

# Methodist College Belfast Preparatory Department

*Opportunity*

*Diversity*

*Excellence*

## *Safeguarding Policies*

*Pastoral Care*

*Child Protection*

*E-Safety*



*Addressing Bullying*

*Intimate Care*

*Mobile Phone*

*Positive Behaviour & Discipline*

*Complaints*

| Fullerton House School:<br>162/0022   | Downey House School:<br>162/0023   |
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**Methodist College Belfast**  
**Preparatory Department**

May 2019

Dear Parent

I am pleased to present our updated policies in relation to Safeguarding. These policies cover both statutory policies and non-statutory guidance for parents. All policies were reviewed and updated in the spring of 2019.

This year we have added in a copy of our complaints policy which we share with the College.

If you have any queries or comments concerning any of the policies in this booklet, then please either use the form at the back of this booklet or email your comments to either of our school secretaries as follows: -

Downey House: Mrs Hampton [shampton876@c2kni.net](mailto:shampton876@c2kni.net)

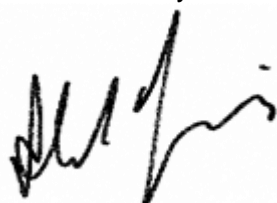
Fullerton House: Mrs Forsythe [rforsythe863@c2kni.net](mailto:rforsythe863@c2kni.net)

Education in school today covers far more than teaching and learning and this booklet helps parents to understand how we manage all those issues relating to child safety in school.

It is our intention to distribute this booklet to all parents but copies will be kept for consultation in the school office and a copy placed onto the Prep section of the school web site ([www.methody.org](http://www.methody.org))

If you have any queries concerning these policies, then please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours faithfully



Alan Jennings  
Head of MCB Preparatory Department

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# Pastoral Care

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At Methodist College Preparatory Department, we are committed to promoting the moral, intellectual, personal and social development of our pupils in an environment where the children feel secure and free from emotional and physical harm. We want them to be able to discuss their interests and to voice any fear or concerns they have, knowing that they will receive a sympathetic and supportive response.

Certain areas of the curriculum are particularly pertinent to the pastoral care of our pupils - such as Health Education (in Science), Religious Education and Physical Education, but much of our pastoral care is integrated into all areas of the curriculum and into all aspects of our daily classroom life. So every member of staff has an important part to play in creating an environment of care and trust and it is our wish that every pupil will know at least one teacher with whom they feel able to discuss interests or problems in confidence.

In endeavouring to maintain good relationships with our pupils within and outside the classroom, we are pledged as a staff to promoting their self-confidence and self-esteem, giving them as many opportunities as possible to develop independent thought and expression. As they learn the importance of working constructively with their peers, they will grow to value and to respect the opinions, views and contributions of others. We aim to be fair, firm, consistent and compassionate in our approach to keeping good order in the school, and, realising that ultimately the best discipline is self-discipline, we endeavour to enhance our pupils' confidence and self-esteem by celebrating their achievements, as well as by correcting any inappropriate behaviour.

It is vitally important that the children develop personal and social skills to help them cope with existing challenges and to prepare them for the next stage of their education and for adult life. We recognise that the satisfactory pastoral care of our pupils is crucial to achieving this and at Methodist College Prep our intention is to promote and to facilitate an atmosphere of care and respect throughout the whole school community. It is important that we, as a staff work well together as a team, keeping the pupils' welfare as our main focus and that we have the confidence and support of our children's parents.

Working together constructively we can meet our pastoral care responsibilities which are both demanding and profound. We are committed to making our pupils' experience in Methodist College Prep an adventure which is happy, safe, productive and thoroughly fulfilling.

## THE SCHOOL - ETHOS AND ENVIRONMENT

The Head of Department will endeavour to promote an atmosphere of care and trust by:

- encouraging good relationships and mutual respect among the staff and between staff and pupils
- expecting impartial, fair and consistent decisions by staff, particularly in dealing with pupils' concerns
- developing good lines of communication with parents and external agencies
- sending staff on training courses to ensure that they are kept well informed about potential dangers and monitoring the implementation of the above.

The staff will endeavour to promote trust by:

- valuing pupils and staff as individuals
- recognising and valuing all their achievements both inside and outside the classroom
- developing pupils' self-esteem and confidence through encouraging independence of thought and expression
- providing a healthy and safe environment in which pupils can collaborate and work
- expecting pupils to respect and be sensitive to the contributions and views of others

- demanding high standards of behaviour
- imposing fair and appropriate disciplinary procedures and sanctions.

The Deputy Head and Pastoral Care teacher will endeavour to guarantee child protection and will:

- ensure that the Kidscape programme is taught in P3 and P5
- ensure that the pupils know how to access the child protection arrangements
- ensure that training is given to staff as and when necessary
- ensure that the vetting of volunteers and sports coaches takes place, or that the children are always accompanied by a full-time member of staff
- ensure that a summary of the child protection arrangements is circulated to all parents at least once every two years.

The Head of Department will monitor the progress of any child on the Child Protection register and co-ordinate with the College if applicable.

## **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

To ensure a structured approach to the caring of all pupils, we have developed the following structure:

Class teacher (Circle Time, class discussions, individual discussions)

Pastoral Care Co-ordinator: Mrs Johnston (FH) and Mrs Doherty (DH)

Deputy Head: Mr Allen (FH) and Mrs Cunningham (DH)

Head of Department: Mr Jennings

It is important that teachers work in co-operation with the Pastoral Care co-ordinator who will provide support and leadership in the pastoral domain.

