



CASTLE GARDENS

Building Together for the Future

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Revised March 2017
To be reviewed September 2017

Designated Teacher for Child Protection: **Mrs P Harbinson**
Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection: **Mrs N Alcorn**
Designated Governor for Child Protection: **Mrs H Moore**
Chairman of Board of Governors: **Mr S Gibson**
Principal: **Mr J Gray**

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1.0 Introduction

At Castle Gardens Primary School, we have a responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of all our pupils.

Our aim is to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment where the children are valued as individuals and in which they may grow to their full potential - academically, physically, socially and emotionally.

This policy is informed by the guidance and procedures set out by

- DE 'Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection (1999)
- The Area Child Protection Committees' (ACPC) Regional Policy and Procedures (2005)
- Relevant DE Circulars and Guidance

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 states 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 Child Protection 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, nonteaching 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.

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 child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
5. Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan

2.0 DE / EA Guidance Documents

This policy is driven and informed by the following guidance:

- Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection - DENI (currently under revision)

2.1 D.E. Circulars

Circular 1999/10 [pdf / 28KB] Guidance for schools on child protection policy and procedures.

Circular 2003/13 [pdf / 18KB] Guidance for schools on the Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003

Circular 2006/06 [pdf / 123KB] Guidance on safer recruitment practices for education authorities.

Circular 2006/07 [pdf / 36KB] Guidance for schools on the employment of substitute teachers.

Circular 2006/08 [pdf / 30KB] Guidance for schools on the requirement for child protection training in relation to interviewing and selection panels.

Circular 2006/09 [pdf / 39KB] Guidance on the vetting of paid and unpaid staff.

Circular 2006/25 [pdf / 45KB] Guidance on the requirement for vetting of school governors.

Circular 2007/01 [pdf / 156KB] Acceptable use of the internet and digital technologies in school.

Circular 2008/03 [pdf / 934KB] Pre-employment checking of persons to work in schools.

Circular 2011/22 [pdf / 127KB] Internet Safety

Circular 2012/19 [pdf / 87KB] Guidance for schools and employing authorities on changes to pre-employment checking and safer recruitment practices.

Circular 2013/01 [pdf / 104KB] Guidance for schools and employing authorities on pre-employment vetting checking and safer recruitment practices.

Circular 2013/25 [pdf / 286KB] eSafety Guidance - provides information and guidance on eSafety within the context of the new C2k contract, Education Network (NI) and in relation to non-C2k networks.

Circular 2014/27 [pdf / 84KB] Managing persons who pose a risk to pupils.

Circular 2015/13 [pdf / 243KB] Dealing with allegations of abuse against a member of staff.

Circular 2016/05 Children who display harmful sexualised behaviour

Circular 2016/20 [pdf / 281KB] Record keeping in schools

Circular 2016/26 Effective Education uses of mobile digital devices

2.2 D.E. Letters

9th Sept 2014 - Disposal of Child Protection Records

18th September 2014 - Use of non-c2k broadband and Networks by schools

October 2014 - Child Sexual Exploitation

June 2015 - E-safety guidance to schools

24th June 2015 - Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation in schools

25th September 2015 - Sexting and the Law

2015 - School Governors Handbook (CPSSS)

3.0 The Safeguarding Team

Chair of Governors - Mr S. Gibson

Designated Governor for Child Protection - Mrs H. Moore

Principal: Mr J. Gray

Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DT) - Mrs P. Harbinson

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DDT) - Mrs N. Alcorn

4.0 What is Child Abuse?

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

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 or 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.

Ref. 2.6. Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland, March 2016

4.1 Types of Abuse

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Neglect
- Exploitation

Physical Abuse is deliberately hurting child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

Signs may include:

- Implausible or no explanations for injuries
- Significant bruising or marking
- Reluctance to go home
- Risky behaviours
- Fear of physical contact

Ref. 2.6. Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland, March 2016

Sexual Abuse occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via e-technology). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Signs may include:

- Isolation
- Overly protective of siblings
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour and language
- Physical injuries
- Reluctance to go home
- Promiscuity
- Risky behaviours

Ref. 2.6. Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland, March 2016

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying - including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones - by a child's peers.

