

Ravenscroft Nursery School

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy 2025/26

Revised 29 August 2025

Reviewing our Safeguarding Policy

The Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually.

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Introduction

The governors and staff of Ravenscroft Nursery School fully recognise the contribution it makes to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part in protecting our pupils from harm.

All staff and Governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social physical and moral development of the individual child.

This policy is informed by the guidance and procedures set out by DE 'Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection (1999) and the Area Safeguarding Committees' (ACPC) Regional Policy and Procedures (2005), The Department of Health's 'Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland' (2016), The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland's (SBNI) policies and procedures and DE's Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools - A Guide for Schools 2017 and updated June 22 to include Annex D: Safeguarding and Child Protection in Pre-school and Early Years Settings: A Summary Guide (June 2022), and its updated version Safeguarding & Child Protection in Schools (September 2024). This is also to include any subsequent amendments to this circular.

The central thrust of The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 is that *the welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration in all decisions concerning the child*. This is also reflected in Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - *the best interests of the child shall be of primary consideration*. The 'paramountcy' of the child principle underpins our Safeguarding policy and procedures.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. The purpose of the procedures set out in this policy is to safeguard and protect our pupils by ensuring that every adult who works in our school - teachers, support staff and volunteers - has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The issue of child abuse will not be

ignored by anyone who works in our school, and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence.

There are five main elements to our policy:

1. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop
2. Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
3. Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
4. Raising awareness of safeguarding issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe. This may be done through discussions at circle time, use of puppets, "stranger danger" talks etc.
5. Supporting pupils who have been socially or physically harmed by the effects of child abuse, in accordance with his/her agreed safeguarding plan.

Staff at Ravenscroft Nursery School adhere at all times to the key Principles of Safeguarding and Child Protection as outlined by DE in their document,

'Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools - A Guide for Schools 2017' and Safeguarding and Child Protection in Pre-school and Early Years Settings: A Summary Guide (June 2022), as well as the September 2024 Safeguarding & Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools (also includes separate annexes for pre-school, early years, and youth settings). This is also to include any subsequent amendments to this policy.

- 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's 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.

Adult Safeguarding

- For further information see: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/adult-safeguarding-prevention-and-protection-partnership-key-document>
- Adult safeguarding is based on fundamental human rights and on respecting the rights of adults as individuals, treating all adults with dignity and respecting their right to choose. It involves empowering and enabling all adults, including those at risk of harm, to manage their own health and well-being and to keep themselves safe. It extends to intervening to protect where harm has occurred or is likely to occur and promoting access to justice. All adults at risk should be central to any actions and decisions affecting their lives.

We are committed to:

- Ensuring that the welfare of vulnerable adults is paramount.
- Maximising the student's choice, control and inclusion, and protecting their human rights.
- Working in partnership with others in order to safeguard vulnerable adults.

We will follow the procedures outlined in this policy when responding to concerns or disclosures of abuse relating to our students who are 18 years or over.

Other Related Policies

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

- Attendance Policy

- Behaviour Management and Discipline / Positive Behaviour Policy
- Pastoral Care
- Addressing Bullying Policy
- Safe Handling
- Special Educational Needs
- First Aid and Administration of Medicines
- Health and Safety Policy
- Intimate Care
- E-Safety Policy
- Educational Visits
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Whistle blowing

These policies are available to parents and any parent wishing to have a copy should contact the school office or visit the school website at www.ravenscroftnursery.co.uk

The Safeguarding Team at Ravenscroft Nursery School

Chair of Governors:	Mr Mark Chambers
Designated Governor for Safeguarding Governance:	Mr Miroslav Hosek
Principal:	Mrs Nuala Symington
Designated Teacher for Safeguarding:	Mrs Nuala Symington
Deputy Designated Governor for Safeguarding:	Mrs Sonia McGowan/ Mrs Orla Duncan

Roles and Responsibilities of the Safeguarding Team

Board of Governors must ensure that:

- A Designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed.
- A Designated and Deputy Designated Teacher are appointed in their schools.
- They have a full understanding of the roles of the Designated and Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection.
- Safeguarding and child protection training is given to all staff and governors including refresher training.
- Relevant safeguarding information and guidance is disseminated to all staff and governors with the opportunity to discuss requirements and impact on roles and responsibilities.
- The school has a Child Protection Policy which is reviewed annually, and parents and pupils receive a copy of the child protection policy and complaints procedure every two years.
- The school has an Addressing Bullying Policy which is reviewed at intervals of no more than four years and maintains a record of all incidents of bullying or alleged bullying.
- The school ensures that other safeguarding policies are reviewed at least every 3 years or as specified in relevant guidance.
- There is a code of conduct for all adults working in the school.
- All school staff and volunteers are recruited and vetted, in line with DE Circulars

- They receive a full annual report on all child protection matters (It is best practice that they receive a termly report of child protection activities). This report should include details of the preventative curriculum and any initiatives or awareness raising undertaken within the school, including training for staff.
- The school maintains the following child protection records in line with DE Circulars 2015/13 Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of Staff and 2020/07 Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools: Safeguarding and child protection concerns; disclosures of abuse; allegations against staff and actions taken to investigate and deal with outcomes; staff induction and training.

The School Safeguarding Team

As best practice, in the best interests of the children, and as a support for the Designated Teachers, the school should establish a Safeguarding Team. This team should include the Chair of the BoG, the Designated Governor for Child Protection, the Principal (as Chair), the DT and the DDT. The team may co-opt other members as required to help address specific issues, for example the SENCO, ICT Co-ordinator, etc. Where schools have employed an individual with social work qualifications/ experience, the postholder may be included in the school safeguarding team. However, only teachers in schools can assume the safeguarding role and responsibilities of the Designated Teacher.

This Safeguarding Team is a vehicle for ensuring effective co-ordination and co-operation between the key individuals responsible for safeguarding throughout the school.

The EA CPSS provides child protection training in relation to the specific responsibilities of each member of the team.

The responsibilities of the team should include:

- The monitoring and periodic review of Safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements in the school.
- Support for the DT in the exercise of their child protection responsibilities, including recognition of the administrative and emotional demands of the post.
- Ensuring attendance of Governors and staff at relevant training - including refresher training - in keeping with legislative and best practice requirements.

Chair of Board of Governors

The Chairperson of the BoG plays a pivotal role in creating and maintaining the safeguarding ethos within the school environment.

In the event of a safeguarding or child protection complaint being made against the Principal, it is the Chairperson who must assume lead responsibility for managing the complaint/allegation in keeping with guidance issued by the Department (and relevant guidance from other Departments when it comes to other early years settings), employing authorities, and the school's own policies and procedures.

The Chairperson is responsible for ensuring child protection records are kept and for signing and dating annually the Record of Child Abuse Complaints against staff members even if there have been no entries.

Designated Governor for Child Protection

The BoG delegates a specific member of the governing body to take the lead in safeguarding/child protection issues 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 and full Annual Designated Teacher's Report
- Recruitment, selection, vetting and induction of staff.

The School Principal

The Principal, as the Secretary to the BoG, will assist the BoG to fulfil its safeguarding and child protection duties, keeping them informed of any changes to guidance, procedure or legislation relating to safeguarding and child protection, ensuring any circulars and guidance from DE are shared promptly, and timely inclusion of child protection activities on the BoG meeting agenda. In addition, the Principal takes the lead in managing child protection concerns relating to staff.

The Principal has delegated responsibility for establishing and managing the safeguarding and child protection systems within the school. This includes the

appointment and management of suitable staff to the key roles of DT and DDT Designated Teacher posts and ensuring that new staff and volunteers have safeguarding and child protection awareness sessions as part of an induction programme.

It is essential that there is protected time and support to allow the DTs to carry out this important role effectively and that DTs are selected based on knowledge and skills required to fulfil the role.

The Principal must ensure that parents and pupils receive a copy, or summary, of the Child Protection Policy at intake and, at a minimum, every two years.

Designated Teacher for Child Protection

Every school is required to have a DT and DDT with responsibility for child protection. These are highly skilled roles developed and supported through a structured training programme, requiring knowledge and professional judgement on complex and emotive issues. The responsibilities involve:

- The induction and training of all school staff including support staff before they commence their role
- Being available to discuss safeguarding or child protection concerns of any member of staff
- Responsibility for record keeping of all child protection concerns.
- Ensuring staff are aware that Notes of Concern should be completed using the template provided in DE circular 2020/07
- Maintaining a current awareness of early intervention supports and other local services e.g. Family Support Hubs
- Making referrals to Social Services or PSNI where appropriate
- Liaison with the EA Designated Officers for Child Protection
- Keeping the school Principal informed
- Lead responsibility for the development of the school's child protection policy
- Promotion of a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school
- Compiling written reports to the BoG regarding child protection.

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection

The role of the DDT is to work co-operatively with the DT in fulfilling his/her responsibilities.

It is important that the DDT works in partnership with the DT so that he/she develops sufficient knowledge and experience to undertake the duties of the DT when required. DDTs are also provided with the same specialist training by CPSS to help them in their role.

Parents

The primary responsibility for safeguarding and protection of children rests with parents who should feel confident about raising any concerns they have in relation to their child.

Parents can play their part in safeguarding by informing the school:

- If the child has a medical condition or educational need.
- If there are any Court Orders relating to the safety or wellbeing of a parent or child.
- If there is any change in a child's circumstances for example - change of address, change of contact details, change of name, change of parental responsibility.
- If there are any changes to arrangements about who brings their child to and from school.
- If their child is absent and should send in a note on the child's return to school. This assures the school that the parent/carer knows about the absence. More information on parental responsibility can be found on the EA website at: www.eani.org.uk/schools/safeguarding-and-child-protection

It is essential that the school has up to date contact details for the parent/carer.