In the event of additional support being required, SENCO, Deputy Head and Head of Department will provide support.

The Head of Department will also inform Class Teacher and Pastoral Care Co-ordinator of any pastoral concerns he is made aware of (if appropriate).

Any information disclosed will be treated as confidential

## **SUPPORTING POLICIES**

Whilst all policies and procedures within the school take cognisance of Pastoral Care of pupils and staff some specifically support Pastoral Care. These include:

1. Anti-Bullying
2. Child Protection
3. Acceptable Use of the Internet/E-Safety Policy
4. Bereavement Policy
5. Positive Behaviour Policy

Cross referencing the policies is essential in delivering the Pastoral Care Policy

## **FORMAL REWARDS**

The use of rewards both formal and informal is a power tool in motivating students and modifying behaviour. Merits awarded for effort and improvement in personal best in work and behaviour often has immediate effects.

Children will be awarded stickers and stamps for work and behaviour in individual classes. Once a week in assembly, at least one child from each class (P1-P7) will receive a mention in the Golden Book which highlights a specific achievement or excellent behaviour. There will also be a class line up certificate of the week for P4-P7 and for P1-P3.

## **INFORMAL REWARDS**

### **PRAISE:**

- This builds up self-confidence.

### **POSITIVE TEACHER ATTITUDE:**

- Each teacher will get to know his/her pupils really well over the course of a year  
They will listen to their pupils' opinions
- Criticise the act, not the person
- If possible, try to suggest ways to improve not to criticise.

### **ENVIRONMENT:**

- Seek to create a supportive environment in the classroom
- Encourage peers to give advice
- Agree rules together.

## **RANGE OF PASTORAL ACTIVITIES**

These include:

- All areas of the NI Curriculum
- The Area of Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities gives opportunities to explore relationships
- PDMU is taught to all classes. It aims to give pupils the knowledge, values, attitudes and skills required to make good choices in their lives
- Clubs and societies
- Educational trips
- Extra curricular activities
- Educational Visits
- School Assemblies.

## **Drugs Education**

- The awareness of drugs and their uses is taught through Health Education and Science programmes appropriate for the age group. Efforts are made to ensure that children realise
- all drugs can have side-effects - depending on the person
- prescribed drugs can affect a patient very badly - allergic reactions etc
- no-one should take someone else's medicine
- many drugs taken by drug addicts are used in hospitals all the time to help people
- addicts are people suffering from addictive behaviour and have no control over it
- being healthy means keeping a balance in all things

## **Sex Education**

Because of the wide range of physical development rates in the Primary School it is felt that detailed information is best delivered by parents at an appropriate time for the child. However, the following takes place:

- Life cycles of plants, animal and humans are taught in Science
- Health Education, Religious Education and Science all cover aspects
- Primary Seven pupils attend a lecture about puberty given by the School Nurse (boys and girls separately) Parents are informed and have to give their permission

## **SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN**

Children will be supervised from 8.30am. Full supervision also continues during all extra curricular activities. No child may remain in the classrooms, cloakroom areas, toilet areas or other area of the building during break or lunchtime without adult supervision.

## **PERSONAL SAFETY**

We will encourage children to be responsible for their own personal safety and help them to acquire skills to do this. It is hoped that with guidance they will be able to make the correct decisions and know where to get help if or when they are confronted with danger.

The whole school community will be aware that;

**Mr Allen and Mrs Cunningham are the Designated Teachers for Child Protection**

**Mrs Johnston and Mrs Booth are the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection**

### **LIASON WITH PARENTS**

We see ourselves as partners with parents in the Education of pupils. Mutual Support and co-operation is an essential element in achieving our objective. On-going activities to ensure communication and parental involvement include:

- Letters home
- Written reports
- School Prospectus/website
- Parent interview- formal and informal
- Verbal contact-messages/phone calls from the school
- Verbal contact initiated by the parents
- Informal discussions
- Open door policy- parents are welcome to make an appointment to see the Head of Department or class teacher
- Curriculum involvement- homework
- Parent Teacher Association- PTA
- Social evenings and events
- Fund raising events
- Sporting events
- Musical shows.

### **RESOURCES**

Although most situations will be addressed within the classroom, time will be made available for visits, interviews and consultations. It is our intention to build up a store of resources- textbooks, reference books, ICT support materials used and guidance material from the Education Authority (EA). All members of staff will keep specific resources on key issues linked to PDMU.

### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The class teacher is the key person in impacting on the care of the pupils in his/her class. Class teachers will monitor the progress academically and pastorally of children in their class. Where a teacher has a concern or has been made aware of a concern about the pastoral well being of a pupil in his/her class the following procedures will be followed:

1. Pastoral issues discussed in staff meetings and appropriate note made in the Pastoral Care Book.
2. When the teacher does not consider it appropriate, only the Pastoral Care co-ordinator will be informed.

As the pupil progresses through the school, Pastoral Care records, both verbal and written will be passed to the next teacher at the beginning of each academic year.

Ongoing monitoring is an integral part of our policy. Support is given to teachers who require any assistance in carrying out any aspect of their pastoral role. New members of staff and ancillary staff are informed of Pastoral Care procedures and will report any problems they hear/see to Mrs Johnston, Pastoral Care Co-Ordinator.

### **LIASON WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES**

After appropriate consultation and communication with teacher, co-ordinator, Deputy Head and Head of Department a range of agencies may be consulted.

