

Magherafelt Primary School Pastoral – Child Protection Guidelines



All children have the right to grow up in a safe, loving and happy environment. It is the intention of school staff to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the welfare of children is safeguarded and their safety is preserved.

There are five main kinds of child abuse. The following are details and possible symptoms:

Neglect: The confirmed or suspected persistent or significant neglect of a child. Symptoms may include hunger, inadequate clothing, and constant lack of cleanliness and regular tiredness or failure to thrive.

Physical Abuse: Confirmed or suspected deliberate injury to a child, or wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical suffering to a child. Symptoms may include unexplained injuries, bruises or burns, especially repeated ones. There may be a refusal to explain these and/ or fear of physical contact.

Emotional Abuse: Emotional ill- treatment or rejection. Symptoms may include delays in physical, mental and emotional development and unexplained fears.

Sexual Abuse: Confirmed or suspected exploitation of a child; where any adult touches a child's private parts in a way, which makes the child feel unhappy and embarrassed. Symptoms may include an unusual sexual awareness (evidenced in behaviour, conversation or in artwork) or affection expressed sexually, which appears inappropriate to the child's age. The child may, on the other hand, appear unusually withdrawn and unhappy.

Exploitation: 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 for personal gain. 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.

Procedures for dealing with:

Bullying: Procedures for dealing with bullying as a form of abuse are held in a separate anti-bullying policy.

Peer Abuse: Where there is suspected abuse of a child by another child or young person then the appropriate child protection procedures will be followed both for the victim and for the alleged abuser.

INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES INVOLVING STAFF

Conduct of staff:

The conduct of staff towards the children must always be above reproach at all times. In safeguarding the welfare of the children, staff must never abuse their position of trust. Staff

should be alert to any suspicion of physical or sexual abuse. They should also be aware of the negative aspect of emotional abuse in the form of persistent sarcasm or verbal bullying. Members of staff should ensure that their contact with the children could never be perceived or alleged as abusive.

Training:

The subject will also be addressed in the induction of newly appointed staff, both teaching and non-teaching.

Guidelines covering Physical Contact with Children:

It is important for staff to be sensitive to a child's reaction to physical contact and to act appropriately. It is also important not to touch children, however casually, on parts of the body or in circumstances, which may be considered indecent.

Allegations against Staff:

Any complaints made that a member of staff has abused a pupil will be thoroughly investigated using the child protection procedures. Advice will immediately be sought from the designated child protection officer, Education Authority – North Eastern Region and the social service. Preliminary enquiries will be carried out with an open mind. These enquiries will have regard to the welfare of the child concerned and of the other children in school, to the efficient functioning of the school and to the rights of the individual against whom the complaint has been made. (The right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty).

Remember: Are you concerned about the welfare of a child?

Have you reason to suspect a form of abuse may be involved?

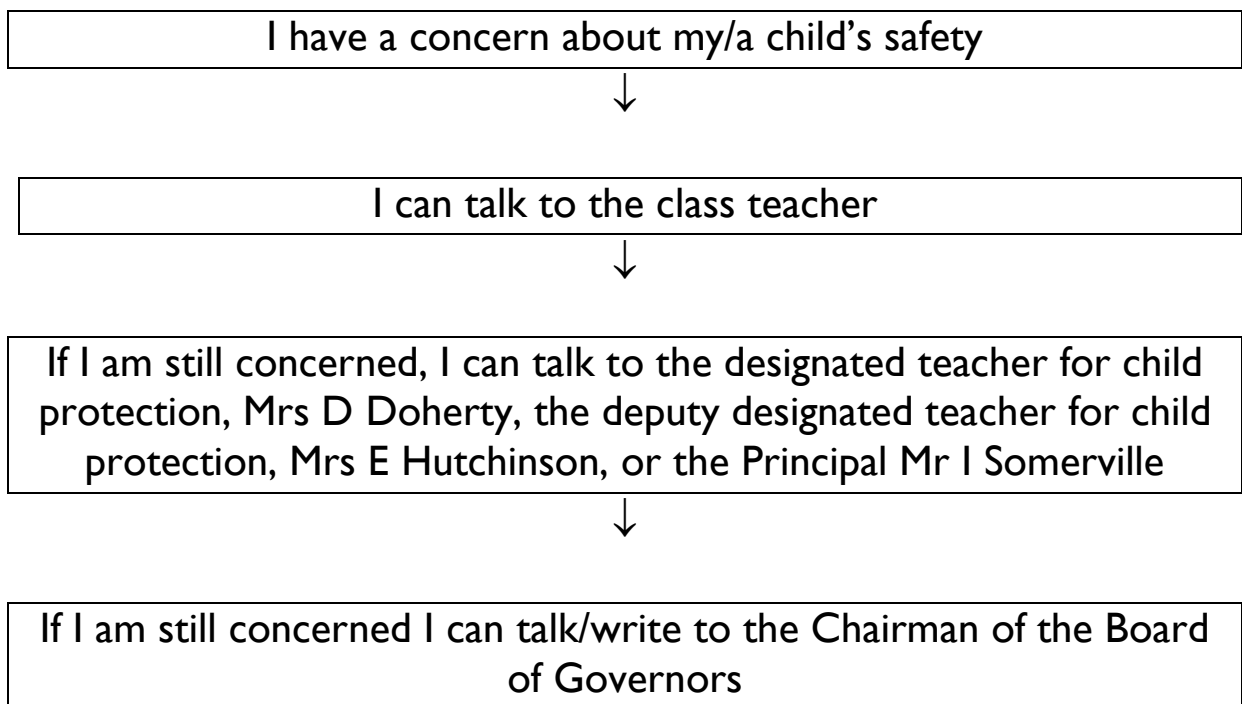
Have you been informed about a case of suspected abuse?

REPORT YOUR CONCERN IMMEDIATELY TO THE DESIGNATED TEACHER, MRS D DOHERTY, OR DEPUTY DESIGNATED TEACHER, MRS E HUTCHINSON, OR THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, MR I SOMERVILLE WHO WILL TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION.

MAGHERAFELT CONTROLLED PRIMARY SCHOOL

In line with our pastoral care policy we wish to issue guidance on how you as a parent can raise a concern in relation to a child protection issue.

How a parent can raise a concern:



Contacts – Child Protection Support Service

EA Offices	Contact Number
Belfast	028 9056 4289
Antrim	028 9448 2223
Dundonald	028 9056 6216
Armagh	028 3834 1975
Omagh	028 8241 1461

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

EA Offices	Contact Number
Belfast	028 9050 7000
Northern	0300 1234 333
South Eastern	0300 1000 300
Southern	028 3741 5285
Western	028 8283 5156
Out of Hours for All Areas	028 9504 9999