Signs may include:

- Over reaction to mistakes
- Unable to accept praise
- Fear of new situations
- Isolated

- Self-destructive tendencies
- Risky behaviours
- Developmental delay

Ref. 2.6. Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland, March 2016

Neglect is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision, or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected also often suffer from other types of abuse.

Signs may include:

- Personal hygiene issues
- Constant tiredness
- Care concerns - hunger, clothing, supervision
- Failure/delay in seeking medical attention

Ref. 2.6. Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland, March 2016

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 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.

Ref. 2.6. Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland, March 2016

Domestic Violence and Abuse

- Threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion or gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member.

Sexual Violence and Abuse

- Any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual/online) 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 or gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability)
- Please note that coercive, exploitative and harmful behaviour includes taking advantage of an individual's incapacity to give informed consent

We recognise that the perpetrator may also be female and the victim male. Many of the symptoms listed for emotional abuse in this policy are also some of the indicators that a child is the over-hearer / witness / victim / colluder or weapon of domestic violence. They may exhibit:

Anxiety; Withdrawal; Restlessness; Lack of confidence; Mood swings; Guilt; Conflicting loyalties; Attention seeking; Over/under-achieving; Regression

These signs and symptoms do no more than give rise for concern. They are not proof of abuse and alternative explanations may exist for them. But it is the concerns that must be reported to the Designated teacher. Where physical or sexual abuse is suspected, all staff have a legal duty to report this.

A child protection record might be commenced if there is evidence of a safeguarding risk of, for example, self-harm, suicidal, ideation or other behaviours that cause concern.

5.0 Bullying

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, **repeated over a period of time** where it is difficult for the victim to defend him/herself.

All bullying behaviour usually has the following 4 features:

- It is repetitive and persistent
- It is intentionally harmful

- It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent it or put a stop to it
- It causes distress

This is behaviour that is never acceptable in Castle Gardens.

Any complaints by a parent that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be fully investigated in line with the policy, and team action will be taken to protect the victim. If necessary this may include the Child Protection Team. This is in line with our Anti-Bullying Policy.

6.0 Procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) abuse

Any concerns must be reported immediately to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection - Mrs P. Harbinson. In her absence, the Deputy Designated Teacher - Mrs N. Alcorn will fulfil the requirements of the policy. In the unlikely event that neither are available, concerns can be reported to Mr Gray - school Principal or to a member of the Senior Leadership Team. They will know the appropriate course of action to take.

If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or a member of staff that gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has a concern about a child, prompt action must be taken.

The concerns **MUST** be reported to the Designated Teacher, discussed with her and notes made. All records, notes and documents will be kept on file by the Designated Teacher.

The Designated Teacher will then refer the matter to the Principal and together they will decide whether in the best interests of the child, a referral should be made to Social Services. This will be actioned through the use of the correct UNOCINI format.

In the case of a Child in Need referral the parents will be contacted and their permission sought.

If the parent is thought to be the abuser, however, the referral will go through as a Child Protection issue that does not require parental permission. The Child Protection officers at EA (South Eastern Region) will be kept informed in the case of any referral.

In her role, Mrs Harbinson has specific responsibility for co-ordinating action within the school and for liaising with Trusts and other agencies about suspected or actual cases of abuse. She also liaises with various other agencies regarding specific issues e.g. bereavement, a parent diagnosed with serious illness.

She should also ensure that established procedures are followed and pass on relevant concerns to Social Services. **ANY INVESTIGATION MUST BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SOCIAL SERVICES.**

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or the DT if the Principal is unavailable) must be informed immediately.

The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Designated Teacher or the Principal).

Where the matter is referred to Social Services the member of staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils, and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigations by social services. The Chairperson of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against the Principal, the DT must be informed immediately. She will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and together they will take appropriate advice and ensure the necessary action is taken.

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.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED OR DISCLOSED CHILD ABUSE

Actions to be taken:

If a child makes a disclosure:

- Receive the information calmly and accept what they are saying as the truth (it is not our place to investigate)
- Reassure the child
- Respond - remember that we cannot promise confidentiality and tell the child what you might have to do next
- Record
 - make notes as you go maintaining eye contact where possible and keep all originals and write-ups
 - tell the child what you are doing
 - include time (start and finish), date, place
 - write a verbatim report as soon as possible
 - record seen non-verbal behaviour e.g. twisting hands
 - record any specific 'pet' words used
- Refer
 - Report to the Designated teacher who will take the matter on in accordance with school policy and procedure.