These may include:

Educational Psychologist  
Chief Medical officer  
School Nurse  
Educational Welfare Officer  
Department of Health and Social Services  
PSNI  
Education Authority.

### **STAFF DEVELOPMENT/TRAINING**

This can be facilitated during directed time and Staff Development days as well as formal/informal communication between staff.

The Co-ordinator will keep staff informed of what training is available outside school e.g. Education Authority.

Outside agencies may be used for development and training if deemed necessary.

**In Concluding our Pastoral Care Policy, we feel that the following points regarding child protection are worth remembering and should be noted by both staff and parents:**

- school should contribute to the growth of every child's self-esteem through praise of both effort and achievement
- be aware of individual needs and personalities and always avoid making derogatory or discouraging remarks
- avoid inappropriate language and subject matter. Be sensitive to and aware of the behaviour and opinions of others. The opinions, prejudices, action and comment of others, particularly those in authority, can easily influence children
- be careful not to do or say something which could create a false impression or be misunderstood or interpreted as an 'innuendo'
- never dismiss or trivialise bullying behaviour
- never let allegations a child makes go unchallenged or unrecorded
- if a child does disclose to you, it is important to reassure them and to tell them 'I believe you, it's not your fault', and 'I am going to help you'.
- one member of staff should never run an event single-handed - try to ensure an appropriate balance of male and female
- always ensure a suitable ratio of adults to children, depending on the activity
- never drive or walk a child home alone, or take a young person to your home, unless the situation is unavoidable
- avoid showing favouritism or singling individuals out in any way which is not appropriate
- avoid unnecessary physical contact
- ensure all helpers are aware of the dos and don'ts of physical contact
- on residential do not allow male staff to enter female rooms or vice-versa, unaccompanied.

Remember, it is your legal duty to report your concerns to the designated teacher within the preparatory school or in the senior school, if you suspect any form of abuse concerning a young person, or if information is disclosed to you.

# Child Protection

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## SECTION A: CODE OF PRACTICE

### I Introduction

- (i) In Methodist College Preparatory Department both students and staff are valued and respected as individuals and they are encouraged to develop their unique talents and abilities to their full potential. We seek to create a safe, caring, positive and supportive environment in which pupils have the right to be heard and see staff and volunteers as approachable people who will listen to their concerns about issues inside and outside school and take them seriously.

The Governors and staff of the Prep Dept. recognise the contribution they can make to safeguarding children. They acknowledge that all staff and volunteers have a full and active part in protecting pupils from harm. Child abuse is completely unacceptable and may also be a criminal offence.

- (ii) In *The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995* it is clear that “*the welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration*” in all decisions concerning a child: this overrides all other considerations. Article 3 of *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* states “*In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public, private social welfare institutions, courts, administrative authorities, legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration.*”
- (iii) This policy is also informed by the guidance and procedures set out by Department of Education *Pastoral Care in School: Child Protection (1999)*, *Co-Operating to Safeguard Children (2003)*, *the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) Regional Policy and Procedures (2005)* and *Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2016)*
- (iv) The policy applies to all Governors, staff and volunteers and it ensures all adults have clear guidance on the action to be taken where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected or disclosed. The issue of child abuse is not ignored by anyone who works in the Prep Dept. If a member of staff or volunteer becomes aware of a pupil who may be suffering abuse, then that member of staff or volunteer follows the procedure detailed in Section B to ensure that the matter is addressed fully.
- (v) Everyone in the Preparatory Department has a responsibility to promote and safeguard the welfare of pupils. However, within the school there are key personnel who are delegated with specific responsibility for child protection. Their roles are listed later in this document.
- (vi) As part of the preventative curriculum, the Prep Dept. helps pupils to recognise unwelcome and unacceptable behaviour in others, to understand appropriate boundaries and to acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe. It is made



clear that pupils have the right to be treated properly by others and they are reminded of their responsibility to treat other people with respect.

## II Safeguarding Team

|   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| Chair of the Board of Governors                     | Mr. M. Humphreys    |
| Designated Governor for Child Protection            | Ms. H. McHugh       |
| Principal   | Mr. S. Naismith     |
| Designated Teacher for Child Protection             | Mrs. A. Logan (MCB) |
| Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection      | Mr. A. Craig (MCB)  |
| Head of Preparatory Department                      | Mr. A. Jennings     |
| Designated Teacher for Child Protection (FH)        | Mr. C. Allen        |
| Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection (FH) | Mrs. S. Johnston    |
| Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DH)        | Mrs. A. Cunningham  |
| Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DH) | Mrs. C. Booth       |

## III Definition of Abuse

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

A child is a person under the age of eighteen years as defined in *The Children (NI) Order 1995*. This policy also applies to vulnerable adults who are registered in the school to the end of their nineteenth year.

## IV Types of Abuse

Child abuse is covered under five categories in *Co-operating to Safeguard Children and young People (DHSSPS 2016)* and in *ACPC (2005)*.

**Physical Abuse** is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful neglect, failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, biting, pinching, 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 in so far 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) Emotional abuse may involve bullying behaviour – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers. (*Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People, DHSSPS 2016*). The school's E-Safety Policy is set out in a separate document.

Possible signs or symptoms of emotional abuse include:

- bullying behaviour 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** occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. It '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) Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males, women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Possible signs or symptoms of sexual abuse include:

- bruised or sore genitals
- genital infection
- difficulty in walking or sitting
- inappropriate sexualized language or behaviour
- low self-esteem
- chronic depression
- substance abuse
- personality changes
- fear of going home.