Child Protection Definitions

Definition of Harm

(Co-operating to Safeguard Children and young People in Northern Ireland August 2017)

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

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

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

Harm can be caused by:

- Sexual abuse**
- Emotional abuse**
- Physical abuse**
- Neglect**
- Exploitation**

What is Child Abuse/Symptoms of Child Abuse

(A child is a person under the age of 18 years as defined in the Children Order)

Child Abuse occurs when 'a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children maybe abused in many settings, in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely by a stranger.' (ACPC, 2005)

Categories of Abuse

Physical Abuse - is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of physical abuse include:

- Unexplained bruises (in places difficult to mark)
- Human bite marks, welts or bald spots
- Unexplained lacerations, fractures or abrasions
- Untreated injuries
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Chronic runaway
- Fear of going home

Emotional Abuse - is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that he is worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as he meets the needs of another person. It may involve causing a child frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose a child to emotional abuse. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of emotional abuse include:

- Bullying of others
- Change in personality from outgoing to withdrawn
- Difficulty in forming / maintaining relationships with others
- Depression
- Signs of mutilation
- Attention seeking
- Chronic runaway
- Wetting and soiling
- Sudden speech disorders
- Low self-esteem

Sexual Abuse - involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children to look at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of sexual abuse include:

- Bruised or sore genitals
- Genital infection
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Inappropriate sexual language or behaviour
- Low self-esteem
- Chronic depression
- Substance abuse
- Personality changes
- Fear of going home

Neglect - is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent

or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision. It may also include non-organic failure to thrive. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of neglect include:

- Poor hygiene
- Constant hunger/cramming food
- Inadequate / inappropriate clothing
- Constant tiredness
- Exposed to danger / lack of adequate supervision
- Untreated illness
- Lack of peer relationships
- Compulsive stealing / begging

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.

Children who have been exploited will have suffered from physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or a combination of these forms of abuse. (Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland, 2016)

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.

Specific Types of Abuse

Grooming - Where the perpetrator gains the trust of a young person or their family, through be-friending or making an emotional connection, in order to exploit and abuse them. It may be sexual or other forms of abuse in nature or be a pre-cursor to this. Staff at Ravenscroft Nursery School will ensure that contact with the pupils in the school is limited only to those who have undergone the appropriate vetting procedures.

Child Sexual Exploitation - Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/ or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology. CSE is a form of child abuse - any staff member who suspects this may be occurring will follow the school's child protection policy and procedures.

Domestic and Sexual Abuse/Violence - Exposure to domestic violence can have a significant impact on children and their emotional development and wellbeing. The DT and DDT of Ravenscroft Nursery School will have training in Domestic Violence. Any suspected or disclosed incidents of domestic violence will be reported to the appropriate authorities, in line with the school safeguarding policy and procedures. The Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland: A Seven Year Strategy (2016) defines domestic and sexual abuse as follows:-

Domestic Abuse:

'threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation) by a current or former intimate partner or family member.'

Sexual Abuse:

'any behaviour (physical, verbal, virtual/digital) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful, or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation) without their informed consent or understanding.

Please note that coercive, exploitative and harmful behaviour includes taking advantage of an individual's incapacity to give informed consent.

The Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse Strategy can be found at: Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland Strategy

A new Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy for 2023-2030 is being developed jointly by the Departments of Justice and Health and was published on 25 September 2024.

Background

In the 12 months from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 there were 33,186 domestic abuse incidents recorded by the PSNI, an increase of 2,026 incidents (6.5%) on the previous 12 months and one of the highest 12-month periods recorded since the start of data series in 2004/2005.

NSPCC research carried out in 2009 'Partner exploitation and violence in teenage intimate relationships' highlights partner violence as a significant concern for young people's wellbeing, providing unequivocal evidence for the need to develop more effective safeguards in this area of child welfare. The survey identified that three-quarters of girls in a relationship experienced emotional violence of some form, a third reported sexual violence and a quarter experienced physical violence with one in 10 girls the physical violence was defined as severe. Half of boys in a relationship reported emotional violence, 18 per cent experienced physical violence and 16 per cent sexual violence. Thus, a substantial number of

young people will experience some form of violence from their partner before they reach adulthood.

Process

Schools should ensure that:

- training for staff by the DTs for Child Protection includes awareness of domestic violence and its impact on children;
- the Child Protection Policy includes recognition of the impact on children of an abusive family setting and states that cases will be reported to the appropriate statutory agency;
- domestic and sexual violence and abuse is included in the school's preventative curriculum - see Section 8.2 for more information.

The DT can contact CPSS for advice at any stage (details are in the Contacts Section).

If it comes to the attention of the school staff that domestic and/or sexual violence and abuse is, or may be, affecting a child, this will be passed to the DT/DDT, who has an obligation to share the information with the SS Gateway Team.

Operation Encompass



Operation Encompass

We are an Operation Encompass school. Operation Encompass is an early intervention partnership between local Police and our school, aimed at supporting children who are victims of domestic violence and abuse. As a school, we recognise that children's exposure to domestic violence is a traumatic event for them.

Children experiencing domestic abuse are negatively impacted by this exposure. Domestic abuse has been identified as an Adverse Childhood Experience and can lead to emotional, physical and psychological harm. Operation Encompass aims to mitigate this harm by enabling the provision of immediate support. This rapid provision of support within the school environment means children are better safeguarded against the short, medium and long-term effects of domestic abuse.

As an Operation Encompass school, when the police have attended a domestic incident and one of our pupils is present, they will make contact with the school at the start of the next working day to share this information with a member of the school safeguarding team. This will allow the school safeguarding team to provide immediate emotional support to this child as well as giving the designated teacher greater insight into any wider safeguarding concerns.

This information will be treated in strict confidence, like any other category of child protection information. It will be processed as per DE Circular 2020/07 'Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools' and a note will be made in the child's child protection file. The information received on an Operation Encompass call from the Police will only be shared outside of the safeguarding team on a proportionate and need to know basis. All members of the safeguarding team will complete online Operation Encompass training, so they are able to take these calls. Any staff responsible for answering the phone at school will be made aware of Operation Encompass and the need to pass these calls on with urgency to a member of the Safeguarding team.

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

Female Genital Mutilation - Staff of Ravenscroft Nursery School are familiar with the contents of the 2003 Female Genital Mutilation Act. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) includes procedures which intentionally alter or injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. FGM is carried out in a number of countries worldwide. In the UK, FGM is illegal. Children may be subjected to

FGM from around the age of five years onwards. It is possible that children of Nursery age could be at risk of FGM, as could other siblings within a family group.

Risk factors associated with FGM include:

- Coming from a community known to practise FGM
- An extended family member has undergone an FGM procedure

Warning signs that the child may be about to undergo the procedure include:

- Family plans an extended trip to country of origin
- Female relative comes to visit
- Child talks about a 'special event' which is about to take place

FGM is a safeguarding issue. Should a member of staff or indeed a parent of Ravenscroft Nursery School be concerned that a child is at risk of FGM then they have a duty to inform the DT or DDT who will follow safeguarding procedures.

Forced marriage - Whilst this is unlikely to be an issue for our pupils directly, staff will be aware of the potential for this to occur with older siblings within families. Should staff of Ravenscroft Nursery School become aware that a pupil's family member (child or young person) is at risk from this, this is treated as a safeguarding/child protection matter and reported in line with our Safeguarding policy.

Children who display harmful sexual behaviours - Learning about sex and sexual behaviour is a normal part of a child's development, however there are some sexual behaviours which would not be acceptable for a child to display in the school environment and indeed would give cause for concern should an adult observe behaviour which is not age appropriate.

DENI circular 2016/05 highlights problematic sexual behaviour as including some of the following characteristics:

- Not age appropriate
- One off incident of low key touching over clothes

- Result of peer pressure
- Spontaneous rather than planned
- Lacking in other balancing factors e.g. no intent to cause harm, level of understanding, acceptance of responsibility
- Targeting other children, to irritate and make feel uncomfortable. Often the children are not scared and can feel free to tell someone
- Concerning to parents / carers
- Sometimes involving substances which disinhibit behaviours

Problematic sexual behaviours will require some level of intervention, as appropriate, generally at school level. More serious incidents may be considered to be classed as Harmful Sexual Behaviour and could include:

- Lacks the consent of the victim
- When the perpetrator uses threats or violence (verbal, physical or emotional) to coerce or intimidate the victim
- Uses age inappropriate sexually explicit words and phrases
- Involves inappropriate touching
- Involves sexual behaviour between children - it is also considered harmful if one of the children is much older - particularly if there is more than two years difference in age or if one of the children is pre-pubescent and the other is not
- Involves a younger child abusing an older child, particularly if they have power over them - for example, if the older child is disabled

Harmful sexual behaviour will always require intervention. Should a member of staff of Ravenscroft Nursery School suspect, observe or receive a disclosure of Harmful Sexual Behaviour then they will immediately follow the school's procedures on reporting a safeguarding concern.

Where the Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher are made aware of any concerns relating to sexual behaviour, then they will deal with this as a Child Protection concern and follow the school safeguarding procedures, including advice contained in DENI circular 2016/05. The Principal would be kept informed of any such concerns and be involved in deciding on the best course of action to take.

The CPSSS will be contacted, if necessary, for additional clarification and support on specific issues and scenarios.

Internet abuse, cyber bullying and online safety - Ravenscroft Nursery School shall ensure that pupils are not permitted to access any inappropriate material online and at all times promote online safety. Use of Ipads in school by children is restricted using parental controls to 'lock in' to an app chosen by staff members. Occasionally, you tube/google may be used when researching something or accessing music. This is only permitted by a staff member working with a child/group and who controls the access to suitable content.

Allegations of cyber bullying of a pupil or staff shall be dealt with in accordance with our addressing bullying behaviour and safeguarding policies and procedures.

Staff at Ravenscroft Nursery School are aware that the overall strategic direction for child safety is the "Keeping Children and Young People Safe: An Online Safety Strategy (February 2021)."

Addressing Bullying Behaviour - Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in Ravenscroft Nursery School

Our addressing bullying in schools policy is informed by the 'Addressing Bullying in Schools Act' (2016) and is available on our website, as well as being distributed yearly via Seesaw. It acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under safeguarding procedures.

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

Any complaints by a parent that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be fully investigated by the DT for Safeguarding, and team action will be taken to protect the victim. This will usually include ensuring that Ravenscroft Nursery child or a group of small children befriends and supports the child being bullied during the school day. A parent making a complaint about bullying will have a personal

response from the DT within one week of making the complaint, indicating the investigation which has been carried out and the action taken.

A record of all incidents of bullying/alleged bullying will be kept in the School's Addressing Bullying Behaviour Register.

The sanctions taken against a pupil who bullies will depend on the seriousness of the case, but will include the loss of privileges in the school. His/her behaviour will be carefully monitored until staff are satisfied that the problem has stopped. If a pupil's bullying behaviour persists, the second stage will be to instigate the safeguarding procedures.