Staff should be aware that their notes of discussions with the child and the parents may need to be used in subsequent court proceedings. Lack of proper records will not exempt the school from giving evidence, so accurate notes are important.

If there are signs of possible abuse:

- Record
 - make clear notes of any signs or symptoms that you have noticed using non-emotional language
 - any comment by the child, or later by the parent or other adult as to how the injury occurred should be noted quoting the words actually used
 - include dates and places
- Refer
 - Report to the Designated teacher who will take the matter on in accordance with school policy and procedure.

If an adult makes a disclosure:

If a parent, carer or other adult expresses concern to a member of staff suggesting abuse by someone outside the school, or by someone working in a voluntary capacity in the school, the person making the complaint must be informed that the information will be passed on to the Designated Teacher.

In such cases the Principal may seek clarification from the person making the complaint and consult with the child's class teacher.

Advice may also be sought from EA(SER) Child Protection Team or Social Services before deciding on appropriate action.

If a complaint is made about a member of school staff:

In the event of the above, procedures will be followed exactly as outlined in the D.E.N.I booklet 'Child Protection' (pgs 21-30).

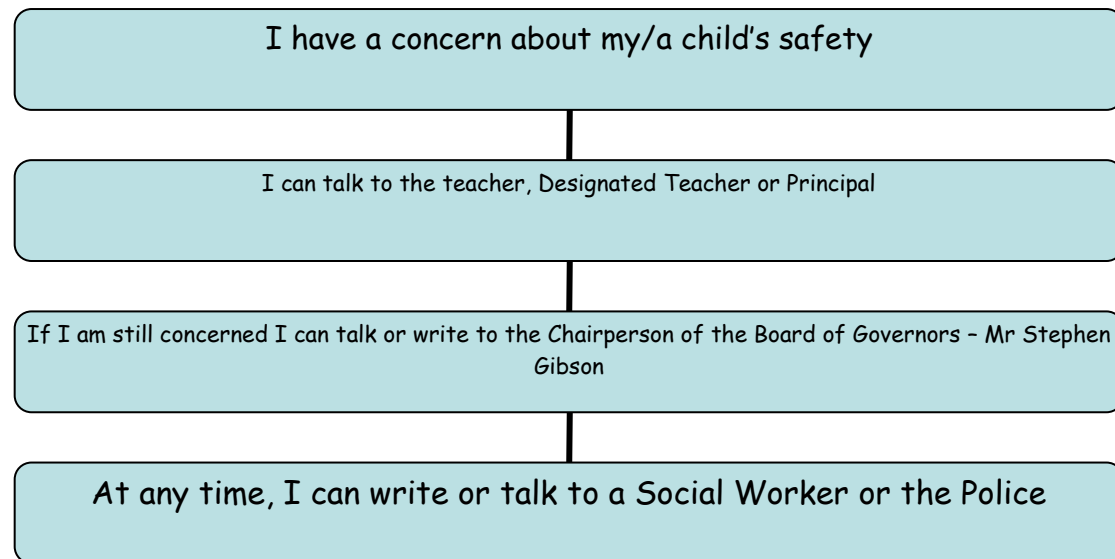
The Principal and Designated Teacher will consult with the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and seek advice from SEELB Child Protection team.

Should the complaint allege misconduct by the Designated Teacher then the matter will be dealt with by the Principal and the Chairperson of the Board of Governors.

Should the complaint allege misconduct by the Principal then the matter will be dealt with by the Designated Teacher and the Chairperson of the Board of Governors.

6.1 How a Parent Can Make or raise a Child Protection Concern

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



7.0 Role of Designated Teacher (DT)/Deputy Designated Teacher(DDT)

The Designated Teacher (DT):

- Attend training and/or refresher training as required;
- To provide training to all school staff including support staff;
- Being available to discuss the Child Protection concerns of any member of staff;
- Responsibility for recordkeeping of all Child Protection concerns;
- Making referrals to Social Services;
- Liaising with EA-SER Designated Officers for Child Protection;
- Keeping the school Principal informed;
- The lead responsibility for the development and updating of the school's Child Protection Policy;
- Ensure parents are made aware of the Child Protection Policy every 2 years (or better) and that it is available both in hard copy (by request) and to download from the school website.