**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.

**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 including:

- 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. (*Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People, DHSSPS 2016*)

**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)

There are six categories of neglect

**Physical** – possible signs may include:

- poor personal hygiene – hair, clothes, skin
- pale or sallow complexion
- body odours
- poorly fitting or inadequate clothing or footwear
- poor standard of hygiene or safety at home
- inadequate sleeping arrangements
- lack of stairgate/fireguard etc.
- no uniform
- regular hunger
- collected from school and or/looked after at home by range of different people who may be inappropriate carers or lack maturity to keep the child safe
- problems caused by pets that are uncared for and possibly a risk
- exposure to drugs and drug related equipment and/or alcohol
- exposure to prescription medication (such as anti-depressants)
- prone to illness and infection.

**Medical** – possible signs may include:

- dental and/or medical appointments missed, or never made
- optical, auditory, speech and language, or therapy advice not adhered to or appointments missed
- advice from or request to meet school nurse ignored
- head lice uncontrolled
- vaccinations not completed
- over/under- administration of prescribed medication
- poor understanding of medical needs arising from disability.

**Emotional** – possible signs may include:

- lack of concern for the child's feelings
- never giving praise
- constant belittling or bullying behaviour
- lack of stimulation
- inconsistent attention – loving/aggressive
- failure to understand how the other types of neglect affect the child's sense of worth
- no sense of belonging to the family
- erratic and unpredictable parenting
- poor attachments
- threats, rejection or frightening behaviour from parents.

**Educational** – possible signs may include:

- no lesson equipment or constantly lost
- no PE kit
- indifference to child's academic performance – never or rarely attend parents' evenings
- no response to requests for meetings or to return telephone calls
- regular unexplained and unauthorised absence
- little support to complete homework
- home/school contact book never completed/often lost
- lack of understanding or concern for child's disability or SEN
- child missing school/unable to concentrate due to caring responsibilities at home
- permitting regular truancy.

**Nutritional** – possible signs may include:

- regular inadequate/poor – quality packed lunch
- unhealthy diet
- complete absence of exercise
- concerns about the child's weight – very underweight or very overweight
- child regularly having to make their own meals (and possibly siblings) due to the incapacity or unavailability of the parent
- lack of food or cooking equipment at home.

**Lack of supervision and guidance** – possible signs may include:

- few boundaries at home – no rules to follow
- child out alone at times/in places inappropriate to their age or maturity
- use of inadequate or inappropriate carers
- antisocial behaviour and vandalism
- repeated involvement of police
- exposure to dangerous people
- encouraged into crime.

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.

**Bullying behaviour** is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in Methodist College Prep Dept. The Pastoral Care Policy is set out in a separate document. Staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying behaviour occurring, and take immediate steps to stop it happening, to protect and reassure the pupil who is being bullied and to deal appropriately with the pupil displaying bullying behaviour. The situation is monitored until staff are sure the problem has stopped.

### **Domestic Violence**

It is now recognised that children who live in an atmosphere of domestic violence may be at risk. Domestic violence is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional.

Symptoms which young people may display and which are indicators only include:

- Nervousness
- Low self-worth
- Disturbed sleep patterns
- Nightmares / flashbacks
- Physiological – stress / nerves
- Stomach pain
- Bed wetting
- Immature / needy behaviour
- Temper tantrums
- Aggression
- Internalising distress or withdrawal
- Truancy
- Alcohol and drugs
- Bullying behaviour.

These symptoms can lead to a child/ young person being misdiagnosed as having an illness, learning difficulties, or being naughty or disruptive.

If it comes to the attention of school staff that domestic abuse is or may be a factor for a child/young person this must be passed to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher who has an obligation to share the information to Social Services

**We will take seriously any concerns which are raised about a pupil in our school who has self-harmed and/or has expressed suicidal thoughts.**

The Designated/Deputy Designated teacher will immediately follow the school's child protection procedures.

### **Female Genital Mutilation**

Under the, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education,' published in April 2014, schools must ensure that staff are aware of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

Female Genital Mutilation occurs mainly in Africa and to a lesser extent, in the Middle East and Asia. Although it is believed by many to be a religious issue, it is a cultural practice. There are no health benefits.

Communities particularly affected by FGM in the UK include girls from: Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea, Yemen, Indonesia and Afghanistan.

In the UK, FGM tends to occur in areas with larger populations of communities who practice FGM, such as first-generation immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

Key Points:

- Not a religious practice
- Occurs mostly to girls aged from 5 – 8 years old; but up to around 15
- Criminal offence in UK since 1985
- Offence since 2003 to take girls abroad
- Criminal penalties include up to 14 years in prison.

**Reasons for this cultural practice include:**

- Cultural identity – an initiation into womanhood
- Gender Identity – moving from girl to woman – enhancing femininity
- Sexual control – reduce the woman's desire for sex
- Hygiene/cleanliness – un mutilated women are regarded as unclean.

Risk Factors include:

- low level of integration into UK society
- mother or sister who has undergone FGM
- girls who are withdrawn from PSHE
- a visiting female elder from the country of origin
- being taken on a long holiday to the family's country of origin

- talk about a 'special' event or procedure to 'become a woman.'

### High Risk Time

Staff should be made aware that this procedure often takes place in the summer, as the recovery period after FGM can be six to nine weeks. They should be alert to the possibility of FGM as a reason why a girl in a high risk group is absent from school or where the family request an 'authorised absence' for just before or just after the summer school holidays.