Adult Safeguarding

An '**Adult at risk of harm**' is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- a) Personal characteristics and/or
- b) Life circumstances

Personal characteristics may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain.

Life circumstances may include, but are not limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions.

An '**Adult in need of protection**' is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:

- a) Personal characteristics and/or
- b) Life circumstances and
- c) Who is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests; and
- d) Where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or is likely to cause, him/her to be harmed.

Adult Safeguarding

For further information see: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/adult-safeguarding-prevention-and-protection-partnership-key-document>

The decision as to whether the definition of an 'adult in need of protection' is met will demand the careful exercise of professional judgement applied on a case by case basis. This will take into account all the available evidence, concerns, the impact of harm, degree of risk and other matters relating to the individual and his or her circumstances. The seriousness and the degree of risk of harm are key to determining the most appropriate response and establishing whether the threshold for protective intervention has been met.

The main forms of abuse are:

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is the use of physical force or mistreatment of one person by another which may or may not result in actual physical injury. This may include hitting, pushing, rough handling, exposure to heat or cold, force feeding, improper administration of medication, denial of treatment, misuse or illegal use of restraint and deprivation of liberty.

Sexual Violence and Abuse

Sexual abuse is any behaviour perceived to be of a sexual nature which is unwanted or takes place without consent or understanding. Sexual violence and abuse can take many forms and may include non-contact sexual activities, such as indecent exposure, stalking, grooming, being made to look at or be involved in the production of sexually abusive material, or being made to watch sexual activities. It may involve physical contact, including but not limited to non-consensual penetrative sexual activities or non-penetrative sexual activities, such as intentional touching (known as groping). Sexual violence can be found across all sections of society, irrelevant of gender, age, ability, religion, race, ethnicity, personal circumstances, financial background or sexual orientation.

Psychological/Emotional Abuse

Psychological/emotional abuse is behaviour that is psychologically harmful or inflicts mental distress by threat, humiliation or other verbal/non-verbal conduct.

This may include threats, humiliation or ridicule, provoking fear of violence, shouting, yelling and swearing, blaming, Controlling, Intimidation and Coercion.

Financial Abuse

Financial abuse is actual or attempted theft, fraud or burglary. It is the misappropriation or misuse of money, property, benefits, material goods or other asset transactions which the person did not or could not consent to, or which were invalidated by intimidation, coercion or deception. This may include exploitation, embezzlement, withholding pension or benefits or pressure exerted around wills, property or inheritance.

Institutional Abuse

Institutional abuse is the mistreatment or neglect of an adult by a regime or individuals in settings which adults who may be at risk reside in or use. This can occur in any organisation, within and outside the HSC sector. Institutional abuse may occur when the routines, systems and regimes result in poor standards of care, poor practice and behaviours, inflexible regimes and rigid routines which violate the dignity and human rights of the adults and place them at risk of harm. Institutional abuse may occur within a culture that denies, restricts or curtails privacy, dignity, choice and independence. It involves the collective failure of a service provider or an organisation to provide safe and appropriate services, and includes a failure to ensure that the necessary preventative and/or protective measures are in place.

Neglect occurs when a person deliberately withholds, or fails to provide, appropriate and adequate care and support which is required by another adult. It may be through a lack of knowledge or awareness, or through a failure to take reasonable action given the information and facts available to them at the time. It may include physical neglect to the extent that health or well-being is impaired, administering too much or too little medication, failure to provide access to appropriate health or social care, withholding the necessities of life, such as adequate nutrition, heating or clothing, or failure to intervene in situations that are dangerous to the person concerned or to others particularly when the person lacks the capacity to assess risk.

Procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour in the Nursery

Nursery children rarely engage in bullying.

Aggressive behaviour can emerge as normal behaviour in 2/3 year olds, with temper tantrums being part of normal development at this stage.

In children with delays in other areas of development- e.g. speech and language, there can be resulting secondary behaviour management difficulties.

Therefore, in nursery, while bullying as such is not in evidence, there may be examples of bullying types of behaviour displayed by some children. This is usually of a physical nature and may include hitting, kicking or damage to property.

If this occurs nursery staff will put in place some, or all, of the following procedures, as appropriate.

- Staff will intervene to stop unacceptable behaviour
- The child will be removed from the situation
- The child will be told why he / she is being removed.
- The child will be given an alternative, calming activity with a member of staff constantly monitoring his / her behaviour. If he / she remains aggressive or starts crying during this time, he / she will be told that he / she can go back to play when he / she calms down or stops crying.
- When completed, the child will be encouraged to play elsewhere and any appropriate behaviour that occurs will be praised and reinforced. Other staff will be encouraged to do likewise.
- After the event, the child will be talked to about his /her behaviour and why it was unacceptable. More appropriate alternatives will be discussed.
- If this occurs regularly, parents will be informed and a written record, detailing incidents will be kept.

The school has a policy on addressing bullying behaviour available on our website or on request.

Responding to Safeguarding and Child Protection Concerns

Safeguarding is more than child protection. Safeguarding begins with promotion and preventative activity which enables children and young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and wellbeing is not adversely affected. It includes support to families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and continues through to child protection. Child protection refers specifically to the activity that is undertaken to protect individual children or young people who are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm.

Procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) Child Abuse

The designated teacher for safeguarding (DT) is the Principal, Mrs Nuala Symington.

In her absence the deputy designated teacher for safeguarding (DDT) Mrs Sonia McGowan/Mrs Orla Duncan will assume responsibility for safeguarding.

If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, the member of staff must act promptly.

She should not investigate - this is a matter for social services - but should report these concerns immediately to the DT, discuss the matter with her, make full notes (signing and dating them), and hand the note to the DT.

The DT will plan a course of action, and ensure that a written record of decisions is made.

The DT will decide whether, in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to social services. If there are concerns that the child may be at risk of significant harm, the school is obliged to make a referral to social services. Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parents will be informed immediately.

The DT should seek clarification or advice and consult with The Safeguarding Support Service for Schools (CPSSS) - Designated Officer for Safeguarding at the EANI, or a senior social worker before a referral is made. No decisions to refer a child to social services will be made without full consideration and on appropriate advice. The safety of the child is our first priority.

Where there are concerns about possible abuse, the DT will inform:

- Social Services
- EANI's Designated Officer for Safeguarding (CPSS)
- PSNI (if appropriate)

A UNOCINI form will be completed and forwarded to Gateway. This will be done in an envelope marked 'CONFIDENTIAL - SAFEGUARDING'. Alternatively, this can be sent via secure (C2Kni) e-mail to Gateway - any E-Mail referrals must be confirmed by the school, by telephone as having been received by Gateway.

A copy of the completed UNOCINI will be forwarded to the Safeguarding Officers, EANI, also marked CONFIDENTIAL, UNOCINI ENCLOSED.

A copy of the UNOCINI is available to parents and a further copy retained in the school's locked Safeguarding box.

In the unlikely event that an **allegation should be made against a member of staff** of Ravenscroft Nursery School, the school will:

1. Ensure confidentiality of all parties throughout.
2. Endeavour to resolve allegations as soon as possible.
3. Follow procedures outlined in DENI circular 2015/133 which advises:
 - The Principal/DT or Mrs Mc Gowan/Mrs Duncan DDT should be informed immediately.

- A lead individual shall be nominated to handle the allegations- Mrs Symington in the case of staff members other than the Principal, and Mr Mark Chambers, Chair, Board of Governors and Mr Miroslav Hosek, Governor in charge of Child Protection informed.

In accordance with agreed disciplinary procedures, the Board of Governors, Chair or Principal may impose a precautionary suspension, should it be deemed necessary after full consideration of an individual case. Advice from the Education Authority will be sought in advance of any precautionary suspension.

Suspension will only be considered if there is no recognisable alternative.

Precautionary suspension will be reviewed monthly.

Parents will be advised when the matter has been fully dealt with but full details will at all times remain confidential to the Principal, Board of Governors, DDT.

Records will be kept in the Child Protection /Safeguarding box, Ravenscroft Nursery School.

If any member of staff feels unsure about what to do if he/ she has concerns about a child, or unsure about being able to recognise signs or symptoms of possible child abuse, he/ she should talk with the DT.

It should be noted that the information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held 'in confidence'. In the interests of the child, staff may need to share this information with other professionals. However, only those who need to know will be informed.

The Information Commissioner's Office have put together a 10-step guide for organisations on sharing information to safeguard children, available on their website at <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations>

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

In Ravenscroft Nursery School, if a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, the member of staff will complete a Note of

Concern and act promptly. **They will not investigate** - this is a matter for Social Services - but will discuss these concerns with the Designated Teacher or with the Deputy Designated Teacher if he/she is not available.

The Designated Teacher will consult with the Principal or other relevant staff **always taking care to avoid due delay**. If required advice may be sought from the Education Authority Designated Officer for Child Protection. The Designated Teacher may also seek clarification from the child or young person, their parent/carer.

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

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

The Designated Teacher will phone the Gateway team and/or the PSNI and will submit a completed UNOCINI referral form.

If the concern relates to a student over the age of 18, the Designated Teacher may discuss the concerns with the Trust Adult Safeguarding Team or the Team with responsibility for Vulnerable Adults which will assess the level of risk.

Where appropriate the source of the concern will be informed of the action taken.

There is a difficult balance between gaining consent for a referral into Adult Protection Gateway services and also ensuring a vulnerable adult is protected from harm. Consent will always be sought from the person for a referral to statutory agencies.

If consent is withheld, then a referral will not be made into the Adult Protection Gateway unless there is reasonable doubt regarding the capacity of the adult to give/withhold consent.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

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

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

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

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

In order to meet these requirements all child protection records, information and confidential notes concerning pupils in our school are stored securely and only the Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teachers and Principal have access to them. In accordance with DE guidance on the disposal of child protection records these records will be stored from child's date of birth plus 30 years.