- Ensure the policy alerts parents to the fact that referrals may be made to Social Services and the role of the school;
- Promotion of a Child Protection ethos in the school;
- Providing information necessary for reporting to the Board of Governors;
- Maintaining all records pertaining to Child Protection in a secure location (accessed only by the DT/DDT and the School Principal as appropriate)

The Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT):

- To support and undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection as required.

8.0 Code of Conduct for Staff (Child Protection)

The code of conduct is known to all staff - permanent and non-permanent and volunteers. It reflects the safeguarding ethos of the school and is set out in Appendix 1. This forms part of the wider document, 'Familiarisation Information for New and Returning Staff (Including Volunteers).'

9.0 Vetting Procedures

Our vetting processes are compliant with practice advised in DE circulars 2006/06, 2006/07, 2006/08, 2006/09, 2008/03 and 2012/19. Copies of these circulars are available on the DE website: www.deni.gov.uk

We vet adults through Access NI as follows:

□ Paid members of staff are subject to an Enhanced Disclosure Check. Fees are taken out of the employee's salary at source. The school is responsible for completion and submission of paperwork.

□ Externally employed adults i.e. NISTR or peripatetic staff, are vetted either by their managing body or independently in the case of the self-employed. Access NI approval will either be sought directly from the adult or verification provided by the managing body.

□ Private service-providers e.g. Extra-Curricular coaches etc. will only be permitted to operate on production of an Access NI certificate or

confirmation by a managing body that a successful check has been carried out on their behalf.

□ Volunteers will be considered under 2 categories:

1) Those with direct access to pupils who have the opportunity to be with pupils in an unsupervised capacity i.e Parents who volunteer to help with reading groups or those who help with sports coaching etc. These volunteers who attend on a regular basis will be subject to Access NI vetting.

2) Those who volunteer on a less regular basis and who have minimal interaction with pupils and no unsupervised access e.g. Parents who assist with the preparation of Healthy Breaks
These volunteers will not be subject to Access NI vetting at the discretion of the Principal.

The above is based on guidance provided in DE Circular 2012/19 relating to changes to the vetting requirements for volunteers in schools.

10.0 Volunteers

Volunteers have an important and beneficial role in supporting the work of teachers and other support staff 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.

10.1 Who is a Volunteer?

A volunteer is an individual who, subject to the satisfactory procedures below, either

□ Assumes unpaid duties in a school on a regular basis or

□ Is engaged by the school to accompany or assist in school visits or trips; residential activities or to undertake coaching in sports activities.

10.2 Use of Volunteers

There are three main categories into which the use of volunteers might be grouped and to which guidance will apply:

- During school hours involving direct contact with pupils
- Outside school hours involving direct contact with pupils
- During school hours but not usually involving direct contact with pupils

10.3 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.

10.4 Initial Appraisal

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

- Personal details;
- 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 child protection;
- Agree to a criminal record being carried out (if deemed necessary as per DENI Circular 2012/19);

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

10.5 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.

10.6 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 nonteaching. 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;
- Volunteers only work under the supervision and guidance of paid staff and these arrangements should be such as to minimise the opportunities for direct, unsupervised, access to children;
- Volunteers are not placed in a position of sole responsibility for the security of children, premises or equipment;
- 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.

10.7 Information and Training for Volunteers

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 child protection, including its behaviour/discipline policy, including rewards and sanctions, and the extent of the volunteer's authority within it; its child protection procedures.

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.

11.0 The Preventative Curriculum

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm of 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.

The staff of Castle Gardens Primary 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 may be withdrawn.

We 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, PSNI and the school nurse.

12.0 Physical Restraint

We acknowledge 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 to another person or property. The child(ren) in question must also be protected.

In the event that a pupil should present with behavioural concerns that require physical restraint, appropriate guidance and training will be provided for the members of staff who work closest with the child(ren).