Although, it is difficult to identify girls before FGM takes place, where girls from these high risk groups return from a long period of absence with symptoms of FGM, the school will seek advice from social services.

Post-FGM Symptoms may include:

- difficulty walking, sitting or standing
- spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
- unusual behaviour after a lengthy absence
- reluctance to undergo normal medical examinations
- asking for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.

Longer Term problems may include:

- difficulties urinating or incontinence
- frequent or chronic vaginal, pelvic or urinary infections
- menstrual problems
- kidney damage and possible failure
- cysts and abscesses
- pain when having sex
- infertility
- complications during pregnancy and childbirth
- emotional and mental health problems.

If it comes to the attention of school staff that a child/young person may be at risk of FGM or is showing the signs of it, the information must be passed to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher who has an obligation to share the information with Social Services

## V Role of the Board of Governors and the Designated Governor for Child Protection

- (i) The Board of Governors recognises the responsibility placed on it by *The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003* and the information in the *School Governors Handbook Child Protection 2007*.
- (ii) The Board of Governors reviews annually the Child Protection structures and procedures in the College and Prep Dept and The Child Protection Policy using the guidance outlined in the documents listed in Appendix 1.
- (iii) The Board of Governors tasks the Head of Department with designating a member of staff to have specific responsibility for Child Protection and he also appoints a Deputy. In this document the teachers are referred to as the Designated Teacher and the Deputy Designated Teacher.

- (iv) The Board of Governors ensures that the Chair of the Board of Governors and the Designated Governor for Child Protection receive appropriate and up-to-date Child Protection training commissioned or provided by the Belfast Education and Library Board, with refresher training at least once every three years. It also ensures that the Designated Teacher and his Deputy receive regular training to update their knowledge in this area and that child protection training is given to all staff and volunteers annually.
- (v) At least one Governor sitting on interview and appointment panels has received Strand 3: Recruitment and Selection Training (EA).
- (vi) The Board of Governors tasks the Head of Department with ensuring parents/guardians have access to a copy of the Child Protection Policy and complaints procedure.
- (vii) Each year parents are advised of the name of the Designated Governor for Child Protection so that they may consult him on a Child Protection matter if desired. If such a matter is raised, he informs the Head of Department (unless the Head of Department is implicated, in which case he advises the Chair of the Board or Governors) and they follow the procedure detailed in **Section B** of this document.
- (viii) In the event of a Child Protection complaint being made against the Head of Department, the Principal/Chair of the Board of Governors assumes the lead for managing the allegations.
- (ix) The Designated Governor for Child Protection inducts the members of the Board of Governors in Child Protection. A roll of attendees is kept. New members of the Board are given a copy of *School Governors Handbook Child Protection* (CPPS, DENI 2007) and given awareness training.

## **VI Role of the Head of Department**

- (i) The Head of Department designates a member of staff to have specific responsibility for Child Protection and he also appoints a Deputy.
- (ii) The Head of Department ensures all staff and volunteers are vetted.
- (iii) The Head of Department notifies the Principal of the College of child protection referrals to Social Services and/or the PSNI.
- (iv) The Head of Department gives reports to the Principal of the College regarding any child protection matters as they arise and, also, termly updates. In addition, a full annual Child Protection report is given to the Board of Governors.
- (v) The Head of Department takes the lead when a complaint is made against a member of staff or volunteer. If the Designated Teacher is the subject of the complaint the Head of Department takes over his/her role.



- (vi) The Head of Department ensures that all parents, pupils, staff and volunteers know who the Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher are and how they can be contacted. If a parent prefers to contact another member of staff, that member of staff must follow the relevant procedures.
- (vii) The Head of Department ensures that parents/guardians are issued with a copy of the Child Protection Policy and complaints procedure every two years.

## **VII Role of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection**

- (i) The Designated Teacher for Child Protection trains all new staff and volunteers, updates the training of current staff and volunteers annually and is available to discuss child protection concerns with them. He/she maintains a record of attendance at training.
- (i) He/she takes the lead responsibility for developing the College's Child Protection Policy and promoting an ethos of safeguarding in the school.
- (ii) He/she keeps the Head of Department informed of child protection issues, liaises with Designated Teacher for Child Protection in MCB, EA (Belfast Branch) Designated Officers for Child Protection and makes referrals to social services and /or PSNI as appropriate.
- (iii) He/she maintains records in accordance with DENI guidance on child protection issues and produces written reports for the Board of Governors.
- (iv) When the Designated Teacher is not available, the Deputy Designated Teacher will have responsibility for child protection.
- (vi) The Designated Teacher follows the procedures in **Section B**.

## **SECTION B: PROCEDURE FOR RECEIVING, RECORDING AND REPORTING SUSPECTED OR DISCLOSED CHILD ABUSE**

### **I. Introduction**

In all cases of abuse or suspected abuse, the member of staff or volunteer immediately informs the Designated Teacher of his or her concerns. The informing teacher follows the procedures detailed later in this section on recording and reporting. It is then the responsibility of the Designated Teacher to pursue the matter in accordance with Prep Dept. policy.

#### **Note:**

Neither the informing staff nor the Designated Teacher for Child Protection investigates. This is a matter for Social Services and/or the PSNI. There is the possibility of legal proceedings in

such cases and, therefore, staff remain impartial and professional throughout. Members of staff seek advice from the Head of Department or the Designated Teacher if they have any concerns about the correct procedure.