If information is held electronically, whether on a PC, a laptop or on a portable memory device, all must be encrypted and appropriately password protected. These notes or records should be factual, objective and include what was seen, said, heard or reported. They should include details of the place and time and who was present and should be given to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

Role of the Designated Teacher (DT) and Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT)

The DT:

- To provide induction & training to all school staff including support staff.
- Being available to discuss the safeguarding concerns of any member of staff.
- Responsibility for recordkeeping of all safeguarding concerns.
- Maintaining a current awareness of early intervention supports and other local services e.g. Family Support Hubs.
- Making referrals to Social services or PSNI where appropriate.
- Liaising with EANI Designated Officers for Safeguarding.
- Keeping the School Principal informed.
- The lead responsibility for the development and updating of the school's safeguarding policy.
- Ensures parents receive a copy of the safeguarding policy every year which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the school on this.
- Promotion of a safeguarding ethos in the school.
- Written reports to the Board of Governors regarding safeguarding.
- Maintains all records pertaining to safeguarding in a secure location (accessed only by The Safeguarding Team as appropriate).

DDT:

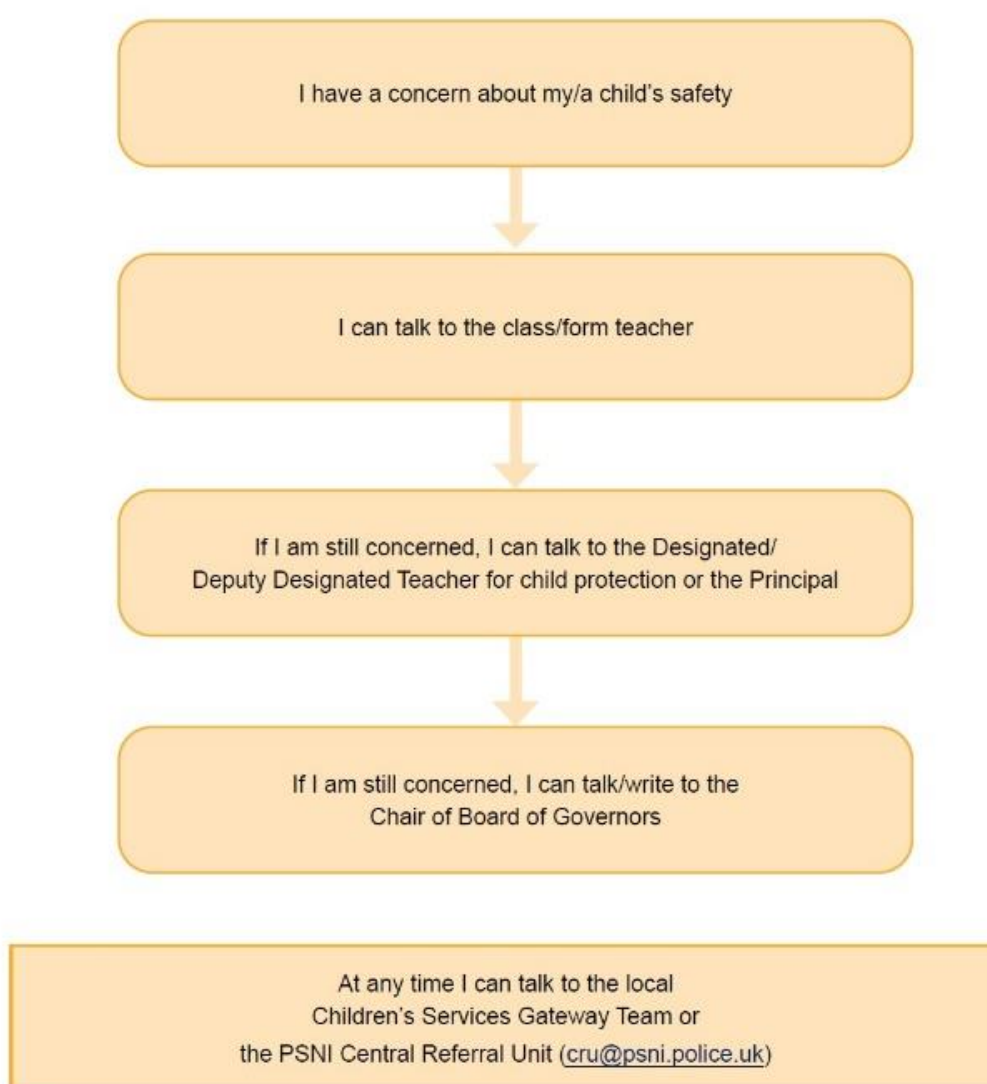
To support and undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher for Safeguarding as required.

How a Parent can raise a safeguarding concern

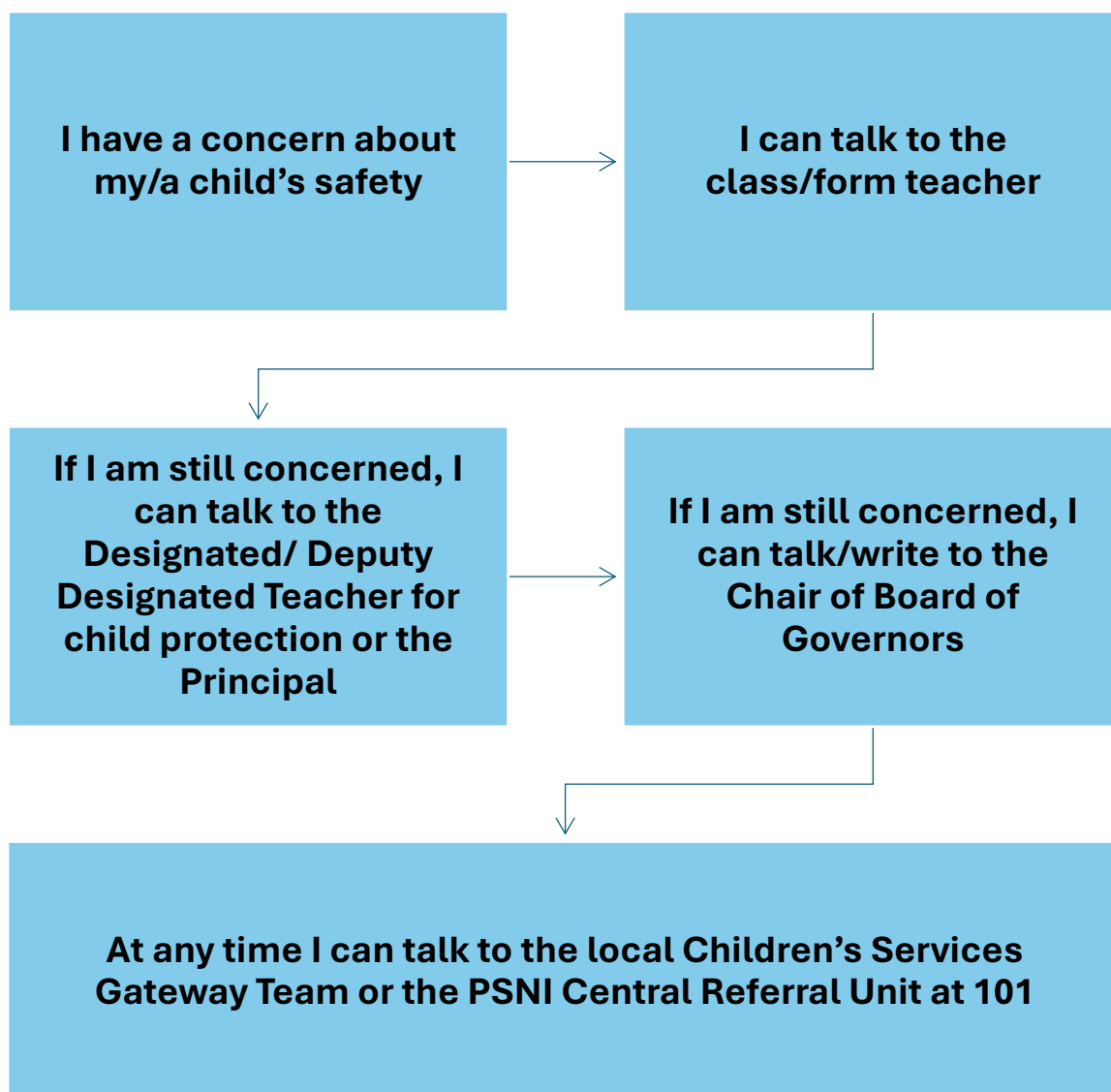
If a parent has a safeguarding concern they can follow the guide below:

Flow chart from page 21:

If a parent has a potential child protection concern within the school:



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



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



I can talk to the teacher



If I am still concerned I can talk to the Principal and Designated Teacher
for Safeguarding - Mrs Symington

Tel: 02890 471684



If I am still concerned I can talk or write to the Chairperson of the Board
of Governors -

Mr Colin Woods

c/o Ravenscroft Nursery School, Belfast, BT5 5BA

Email ravenscroftgovernors@hotmail.com



If I am still concerned I can contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman -

Tel: 0800 343 424

nipso@nipso.org.uk



At anytime, I can write or talk to:

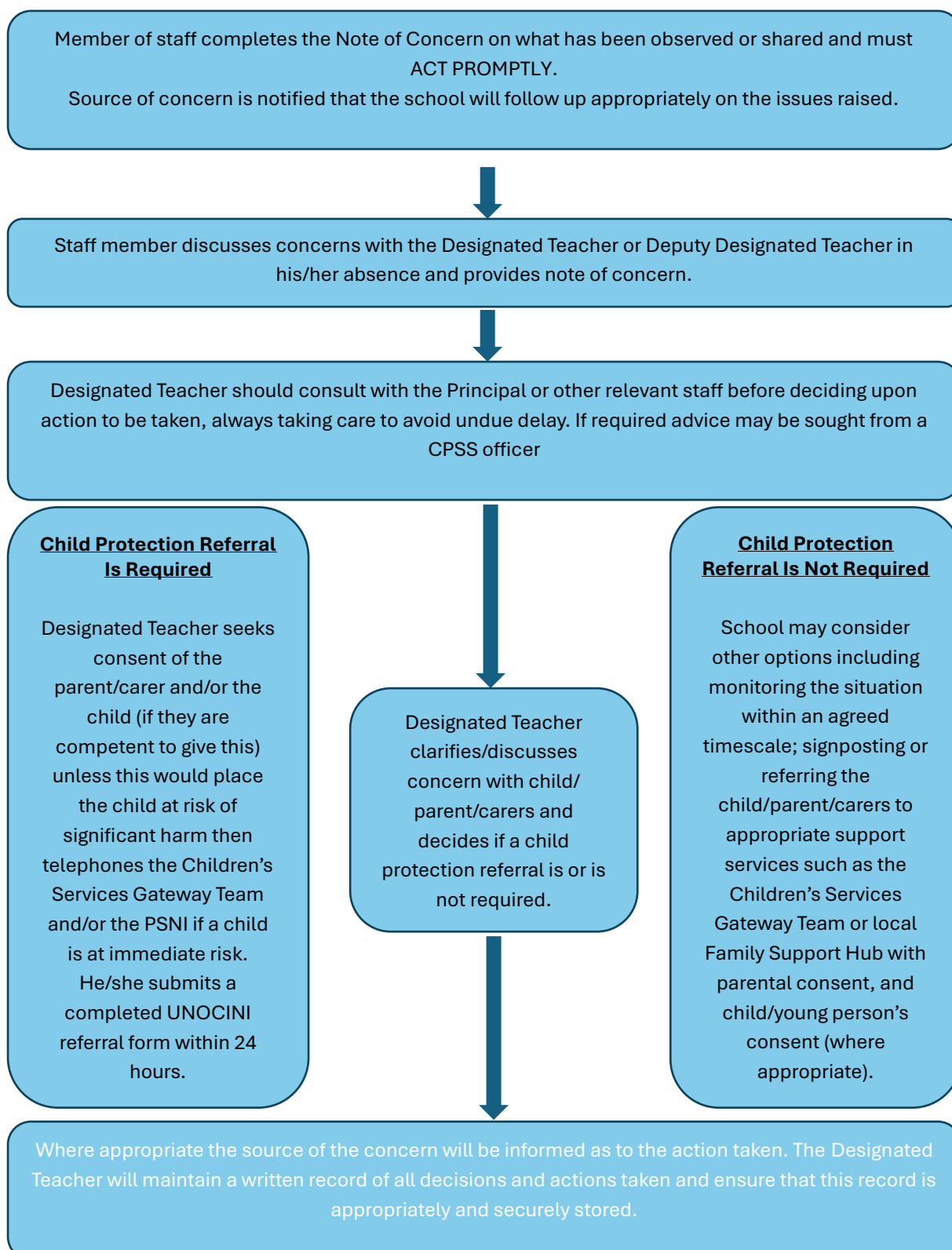
a Social Worker at Belfast Gateway Team,

tel:02890 507000

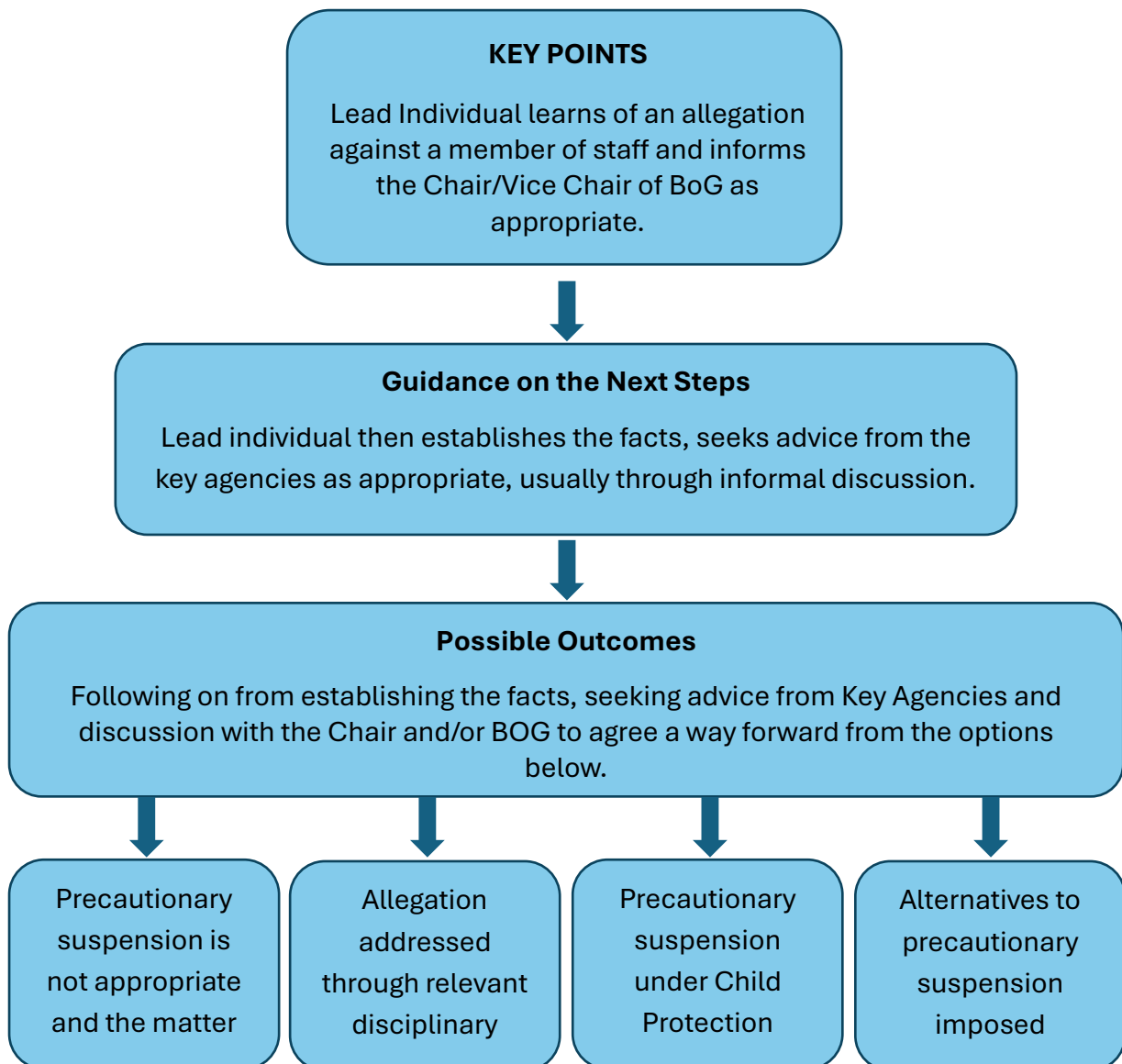
or the PSNI Central Referral Unit at 101

cru@psni.police.uk

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



Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against a Member of Staff



Child Protection Support Service

The helpline number is **028 9598 5590** and operates from Monday to Friday from 9.00 am until 4.30 pm.

Duty Social Worker Gateway Team (Health & Social Care Trusts)

Gateway Teams	Contact Number
Belfast	028 9050 7000
Northern	0300 1234 333
South Eastern	0300 1000 300
Southern	028 3756 7100
Western	028 7131 4090
Out of Hours for All Areas	028 9504 9999

Regional Emergency Social Work Service (RESWS)

The RESWS provides an emergency social work response across Northern Ireland on an out of hours basis:

B 5.00pm to 9.00am weekdays

B 24 hours at weekends and bank holidays

Wherever you live in Northern Ireland, Out of Hours Social Workers can be contacted through one central telephone number: (028) 0800 197 9995

This is an emergency service to be used only when you need a social worker urgently, after hours.

Complaints Procedure for parents

Should a parent wish to make a complaint for any reason, they should in the first instance raise this with their child's teacher. If not satisfied, they may then approach the Principal who will proceed in accordance with the school policy for Parental Complaints. This policy is available on the school website, in translatable format or is available on request in the school.

The NI Public Services Ombudsman may be contacted in the case of complaints which have not achieved a resolution through the School and EANI's internal complaints process.

A Code of Conduct for All Staff, Paid or Unpaid

(Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools - A Guide for Schools, DE, 2017)

The code of conduct is known to all staff - permanent and non-permanent and volunteers. It reflects the safeguarding ethos of the school:

All staff and volunteers are aware of and have received a copy of our code of conduct. The Code is informed by guidance from DE. - Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools - A Guide for Schools (2017).

This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences pupils at Ravenscroft Nursery gain from positive interaction with staff. It is intended to assist staff in respect of the complex issue of child abuse, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on prudent conduct.

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

Private Meetings with Pupils

Staff should be aware of the dangers which may arise from being alone with individual pupils. It is recognised that there are occasions when this take place. As far as possible, staff should always be in a room with visual access, or with the door open.

Staff may not use school premises to undertake private tuition or private lessons.

Physical Contact with Pupils

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

It is unrealistic and unnecessary, however, to suggest that staff should touch pupils only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed child may need reassurance involving physical comforting. Staff should not feel inhibited from providing this in an age appropriate way.

Staff should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that he/she is, or would be, uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm. Staff would follow guidelines given by EANI.

Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint.

Teachers and nursery assistants come into physical contact with young children while helping them with toileting and often in washing them and changing their clothing.

The special procedures regarding changing a child who is wet, dirty, or sick (or is in nappies and has a statement of Special Educational Needs) should be adhered to by all staff.

The following procedures must be observed at all times:

- a. Only children whose parents have given permission for them to be changed may be changed. The Parent / Carer of those for whom parental consent has not been received should be telephoned instead. A list of any children who MAY NOT be changed will be clearly sited for all staff to check
- b. Due to problems of supervision of the rest of the class, both members of staff will not be present when a child is being changed. However, the member of staff changing the child MUST alert the other member of staff prior to starting to change the child.
- c. To provide visual access, the bathroom door should remain open at all times.
- d. While every attempt should be made to give the child privacy and preserve their dignity, other children will not be barred from the bathroom during changing.
- e. Staff must wear disposable gloves when changing a child.

- f. The child should be encouraged to remove the clothes to be changed by him/herself, where possible.
- g. Where necessary, the child can be given a baby wipe to freshen themselves.
- h. The child should be encouraged to dress themselves with help being given when necessary.
- i. A note of the change must be entered on the chart and signed by the staff member.
- j. A child who is asking for help in the toilet should be encouraged and directed how to clean him/herself where possible. Where intervention is necessary, the other member of staff should be alerted, and the record sheet signed by the staff member on completion.
- k. Parents are given the option to choose if their child is changed into spare school clothes or only clothes provided by them as a spare.

A separate policy for Changing and Intimate Care exists in Ravenscroft Nursery School and is followed by all staff.

Staff who administer first-aid to a pupil should ensure whenever possible that this is done in the presence of other children or another adult. However, no member of staff should hesitate to provide first-aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present.

Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the pupil, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.

Following any incident where a member of staff feels that her actions have been, or maybe, misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the Principal.

Choice and Use of Teaching Materials

Teachers should avoid teaching materials, the choice of which might be misinterpreted and reflect upon the motives for the choice.