Staff working in the Social Communication Unit have been trained in the TeamTeach method of providing age appropriate restraint in very specific circumstances - the physical interventions should be viewed as a "last resort option" for staff.

Appropriate procedures and guidelines are available in the *Use of Reasonable Force Policy*.

13.0 Health and Safety

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

Please see Health and Safety Policy / Risk Assessment Policies for details.

14.0 Security

Castle Gardens PS 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 visitors on school premises. Particular attention is drawn to:

- The visitor registering (or signing-in) at the beginning of each visit;
- Providing the volunteer with a readily identifiable pass which should be returned at the end of each visit.

Full details of this procedure can be found in our 'Health and Safety Policy' as part of the 'Safeguarding Portfolio of Policies'.

15.0 The Internet and Digital Technologies

Our various policies for technology-related safeguarding include E-Safety, Acceptable Use of the Internet, Internet Filtering and Social Media.

As a set they acknowledge the opportunities for learning as well as the risks attached to the internet and digital technologies. Specifically, they address safeguarding concerns that may arise in the use of the internet and digital technologies and the measures taken to mitigate them.

16.0 Photography and Images of Children

At Castle Gardens Primary School all parents are consulted as to whether or not they wish photographs of their child(ren) to be taken. This permission is sought at the outset of each school year then those pupils with permission can be photographed freely for school purposes e.g. school website, trips/outings, newspaper articles, prospectus etc.

Parents are also consulted as to their willingness for images of their children to be used online via website, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. 'Expressions of Concern' are adhered to and records kept to ensure parents' wishes are upheld. Please see Social Media Policy for details....

17.0 Intimate Care Policy

On joining Castle Gardens Primary School, parental permission is requested to allow staff to administer intimate care when necessary e.g. a change of clothes following an accident or gentle physical comforting for a child in distress.

Records are retained of all these permissions and guidelines are further outlined in the *Intimate Care Policy*.

18.0 Record Keeping, Sharing and Disposal

Child protection records will be held in the school archive in accordance with DE Circular 2016:20.

18.1 Recording of Child Protection Information

Any member of staff who has a concern about the welfare or safety of a child or young person should complete a Note of Concern supported by a member of the Safeguarding Team if necessary.

(See Circular 2016:20).

- Notes must be made as soon as possible after the incident to ensure an expedient response, and certainly within 24 hours to maintain the accuracy and content of the report.

For some children a one-off serious incident or concern may occur and staff will have no doubt that this must be immediately recorded and

reported. More often, however, it is the accumulation of a number of small incidents, events or observations that can provide the evidence of harm being caused to a child.

- The staff member should report the concern to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DT) at an early stage, immediately if the concern is of a serious nature, as the DT may be aware of other circumstances which would influence steps to be taken.
- The Note of Concern and any further details discussed or action taken should be placed on the pupil's Child Protection File and should be signed and dated by both parties to confirm the information is accurate.

18.2 Hard Storage

Each school should have a separate secure confidential filing system for Child Protection concerns, ideally in a fireproof filing cabinet.

Other child protection records including the school's confidential Record of Child Abuse Complaints should also be stored here.

The filing cabinet should be accessible to only the Designated Teacher, Deputy Designated Teacher or Principal. The cabinet is not accessible to anyone else, including administrative staff, the ETI and members of the Board of Governors.

The keys to the cabinet should not be removed from the premises and should be stored securely.

18.3 Soft Storage

In line with recommendations in DE Circular 2016: 20, electronic records are held in the school C2K system in a 'Private Folder' (Private 1). Access to this folder is restricted to the Principal, DT and DDT.

18.4 Sharing of Records

All CP records made in Castle Gardens Primary School remain in Castle Gardens Primary School.

In the case of pupils transferring to another school either within the primary sector or primary to post-primary, concerns will be verbally referred to the receiving DT. It will be the responsibility of the recipient school to source any HSC or Social Services records and to liaise with any external agencies if necessary.

Safeguarding children requires professionals to share information on a 'need-to-know' basis. Where there are concerns that a child is, or may be at risk of significant harm, the over-riding objective must be to safeguard the child.