## **II Abuse or Suspected Abuse is Disclosed to a Member of Staff or Volunteer by a Pupil**

- (i) If a pupil makes a disclosure of abuse, the member of staff or volunteer follows the procedure set down in ***The Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers*** for interviews in which a pupil asks to speak in private. They explain that he or she wishes to help but cannot assure the pupil of total confidentiality as it may be necessary to seek advice and pass on information. It is explained that any information is treated as sensitively as possible and only those who need to know are informed, in the best interests of the pupil.
- (ii) Staff or volunteers listen to the pupil, accept what he/she is saying without judgement, or displaying shock or disbelief, do not ask leading questions and do not suggest a reason for what has happened or criticise the perpetrator. Staff and volunteers do not investigate the issue. If it is felt that some questions are needed in order to clarify the matter, open questions are used to establish the facts. Unless revealed, they do not ask who, what etc. A pupil is not pressed for information the child does not want to give. Closed questions and questioning beyond what the pupil volunteers without prompting can jeopardise a subsequent court case. This is the role of partner agencies.
- (iii) Staff and volunteers reassure the pupil that he/she has done the right thing in talking about the matter. They do not make promises e.g. everything will be all right. They explain what they will do next i.e. talk to the Designated Teacher.
- (iv) They make sure that the pupil is safe. If there is any concern about the immediate welfare of the pupil, the member of staff or volunteer ensures that the pupil is in the care of a responsible person. This may, for example, involve taking him or her to the School Office if in a distressed state.
- (v) Immediately after disclosure by a pupil the member of staff or volunteer makes a written note of the details given by the child. The notes are factual and accurate and any reference to the abuse or to the abuser is recorded as far as possible in the actual words used by the pupil. The member of staff or volunteer does not express opinions but notes the demeanour and physical state of the child and notes when and where the disclosure took place.
- (vi) The member of staff or volunteer reports the matter within the same working day to the Designated Teacher (or, in his absence, the Deputy Designated Teacher) and notes when and where this took place. He or she hands over a written report of the disclosure, signed and dated. The Designated Teacher keeps them securely in Child Protection cabinet so no copies are required by the informing staff. The Designated Teacher, in consultation with the Head of Department, decides on the next step.

## **III Abuse or Suspected Abuse Disclosed to a Member of Staff or Volunteer by a Third Party**

- (i) On becoming aware of information about the possible abuse of a pupil the member of staff or volunteer does not express opinions, but makes a written note of when and where the disclosure took place, and records as far as possible the disclosure in the actual words used by the third party. Staff or volunteers do not ask for a written account.

- (ii) The member of staff or volunteer reports the matter immediately to the Designated Teacher (or, in his absence to the Deputy) and hands over a written account of the disclosure, signed and dated.

#### **IV Abuse or Suspected Abuse by a Member of Staff or Volunteer**

It is a serious matter if an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff or volunteer. The Head of Department (or, in his absence, the Deputy Head of Department) is informed immediately, unless the complaint is against the Head of Department in which case the Principal is informed. The Principal (or the Chairman of the Board of Governors if the complaint is against the Principal) ensures that any such complaint is thoroughly clarified by means of the normal Child Protection procedures and the Chairman of the Board of Governors is informed immediately. Preliminary steps are carried out with an open mind. **However, the prime consideration is the protection of the pupils** in the school and the Principal and/or Chairman of the Board of Governors take all necessary steps to ensure this. Where the matter is referred to Social Services and/or the PSNI, the member of staff or volunteer can be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils or staff and may be suspended from duties as a precautionary measure pending further investigation. (See Disciplinary Policy and Procedures)

#### **V Action to be taken by the Designated Teacher following an incident of suspected or disclosed child abuse.**

- i) As soon as the Designated Teacher becomes aware of a possible case of child abuse, he/she asks for the notes made by the staff or volunteer reporting it. If the report is verbal, he /she asks the staff concerned to write down the information.
- (ii) The Designated Teacher meets with the Head of Department (or the Designated Teacher of Child Protection (MCB) if the Head of Department is not available) as a matter of urgency. They consider the situation and plan a course of action, ensuring that a written record of all decisions is made at each step of the process. The Designated Teacher may consult with the EA Child Protection Support Service's Designated Officer for Child Protection.
- (iii) Suspected or alleged abuse is referred to Social Services by the Designated Teacher, using the regional UNOCINI form, within twenty-four hours of the initial referral to Social Services. Where physical or sexual abuse is suspected or alleged, the case is referred to the PSNI. In some cases, the Head of Department makes the referral personally but in either situation, the Principal is informed of the matter and of subsequent developments. The Designated Teacher informs EA's Designated Officer for Child Protection of the referral.
- (iv) Unless there are concerns that the parent/guardian may be the possible abuser, the parent/guardian is informed as soon as possible of the course of action to be taken, by the Designated Teacher or the Head of Department, normally before the referral. However, the referral is not delayed if the parent/guardian cannot be contacted. If the parent/guardian does not agree with the referral, the latter proceeds as the protection of the child is paramount. In some circumstances it may not be in the child's interests to inform the parent/guardian immediately. In such a situation, at the time of referral, the Designated Teacher clarifies with the investigating agencies when, how and by whom the parents and the pupil are told that a referral has been made. The Principal is contacted and informed of the reasons for the decision.