When using teaching materials of a sensitive nature a teacher should be aware of the danger that their application, either by pupils or by the teacher, might after the event be criticised.

If in doubt about the appropriateness of a particular teaching material, the teacher should consult with the Principal before using it.

Relationships and Attitudes

Staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought. Staff should be aware of a child's emotional well-being and should not use sarcasm, verbal bullying or persistent negative comments or actions.

Staff are aware that they are in a position of trust in relation to the children at the school.

It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all circumstances in which staff interrelate with children, or where opportunities for their conduct to be misconstrued might occur.

In all circumstances, employees' professional judgement will be exercised and for the vast majority of employees this Code of Conduct will serve only to confirm what has always been their practice.

From time to time, however, it is prudent for all staff to reappraise their teaching styles, relationships with children and their manner and approach to individual children, to ensure that they give no grounds for doubt about their intentions, in the minds of colleagues, of children or of their parents/guardians.

The Preventative Curriculum

The staff of Ravenscroft Nursery 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 maybe challenging or they maybe withdrawn.

Ravenscroft Nursery School will endeavour to support the pupils who are exposed to risk of harm through supporting such pupils in accordance with his/her agreed protection plan.

Support for all pupils in the school in developing skills in self protection and developing confidence will be afforded as follows:

- The content of the curriculum, particularly Personal Development.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that pupils understand the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviours towards themselves and others
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Social Services, Education Welfare Service, Educational Psychology, and the PSNI

Setting an Example

- All staff and volunteers in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Staff and volunteers should therefore, for example, avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times, and demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same. All staff and volunteers should be familiar with all school policies and procedures and to comply with these so as to set a good example to pupils.
- Staff and volunteers must always comply with statutory requirements in relation to such issues as discrimination, health and safety and data protection.

Honesty and Integrity

- All staff and volunteers are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.
- Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school (e.g. a supplier of materials) must be declared to the Principal. A record should be kept of all such gifts received. This requirement does not apply to "one off" token gifts from pupils or parents e.g. at Christmas or the end of the school year. Staff and volunteers should be mindful that gifts to individual pupils may be considered inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.

Conduct outside of Work

- Staff and volunteers should not engage in conduct outside work which could damage the reputation and standing of the school or the staff/ volunteer's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.
- Staff and volunteers may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary and should ensure it does not affect their work performance in the school. Advice should be sought from the Principal when considering work outside the school.

E-Safety and Internet Use

- A staff member or volunteer's off duty hours are their personal concern but all staff and volunteers should exercise caution when using information technology and be fully aware of the risks to themselves and others. For school-based activities, advice is contained in the school's Online Safety Policy.
- Staff and volunteers should exercise particular caution in relation to making online associations/friendships with current pupils via social media and using texting/email facilities to communicate with them. It is preferable that any contact with pupils is made via the use of school email accounts or telephone equipment when necessary.

Confidentiality

- Staff and volunteers may have access to confidential information about pupils including highly sensitive or private information. It should not be shared with

any person other than on a need-to-know basis. In circumstances where the pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.

- There are some circumstances in which a member of staff or volunteer may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals should pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated child protection responsibilities.
- If a member of staff or volunteer 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.
- Staff and volunteers need to be aware that although it is important to listen to and support pupils, they must not promise confidentiality or request pupils to do the same under any circumstances. Additionally concerns and allegations about adults should be treated as confidential and passed to the Principal or a member of the safeguarding team without delay.
- The school's child protection arrangements should include any external candidates studying or sitting examinations in the school.

Ravenscroft Nursery School Vetting Procedures

The school's vetting processes are compliant with practice advised in DE circulars 2006/06, 2006/07, 2006/08, 2006/09, 2008/03, 2012/19 (currently under review), 2013/01 (currently under review), and 2024/10. Copies of these circulars are available on the DE website: www.deni.gov.uk

Ravenscroft Nursery School notes that pre-employment vetting remains a key preventative measure in denying unsuitable individuals access to children and vulnerable adults through unsupervised Regulated Activity.

Ravenscroft Nursery School will ensure that newly appointed paid staff such as teachers and support staff, including classroom assistants, office, catering, cleaning and caretaking staff are appropriately vetted in line with the practice and procedures operated by EANI (BR) and outlined in DE Circular 2024/10, Pre-Employment/Access NI Check Requirements and Safer Recruitment Practices for Staff and Volunteers working in or Providing a Service for Schools/Education Settings. Teachers employed through NISTR on a temporary basis and those newly appointed staff reporting for work on their first day must provide photographic evidence to the Principal to verify their identity.

Guidance for Volunteers

Volunteers have an important and beneficial role in supporting the work of teachers and other support staff in Ravenscroft Nursery school and in contributing, by their efforts and initiative, to the life of the school.

It is essential however, that appropriate steps are taken, through screening and selection arrangements, to ensure that children are not placed at risk through allowing the unsupervised and unmanaged access of unsuitable adults to the school. The Department of Education has produced guidance (DE Circular 2024/10 English Version PDF 87 KB and DE Circular 2012/19 (currently under review) Irish Version PDF 93 KB), which Ravenscroft Nursery school complies with in order to help decide whether the supervision they plan to provide will take any supervised activity out of Regulated Activity.

Ravenscroft Nursery School can obtain an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate from AccessNI, but not check barred list status, for supervised work that is no longer Regulated Activity.

Who is a Volunteer?

A volunteer is an individual who, subject to the satisfactory procedures below, assumes unpaid duties in a school on a regular basis.

Formal arrangements as to selection and vetting should not be required for volunteers who are involved outside school hours and who do not have unsupervised contact with pupils. These would include fund raisers, people using school premises for meetings etc.

Recruiting and Selecting Volunteers

The school may canvass for volunteers or people may come forward to offer assistance at their own initiative. In many cases potential volunteers may already be known to the school. Others may come forward from the local community.

Engagement of volunteers is only undertaken with agreement of the Board of Governors.

Initial Appraisal

As a minimum requirement all potential volunteers are asked to provide the following information to the Principal:

- personal details
- qualifications and previous work with children
- a declaration that they have never been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound-over Order
- a declaration as to whether they have been investigated by Social Services for safeguarding
- agree to an enhanced disclosure check being carried out if engaging in regulated activity
- provide the name of two referees who are not family members or members of staff in the school
- attend an interview with the school Principal with proof of identity
- Undergo an annual enhanced disclosure check through Access NI (via EANI), if appropriate.

No individual will be admitted to the school as a volunteer until these basic steps have been completed and the results assessed.

Accepting Volunteers

Where the previous procedures have been followed as appropriate and the school is satisfied that:

- the volunteer is a suitable person to have contact with the children and has the character, skills and experience to support the work of the school in a voluntary capacity;
- well defined and worthwhile activities have been identified for the volunteer to undertake and he/she is competent to undertake them;

the school will notify the individual that he/she has been accepted for voluntary duties in the school

The use of Volunteers

These are the fundamental principles observed when using volunteers:

- The purpose of the volunteer is to assist staff, whether teaching or support . They are not used as substitutes either to cover activities normally undertaken by paid staff who are absent, or to release such staff to undertake other duties.
- Parent volunteers who provide occasional voluntary work in Ravenscroft Nursery School will always be supervised by a permanent staff member and will not require vetting procedures to be carried out.
- Parent volunteers providing more than occasional voluntary work and any other volunteer to RNS School will be required to undergo an enhanced disclosure check before commencing any volunteer work.
- The Principal will conduct an interview process with prospective volunteers in order to determine the extent of their time commitment to the school and hence the need for an EDC to be sought.
- NO volunteer, in any capacity, will have access to the children or work unsupervised at any time in RNS.
- Volunteers should understand the tasks they are to undertake and receive appropriate training to enable them to perform these;
- Volunteers are only allocated duties after consultation and agreement with the teacher or other member of staff with whom the volunteer will be closely involved. Teachers are not to be placed under any pressure to accept a volunteer in their classroom;
- Volunteers are not afforded access to records or other information relating to staff or pupils. An exception might be made where a child has a medical or other condition of which all those working with the pupil should be made aware, and where agreement of the parent has been sought.
- At all times RNS shall comply with the guidance contained in DENI circular no 2024/10 Pre Employment Access NI Check Requirements and Safer Recruitment Practices for Staff and Volunteers Working in or Providing a Service for Schools/Education Settings
- Ravenscroft Nursery School has drawn on the advice from the guidance Document "Security and Personal Safety in Schools" 1997 to establish

arrangements for the admission and supervision of volunteers on school premises. Therefore, all new volunteers must provide photographic ID on initial arrival at the school.

- The volunteer must report to the Principal at the beginning of each visit.

Health and Safety Insurance

Volunteers are owed a duty of care under the requirements of Health and Safety Legislation. Ravenscroft Nursery School therefore ensures that volunteers are treated no less favourably than paid employees in terms of Ravenscroft Nursery school's obligations under the legislation.

Duration

Ravenscroft Nursery school places a time limit on the period of the volunteer's service. This is done where the work earmarked for the volunteer is likely to be completed within a specific period. Where a volunteer's involvement is likely to be long term, the school advises the volunteer that he/she will be subject to a trial period, during which the Principal monitors the volunteer's effectiveness in contributing to the life and work of the school.

Information and Training

The school ensures that the volunteer receives such information, guidance, preparation and where necessary, training to enable him/her to perform tasks effectively. As a minimum, volunteers are briefed on

- the policy of the school and the management authority in relation to pastoral care and safeguarding, including its behaviour/discipline policy, including rewards and sanctions, and the extent of the volunteer's authority within it; its safeguarding procedures
- Ravenscroft Nursery School's Health and Safety Policy, Fire and Evacuation Procedures and the Code of Conduct.

Arrangements are made for the volunteer to have a formal line of communication to the Principal for reporting issues of concern or the welfare of the children in the school.

Visitors to the School

(Circular 2024/10)

Visitors to schools, e.g. to attend meetings or events; parents; visitors to deliver goods or provide voluntary-sector services; contractors to carry out maintenance tasks; or past pupils who are no longer enrolled at the school are not engaged in regulated activity and do not routinely need to be vetted before being allowed onto

school premises. However, such visitors should be managed by school staff and their access to areas and movement within the school should be restricted as needs

require. Such visitors should be:

- met/directed by school/organisation staff/representatives;
- issued with a temporary pass;
- signed in and out by the school/organisation staff;
- if appropriate, be given restricted access to only specific areas of the school/organisation;
- escorted around the premises by a member of staff;
- not left unattended, they should be clearly identified with visitor/contractor passes;
- their access to pupils restricted to the purpose of their visit;
- cordoned off from pupils for both safeguarding and health and safety reasons if delivering goods or carrying out building, maintenance or repair tasks their work area.