At all stages of the child protection process we must be prepared to share the information necessary to keep a child from harm. We will not disclose information for any other purpose without the permission of the person who provided it, unless the safety of the child requires this.

(Adapted from 'Regional Child Protection Policy and Procedures' developed by the Area Child Protection Committees)

18.5 Closure, Retention and Disposal of Child Protection Records

When a pupil leaves the school or child protection concerns cease to be current or ongoing, and records cease to be of active use other than for reference purposes, the child's individual Child Protection File should be closed.

The DT should consult the School's Disposal of Records Schedule, review the file and mark the front cover of the file indicating the date on which the file can be destroyed, for example, 30 years from the pupil's date of birth.

Closing a file simply means that no further papers can be added. If new concerns arise a new file can be opened and cross-referenced with the previous record.

18.6 Retention Periods for Child Protection Records

Record	Retention Period
Pupil Child Protection case files	DOB + 30 years
The school's confidential record of Child Abuse complaints	Indefinitely*
If Social Services inform the school that a child's name has been placed on the Child Protection Register	Maintain a record of this fact and associated documentation from Social Services on the child's file while he/she continues to attend. On transfer, the school should inform the new school, and destroy all social services records. The record on the Child Protection file will remain DOB + 30 years.
If Social Services inform the school that a child's name has been removed from the Child Protection Register	On transfer to a new school, the school should destroy any child protection records on the child supplied by social services, including records of case conferences. The record on the child protection file will remain until DOB + 30 years.
Complaint against a member of staff Staff members file	Indefinitely unless totally exonerated
Child's Child Protection File	DOB + 30 years
Record of Child Abuse Complaints	Indefinitely*
Complaint to be pursued under the school's disciplinary procedures Staff members file	Indefinitely
Child's Child Protection File	DOB + 30 years
Record of Child Abuse Complaints	Indefinitely*

*as a general guide, indefinitely should be a minimum of 40 years

18.7 Disposal

At the end of the agreed retention period records should be securely disposed of, for example, incinerated or shredded in the presence of a member of the school or entrusted to a firm specialising in the destruction of confidential material.

Information held electronically within private folders on the C2k system should also be deleted within the timescales set.

Following deletion, the electronic records will be held securely on the centralised backup for a period of time but in due course will be overwritten and the documents removed. No evidence will remain on the C2k system.

19.0 Board of Governors Involvement

19.1 Reporting to the Board of Governors

Child Protection is a standing item on every meeting of the Board of Governors.

The Designated Teacher provides either a verbal or written report for the Board of Governors as required before each meeting of the Board.

The Designated Teacher will also provide a written Child Protection report to the Board of Governors on annual basis at the close of the school year. All reports will be anonymised in keeping with the principle of confidentiality. The Chair will sign and date the annual report.

The ETI can be provided with sight of this record but are not permitted to view any child's individual record.

20.0 Complaints Against School Staff

Where a complaint is made about possible abuse by a member of staff of the school, the procedures set out in DE Circular 2015/13 should be followed.

As set out in Circular 2015/13, all allegations of a child abuse nature must be recorded in the Record of Child Abuse Complaints book, which must be retained securely.

A record of this should be placed on the relevant pupil's Child Protection File.

It is important that ALL allegations are recorded to ensure a school can monitor allegations made and identify causes or patterns of concern at an early stage.

It is also important that Boards of Governors are fully informed of all complaints to ensure they are complying with their statutory responsibilities under the Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003.

21.0 Reviewing our Child Protection Policy

This Child Protection policy will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Governors annually in order to keep up-to-date with any new regulations provided by DE.

Appendix 1

Staff & Volunteers Code of 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 that they hold a **position of trust**, and that their behaviour towards the children and young people in their charge must be above reproach. The DENI Circular 1999/10: Child Protection, Appendix 9 identifies a Code of Conduct for implementation in schools.

Children gain a great deal from positive interaction with adults and these procedures are not intended to dilute or restrict these experiences. They are laid down to give guidance and to protect staff and volunteers. They are based on respect for children and recognition of their rights.

Staff and volunteers will be given a copy of this before becoming involved in any activity.

The following general information is intended to assist staff in ensuring that their behaviour towards children is above reproach and to assist them by pointing out areas of risk and offering support.