- (v) The Head of Department and the Designated Teacher meet as often as necessary to review the situation and to ensure that all possible steps are taken to safeguard the welfare of the pupil, recording all decisions made. The Designated Teacher or the Head of Department keeps those people who need to know informed of developments, subject to the requirement that the welfare of the child is paramount and legal constraints.
- (vi) A written account of all proceedings connected to the case, timed and dated, is made by the Designated Teacher and kept in the Child Protection cabinet. If a member of staff or volunteer is implicated in the proceedings, then an extra copy of the documentation is placed in that individual's personal file.

## **VI Supporting Pupils in the College**

- (i) The Designated Teacher works with external agencies to ensure that appropriate support is provided for a pupil who has suffered abuse.
- (ii) Staff help all pupils to develop skills in self-protection and develop confidence through:
  - The content of the curriculum, particularly the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding Programme
  - The school ethos, which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued
  - Discussion in Circle Time of personal, class or school issues
  - The Prep's Positive Behaviour policy, which is aimed at supporting pupils in the school. The school ensures that pupils understand the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour towards themselves and others
  - Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Social Services, Education Welfare Service, Educational Psychologists, police and the school nurse.

## **VII Information to Pupils and Parents**

- (i) At the beginning of the academic year, the Head of Department speaks to the pupils in the school re issues e.g. bullying behaviour etc. and who they can talk to. He or she also explains that while a specific teacher may have responsibility for Pastoral Care in the school there may be occasions when a pupil may prefer to speak to their own teacher or any other member of Staff if they are experiencing personal difficulties. Posters outlining the Pastoral and Child Protection Teams are displayed in prominent positions around the Prep Dept.
- (ii) Each academic year, parents receive information about the members of the Pastoral and Child Protection Team and they receive guidance detailing the most suitable person to contact in particular instances. Parents are advised each year that a formal procedure exists and will be followed if a Child Protection matter arises. A summary of the Child Protection Policy is issued every year. The full policy is available on the College website and on request from the Office.

## **VIII Conduct of Staff and Volunteers**

- (i) Staff and volunteers have a duty of care to pupils and a responsibility to pass on information and concerns about a pupil's welfare, no matter how small, to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection. Staff and volunteers make no assumptions that someone else is aware of a concern.

- (ii) It is important that members of staff and volunteers are totally professional in their dealings with pupils at all times, including non-classroom situations: for example, on school trips, taking extra-curricular activities and when coaching school games. Guidance for staff and volunteers is provided in a separate document entitled *A Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers*. Each member of staff and volunteer receives a copy of this document.

## **IX Recruitment and Vetting Procedures of Staff and Volunteers**

- (i) Pre-employment enhanced disclosure checks are carried out on all staff employed in the College, through Access NI. References are taken up on all new staff.
- (ii) The College uses volunteers from time to time in its work. If it is envisaged that the volunteer could be in contact with pupils with no member of staff present, then that person is required to have an enhanced disclosure check carried out through Access NI.
- (iii) New members of staff and volunteers receive appropriate induction Child Protection training, a copy of the Child Protection Policy and the Code of Conduct for Staff. All staff and volunteers receive refresher training every year.
- (iv) The Director of Services takes all reasonable steps to ensure that any outside contractors satisfy the requirements of the Prep Dept. in this area.

## **X Management of Records**

Child Protection information is kept securely in the locked Child Protection cabinet in school. The cabinet contains details of all the cases which have involved pupils in the College. It may be accessed by the Designated Governors for Child Protection, the Principal and the Designated Teacher. The guidance laid down on the retention of records is followed.