Managing Information on Persons who Pose a Risk to Pupils

Public Protection Arrangements are in place in Northern Ireland, managed by a multi-agency framework - PPANI. Their remit is to protect the public from persons convicted of sexual and violent offences.

Should the PPANI judge it necessary, information about a person who poses a risk to pupils may be shared with Mrs Symington (The Principal) who will then take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the pupils.

To ensure confidentiality, Mrs Symington will discuss with the designated risk manager and PPANI

1. The nature of the risk posed.
2. How information should be made public and with whom.

A record of this discussion will be taken, kept in the Safeguarding box and will include the contact details of the designated risk manager and the advice given on how to manage the situation.

Information will not be shared with any other school.

Mrs Symington may liaise with/seek advice from safeguarding officials and EANI if needed.

Information regarding individuals who pose a risk arising from other sources, will immediately be referred to Mrs Symington to the Public Protection Unit and seek advice - a record of any advice given will be kept in safeguarding box.

Ravenscroft Nursery School will not discuss any individual cases with the media.

Full details of Managing Information on a person who pose a risk to pupils, are contained in DENI Circular no. 2014/27.

The Preventative Curriculum

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protections.

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk , and are listened to
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- Include in the curriculum opportunities for Personal and Social Development which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to whom they should turn for help if the need arises. Modelling and teaching about developing healthy relationships, and attitudes to navigate the world around them. Strategies may include:
 - "Stop, I don't like it" approach
 - Use of puppets
 - Use of stories, posters and appropriate materials

Parents and school staff are encouraged to download and make use of the Safer School App, available on the Safer Schools homepage:
<https://saferschoolsni.co.uk/>

Attendance

Regular school attendance is an important factor in school success, learning and overall development of a child. It also can provide a safe and secure place for some children. Attendance at Ravenscroft Nursery School is closely monitored and where there is cause for concern, this will be discussed with parents and teacher. Poor or erratic attendance can be an indicator of abuse or neglect, again this will be raised with a parent if it is a concern.

If a child has not attended school for more than three days and the parent has not contacted the school to give an explanation, the class teacher will telephone to make contact in a pastoral capacity. Should the teacher be unable to make contact with the parent then a home visit shall be carried out to ensure the welfare of the family.

Children with increased vulnerabilities

This may include (but not exhaustive):

Children with a disability, EAL, limited understanding/communication, e.g. nursery age, gender issues/sexual orientation.

Our school Code of Conduct and Intimate Care policies seek to protect both children and staff members by clearly outlining bounds of appropriate physical contact when working with these groups of children.

Ravenscroft Nursery School is a fully inclusive environment with a range of visual supports/strategies to support communication at all levels and to ensure that the voice of the child is heard.

Our pupils access a Makaton signed and visually supported version of our procedures for a child to report or share a concern.

RNS Changing and Intimate Care Policy 2025

At Ravenscroft Nursery School, we provide a purely play based curriculum to very young children. We recognise that wetting/soiling accidents may occur from time to time, necessitating a change of clothing to ensure the comfort, well being and health of the child.

These 'accidents' may arise from toileting issues/mishaps or may occur during curriculum activities such as messy/water based /outdoor play. Whatever the reason, all staff at Ravenscroft Nursery School are equipped to provide appropriate care when assisting a child in the Nursery School with a change of clothing should it be required.

Both bathrooms - Nursery 1 and Nursery 2-keep a stock of clean, dry clothes and undergarments should a child need a set of clothing to change into. We also offer parents the option of supplying their own change of clothing as we recognise that some children may feel reassured by being changed into their own, familiar clothing. Where parents opt to provide a change of clothes, these should be kept in a bag on their child's coat peg. Before beginning a changing procedure, staff will always check to see if a change is available on the child's coat peg- if not, school clothing is used for the change- care is taken to provide similar clothing- e.g. Winter clothing/layers in winter. Only permanent or long term staff members will assist a pupil with a clothing change. In order to safeguard the child and the staff member, another staff member is always made aware that a changing procedure is about to commence. The child will be changed close to the entrance of the bathroom, where the staff member working in the classroom can observe/see this change taking place.

Whilst children in the Nursery may be at differing developmental stages regarding toileting or managing clothing, staff will always offer an appropriate amount of assistance with changing, (staff do not routinely provide assistance such as wiping bottoms for example), matching it to the child's developmental level in toileting and managing clothing. Staff at all times provide a loving, caring approach to supporting the child's progress towards independence.

A log is kept in each bathroom to record date, time and details of change reason/action taken- this is countersigned by the observing staff member.

Parents are given a written slip at the end of the session, detailing the change and reason why it was necessary- this slip may be placed inside a plastic bag along with the wet/soiled clothing or in some instances where clothing is very wet or soiled the slip may be placed in the child's individual cubby.

Additionally, very soiled clothing may be disposed of hygienically at the discretion of staff. Should this happen, parents will be offered a replacement item of clothing from the school. Baby wipes are available should they need to be used for soiling accidents. Should it become apparent over a period of time that a child is not fully toilet trained and is having frequent toileting accidents then this will be raised with parents by the class teacher with a view to putting a suitable plan in place to support the child's developmental progress in toilet training. In some circumstances this may mean reducing the school day so that the child can benefit from an emotionally and developmentally appropriate toilet training experience. Our aim is always to work with families towards full toilet training, and therefore increasing their child's day's attendance. Parents will also be advised to contact their Health Visitor for advice and support. Our staff are available to offer advice and support on toileting issues.

Students at Ravenscroft Nursery School are never permitted to change a child, nor are they permitted to enter the bathroom area unaccompanied by a staff member when a child is present in this area.

Parents offering toileting support to their own child in school

Staff of Ravenscroft Nursery School will be alert to situations which may arise at the beginning/end of school day or during school events where parents may accompany their own child into the school bathrooms when another child is present in the bathroom. Parents are issued guidance at the beginning of the school year that they should not place themselves into such a situation, but should ask a staff member who would be happy to accompany them in the bathroom area. Should a staff member be aware that a parent is in the bathroom at the same time as another child, they should ensure that they enter/join the parent in the bathroom area to provide safeguarding support.

Parents accompanying their child on a school outing are made aware (at the outset of each trip) of the School's policy on assisting children other than their

own with toileting, intimate care and changing - they are advised that this may only be done by a permanent staff member.

Intimate Care which may include Nappy Changing

Ravenscroft Nursery School is an inclusive school and welcomes children with a wide range of needs. This may include children who are not fully toilet trained for developmental or medical reasons.

When a pupil of Ravenscroft Nursery School has identified needs which mean that he/she requires nappy changing during the school day, this will be discussed with the child's parents prior to beginning school, and an appropriate Intimate Care Plan drawn up in consultation/agreement with the parents.

We recognise that every child has different needs and each intimate care plan will be flexible and responsive in order to meet these needs.

Nappy changing will only be carried out by a designated and named staff member trained in Child Protection/Safeguarding.

Children with identified medical needs which include intimate care will have an individual intimate care plan drawn up. Where appropriate, staff will receive relevant training, and an environmental risk assessment may also be carried out in conjunction with EANI or medical professionals.

Physical Restraint

Our policy on physical restraint by staff is set out in a separate policy, "Reasonable Force and Safe Handling", in accordance with guidelines from EANI.

It acknowledges that staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury.

This is in line with the training all staff have received from the EANI.

Definition of Reasonable Force

The Education (NI) Order 1998 (part 11 article 4 (1) states:

A member of the staff of a controlled school may use, in relation to any pupil at the school, such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for the purpose of preventing the pupil from doing (or continuing to do any of the following, namely):

- Committing any offence;
- Causing personal injury to , or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs during a teaching session or otherwise.

Based on this legal framework, the working definition reasonable force is the minimum force necessary to prevent a pupil from physically harming him/herself or others or seriously damaging property, but used in a manner that attempts to preserve the dignity of all concerned.

Reasonable Force/ Safe Handling Policy of the school

(Based on DENI's Regional Policy Framework on the use of Reasonable Force / Safe Handling)

1. Introduction

Schools have a 'duty of care' to their pupils - to provide a safe and secure environment for the entire school community (pupils and staff) and to promote and sustain appropriate behaviour. This may involve all staff having to handle pupils to prevent them harming themselves, others or damaging property.

Ravenscroft Nursery School has prepared this policy for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils and for volunteers working within the school. The policy is intended to explain the school's arrangements for physical intervention. The policy has taken account of

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child (Article 12); International 1989 (UK 1991)
- The Education (NI) Order 1998 (Article 3) which requires Boards of Governors to ensure that policies are designed to promote good behaviour and discipline on the part of the pupils;
- The Education (NI) 1998 (Article 4) which clarifies the powers of members of staff of a grant-aided school regarding the use of reasonable force;
- The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003 (Article 17 +19) which imposes a duty on Boards of Governors to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils; and
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which provides for the right to education.

This policy and our procedures have been developed in line with the guidance from:

- The Department of Education NI circular 1999/9;

- DE document "towards a Model Policy in Schools on the Use of Reasonable Force" August 2002;
- Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour (2001);
- Pastoral Care in Schools - Safeguarding; Code of Conduct for Staff (1999/10) paragraphs 69 to 72; and
- DE Circular 2003/13 Welfare and Protection of Pupils.

Values and Principles underpinning this Policy

Ravenscroft Nursery School believes that:

- Each child has the right to be educated in a safe and secure environment where each child's moral, intellectual, personal, social and emotional development is promoted.
- Parents and Carers are informed and reassured that their children are being educated in a safe, caring and respectful atmosphere.
- All staff have the right to work in a safe and secure environment.

These principles underpin our school ethos and culture.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The following purposes underpin Ravenscroft Nursery School's policy and practices to:

- Create a learning environment in which children and adults feel safe;
- Protect every person in the school community from harm;
- Protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention, which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful; and
- Develop and implement guidelines for staff (teaching and support) so that they are clear about the circumstances in which they might use reasonable force to restrain pupils and how such force might be applied.