Care and Share

Should a situation arise when you see or hear something that concerns you regarding the welfare or safety of a child, a member of staff should follow the procedures that were outlined at the annual child protection training session.

All adults including staff need to remember in this situation that they:

- Do not investigate
- Do not make promises
- Inform the class teacher or the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Mrs Paula Harbinson
- Make a note of exact details including names, dates, times detailing what was said and heard

Private Meetings with Pupils

Never be alone with a child. Always ensure that other children or preferably another adult is nearby. Adults and children should be aware of the possible implications, which may arise from private meetings or interviews with individual pupils. It is recognised that there are times when such meetings must take place or that certain children may receive one-to-one teaching support. As far as possible, adults should conduct such meetings in a room with visual access or with the door open.

Such meetings should not occur outside the times of the school day as far as possible. If such conditions cannot be applied for whatever reason, adults are advised to ensure that another adult knows that the meeting is taking place. If possible, another adult should be in the near vicinity at such times.

Physical Contact with Pupils

As a general principle, adults are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with pupils. However, a distressed child may need reassurance involving physical comforting just as a caring parent would do. Staff should never touch a pupil who has clearly indicated that s/he is, or would be, uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm. Any physical contact that could be misinterpreted by a pupil, parent or casual observer should be avoided. Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been or may be misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection – Mrs Paula Harbinson or the Deputy Designated Teacher – Mrs Natalie Alcorn. Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour.

Several members of staff, in particular those working with pupils in provision classes will have carried out Team Teach training. Adults without this training should avoid employing such techniques.

First Aid

Adults who administer first aid to a pupil should ensure, wherever possible, that it is done in the presence of another child or adult. However, no adult should hesitate to provide first aid in an emergency simply because no other person is present.

Intimate Care

Should a child require care of a more intimate nature a member of teaching staff should be sent for and the correct procedures followed as detailed in the Intimate Care Policy.

Residential Trips

Adults should be particularly careful when supervising pupils in a residential setting or in approved out of school activities, where more informal relationships tend to be usual and where adults may be in proximity to pupils in circumstances very different from the normal school/work environment. On residential visits children should not sleep in a room on their own. Adults should never take a child or children into an adult's room.

Use of Social Networking Sites and Mobile Phones

Under no circumstances should adults make contact with children through social networking sites such as Facebook and Instagram, or other electronic communication such as email or text messaging. This is as much for the protection of adults as well as the children. In general, there should be no contact between staff/volunteers and children outside of school.

Mobile phones should not be used at times when working with children, particularly due to the rise in the use of camera phones. Many staff will use smart phones to check emails however personal calls, text messages and the use of messaging sites such as WhatsApp should be limited to non-contact times. In an emergency, any member of staff or volunteer can be contacted through the school office. Staff or volunteers should not take photographs of pupils on personal mobile phones. Please see separate mobile phone policy.

Relationships and Attitudes

Adults have an individual responsibility to ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age, maturity and gender 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.

Teaching Resources and Materials

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.

Dress code

All adults should give due consideration to their personal appearance and should dress in a manner appropriate to the important role they fulfil. Consideration should be given to the wearing of jewellery and footwear that may have implications for your health and safety. It should be remembered that pupils can be easily influenced by an adult's attitudes and standards. Adults should therefore dress in a manner that takes into consideration the thoughts of colleagues, pupils, parents, visitors and the overall image of the school. It is of course important to dress appropriately for the occasion, so if taking games or PE, it is perfectly acceptable to change into leisure wear for the session.

Identification

Staff should wear identification lanyards (burgundy) at all times when in contact with pupils from Castle Gardens. All visitors will be expected to sign in at reception and collect an appropriate lanyard. The purpose of wearing lanyards is to allow pupils to be able to distinguish between staff and visitors to our school.

Confidentiality

Once you enter the school environment you become part of our "team" and will share the responsibility that goes with this. It is important that you treat what you see and hear with respect and with confidentiality. Also you must not discuss a child's work, progress or behaviour outside of the school. This is of particular importance as you may have been in the presence of a child or children who are involved in an ongoing child protection issue.

If you have any doubts or concerns about this document please speak to Mrs. Harbinson or Mr. Gray.