We, the staff of Ravenscroft Nursery School, believe that nursery education is a stage in its own right and should be a valuable and important experience for all children who have the opportunity to avail of it.

We see it as an extension to, and complement of, the love and care experienced by children at home. It is important that parents and staff work in partnership to help each child reach his or her own potential.

We provide a varied curriculum set in a stimulating learning environment to help us cater for the individual needs of our children. We hope to encourage each child to become increasingly independent, self confident and happy.

Ravenscroft Nursery School is an integral part of the local community and the staff, together with the Board of governors, are committed to nurturing the aims of local education.

This policy has been formulated with due consideration to the following legislation.

- Children (NI) Order 1995 - duty to protect and safeguarding responsibilities / fulfilling responsibility;
- UN Convention On The Right Of The Child 1989 - (Article 12, 16 and 19); UK 1991;
- Education (NI) Order 1998 (Part 11 Article 4 (1));
- Human Rights Act 1998 - Articles 3 and 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights;
- Health and Safety at Work Act (NI) Order 1978;
- Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003 - Articles 17, 18, 19.
- Links with Other Policies
- This policy is one of the overall pastoral policies and dovetails into the school's existing behaviour policy, addressing bullying behaviour policy, safeguarding policy, special needs policy, health and safety policy and complaints policy.
- It also takes account of the staff development and welfare policy.
- Teaching, learning and assessment policy and curricular policies.

3. Practices

Preventative Strategies

Ravenscroft Nursery School actively promotes positive behaviour management strategies, thus reducing the need for the use of any form of physical intervention, except in emergency situations.

Preventative strategies for defusing and de-escalating conflict/confrontation or aggression are detailed in our school's behaviour management policy.

4. Procedures

Support Structures

The following procedures have been agreed by the staff and adopted by the board of governors. Parents and pupils will be informed of the school's procedures and support structures within the overall Pastoral Care Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Reasonable force/safe handling can be used by any member of staff who is authorised by the principal to have lawful control or charge of pupils e.g. teachers, nursery assistants, supervisory assistants. The principal will confirm with all the staff those who are authorised to be in charge of pupils at any given time.

Procedure

There may be circumstances when a member of staff may have to decide between making an intervention/using reasonable force by placing herself in a dangerous situation or standing back and thereby allowing colleagues or pupils to face potential danger. There will be an element of personal judgement in these decisions and there is the possibility of someone being injured. However, it is reasonable to expect a member of staff to engage in some risk where there is evidence of danger to others and intervention has a good chance of being effective.

Staff should not, however, put themselves in personal danger merely to safeguard property.

Reasonable force/safe handling can be used by a teacher or other authorised persons on the school premises or when authorised elsewhere e.g. on school trips. Reasonable force/safe handling should be limited to emergency situations and used only as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have been exhausted and where:

- action is necessary in self defence or because there is imminent risk of injury to another pupil or person;
- there is a developing risk to another pupil or person, or significant damage to property;

Examples that fall into the above categories are:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- pupils are fighting;
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse materials or objects;
- a pupil is running in the playroom or hallway where he/she might cause an accident likely to injure himself/herself or others;
- a pupil tries to leave the school;
- a pupil persistently refuses to respond appropriately to safety instructions

5. Forms of 'Reasonable Force'

When other behaviour management strategies have failed - the minimum intervention or force will be reasonably employed depending on the age, gender, understanding and any special needs of the pupil and used in a way that preserves the dignity and respect of all concerned. The use of reasonable force/safe handling will involve a calm and measured approach at all times appropriate to the particular pupil and be in accordance with the nursery's agreed strategies and the following procedures:

- tell the pupil to stop the inappropriate behaviour;
- ask the pupil to behave appropriately, clearly stating the desired behaviour;

- tell the pupil the nature of physical intervention that will take place if the inappropriate behaviour continues;
- during the incident repeatedly reassure the pupil and tell him/her that physical contact will stop as soon as he/she is ready to behave appropriately;
- If the teacher/assistant, feels at risk another member of staff will be alerted for assistance. The design of the school and the deployment of staff will ensure another member is close by at all times.

6. Forms of Physical Intervention

The forms of physical intervention used in the nursery will depend on the individual circumstances and may include

- guiding or leading a pupil by the hand with little or no force;
- lifting a pupil e.g. off outdoor equipment (a bike or a slide), when blocking a doorway or in extreme circumstances when a pupil is in danger of hurting others;
- shepherding a pupil away by placing hands on backs of elbows or middle of back.

7. Restrictive Physical Intervention

This will involve the use of physical intervention/reasonable force where there is a risk to pupils, staff or risk of significant damage to property. All incidents will be recorded in the school's Serious Incident Book and on the Record of Restraint/Physical Intervention Form

8. Forms of Safe Handling

The forms of safe handling used in the nursery will depend on the individual circumstances and are

- Teaching a pupil to hold an adult's hand appropriately whilst

- on visits outside school,
- learning to move safely around the inside of the school,
- exiting and entering the school building as part of a group,
- Holding /restraining a child with clothing after toileting (in accordance with Safeguarding Policy guidelines)
- In exceptional circumstances, providing comfort to a pupil who is very upset or ill by sitting her/him on the knees of a staff member. (In such circumstances a second adult will be present.)

9. Health and Safety

When using reasonable force/physical intervention/restraint/safe handling, the pupil's health and safety will always be considered and monitored. Physical interventions will involve the minimum amount of force necessary to resolve the situation and calm the pupil.

Limits on the Use of Force

The use of Reasonable Force will only be employed in exceptional circumstances or an emergency where a pupil appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and whose behaviour is presenting a threat to himself/herself or others. All staff in Ravenscroft Nursery School are aware of acceptable and unacceptable measures of physical intervention as outlined in the 'regional policy framework' and understand that the use of force as a punishment or to intentionally cause pain, injury or humiliation contravenes our Safeguarding Policy and is strictly prohibited, by law.

10. Record Keeping

All incidents involving the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention will be recorded in the nursery's Serious Incident book. The principal will maintain this record and, with the Chairperson of the Board of Governors, will review annually the entries in the incident book.

In addition members of staff involved in an incident will provide specific details to be recorded on a 'Record of Physical Intervention' form.

The monitoring of incidents will help ensure that staff are following correct procedures and will alert the principal and Board of Governors to the needs of any pupil whose behaviour can only be contained by the use of physical intervention.

11. Post - Incident Management

The use of restrictive physical intervention can be upsetting to all concerned, therefore, we will ensure that staff and pupils are given the required physical and emotional support.

Parents will be contacted as soon as possible and the incident explained to them. Any complaint from a parent will be dealt with within the nursery's complaints policy and procedures.

12. Training and Development

Ravenscroft Nursery School is committed to providing regular professional development on

- The use of reasonable force/safe handling,
- Behaviour strategies/management,
- Safeguarding policy and procedures

for all staff, in order to maintain the ethos of the school, its values and the boundaries of acceptable behaviour.

Health and Safety

Our Health and Safety Policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

Photography and Images of Children.

All parents are asked at the start of the academic year to consent to their child's photographs being taken and displayed within the school, on seesaw and occasionally in newspapers or on the school website.

A list of any children who **MAY NOT** have photographs taken or displayed will be available for all staff to check.

The use of mobile phones and digital devices with camera options is not permitted in the school for safeguarding reasons. We maintain a rich and varied selection of photos on our school website and seesaw to keep parents up to date with school life, for example Christmas concert and Easter Singalong events. Any parent wishing to receive a copy of a specific moment or have a photo taken of a specified event should arrange this with a staff member who will be happy to oblige.

It may transpire that the school or an individual staff member may become aware of an image/images of a pupil or family member which gives cause for concern- this may especially be true of photos shared on social media sites. Staff should not copy, share or email any photos but should immediately inform the Principal of their existence and give brief details of any concern regarding these images.

Educational trips/Visits

Ravenscroft Nursery has a separate policy on educational trips and visits:

Policy on School Trips

Parental Consent

Parents will be informed by letter about the nature of the trip, the format of the day, the expected departure and arrival times and the eating arrangements in advance and asked to sign a consent form.

Pre-visit by Staff

Staff will acquaint themselves with the place to be visited beforehand and plan the order of the day etc.

Extra Adults

Volunteers will be invited to join all trips - the exact number will depend on the nature of the trip and guided by a risk assessment carried out before the outing. Cognisance will be given to any current DENI guidance (August 2023) regarding Educational Outings.

All volunteers, including parent volunteers should be supervised at all times by a permanent member of staff. Volunteers are not permitted to accompany children other than their own to the toilet, unless a permanent staff member is also present.

All parents and other relatives accompanying school trips must be supervised by a staff member at all times.

All volunteers will be briefed about the nature of their responsibilities before the trip.

Behaviour on Trips

The children will have been informed as to what constitutes reasonable behaviour when out of the school, and be expected to follow Nursery expectations of appropriate conduct.

Emergency Telephone Numbers

A list of names, addresses and emergency telephone numbers will be taken on all trips. A member of staff will carry a mobile phone.

Emergency Medication

All emergency medication should be brought on any school trip/outing with a named adult designated to carry the medication- this adult will supervise the child closely throughout the outing, to ensure that medication is close to hand should it be needed.

Risk Assessments

Carried out prior to each outing.

First Aid

The schools designated first aider is Ms Ashleigh Steed.

Any First Aid offered will be to give the minimal amount to contact required to ensure physical contact is minimised. Other members of staff may also have current first aid knowledge and certification which is relevant.

School Security

Ravenscroft Nursery School is a secure site and building, it cannot be accessed without either an authorised key/fob or by admittance from a staff member. Only permanent or long-term staff are permitted to answer the door or open a gate of the school when children are in attendance. Access during pupil attendance hours is controlled by buzzer access only.

Arrival and departure times are well controlled in the interests of child protection and safeguarding with a staff member manning any open access or departure site, gate or door.

The school grounds are secured by fencing which surrounds the perimeter and the outdoor play area has additional fencing to secure it as a safe play area.

Parents and visitors are requested to observe etiquette when arriving at and departing from the school building and grounds. At drop off and pick up times a one way system operates to ensure that staff can safely and each entry/exit point. Late arrivals use the front entrance and use the buzzer access system.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

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

Date Policy Reviewed:	
Signed:	Designated Teacher
Signed:	Principal
Signed:	Chair of Board of Governors