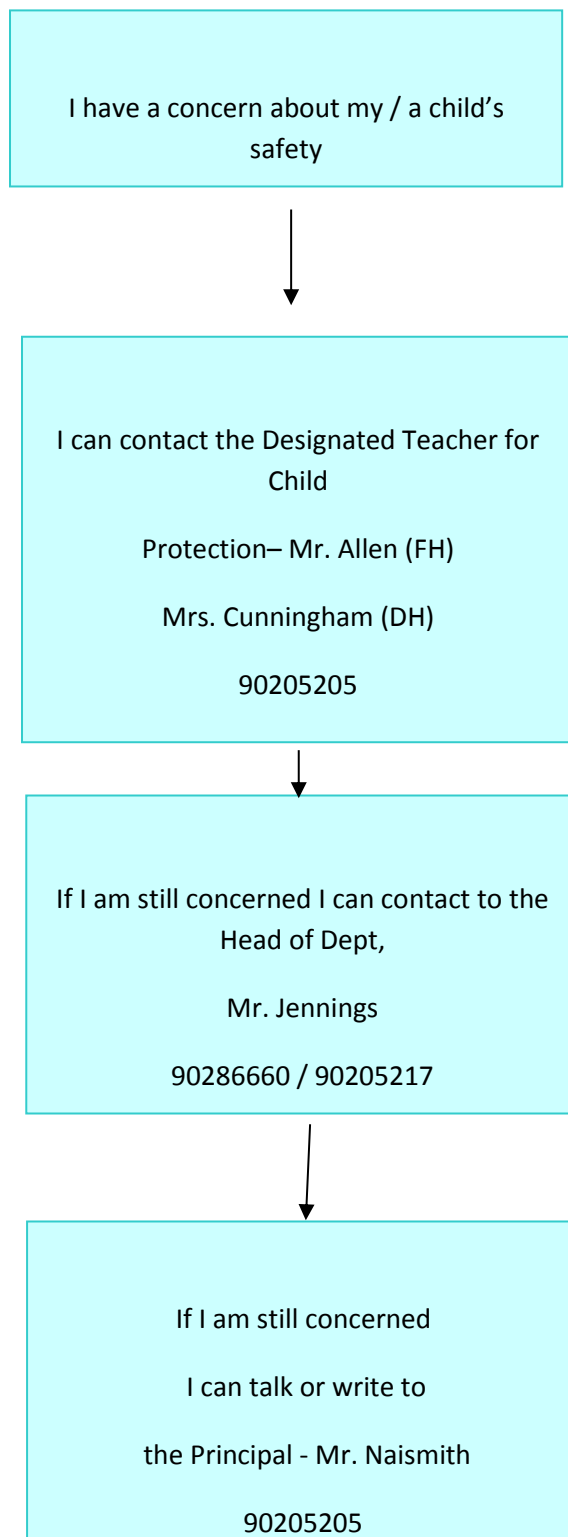
## **XI Policy Review**

The Designated Teacher conducts a formal review of the Child Protection Policy annually. This is done in consultation with the Chairman of the Board, the Designated Governor and the Head of Department. The revised policy is discussed with the Senior Leadership Team before being presented to the Education Committee and the Board of Governors for consideration.

The views of parents and pupils are welcomed at any time and are normally directed to the Designated Teacher.

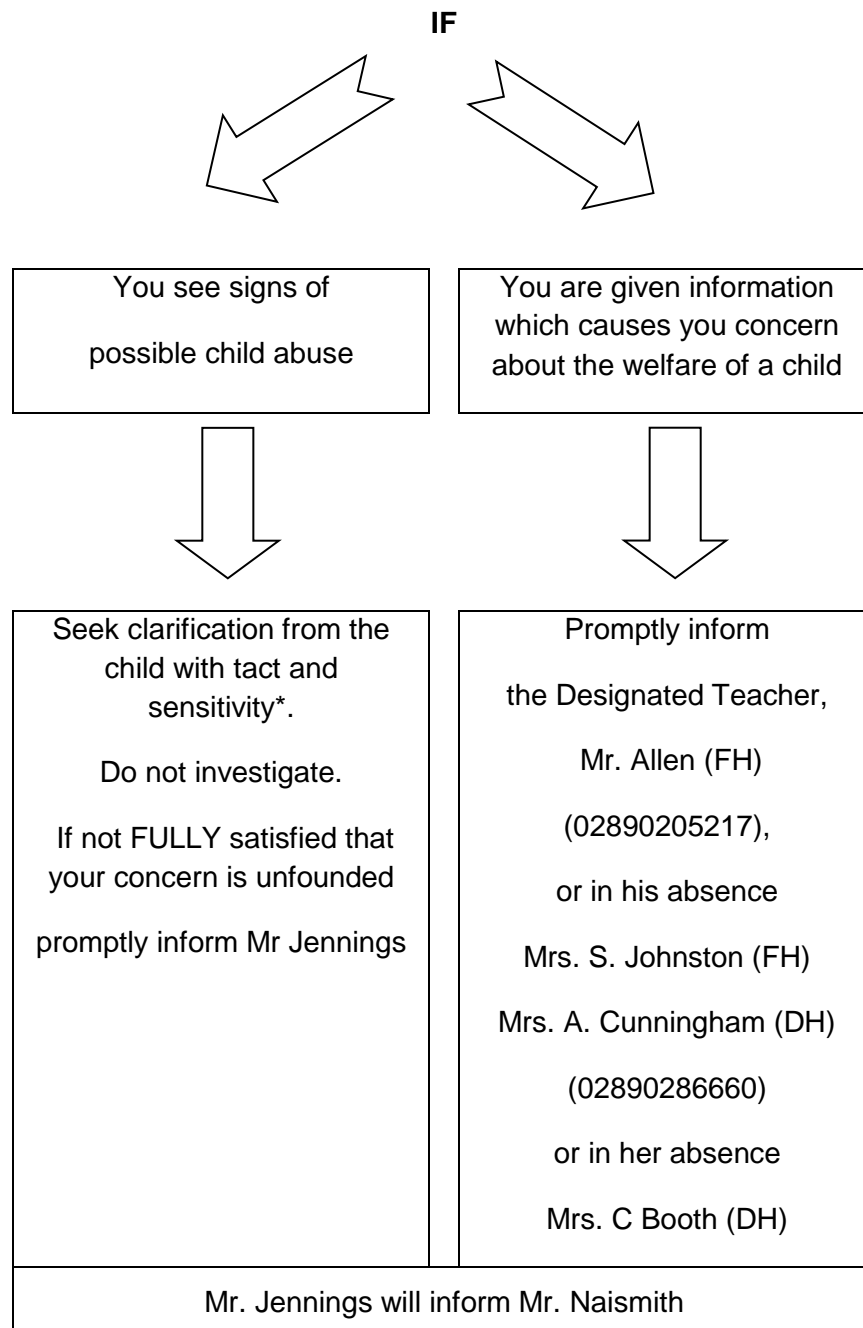
## How a parent/guardian can raise a safe guarding/ child protection concern

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



At any time, I can write or talk to a Social Worker or  
the Police (101, 02890 650222)

### Summary of Child Protection Guidelines for Staff



\*Whilst discreet preliminary clarification may be sought in order to confirm or allay concerns **it is not the responsibility of teachers or the school to carry out investigations into cases of suspected abuse or to make extensive enquiries of members of the child's family or other carers.**

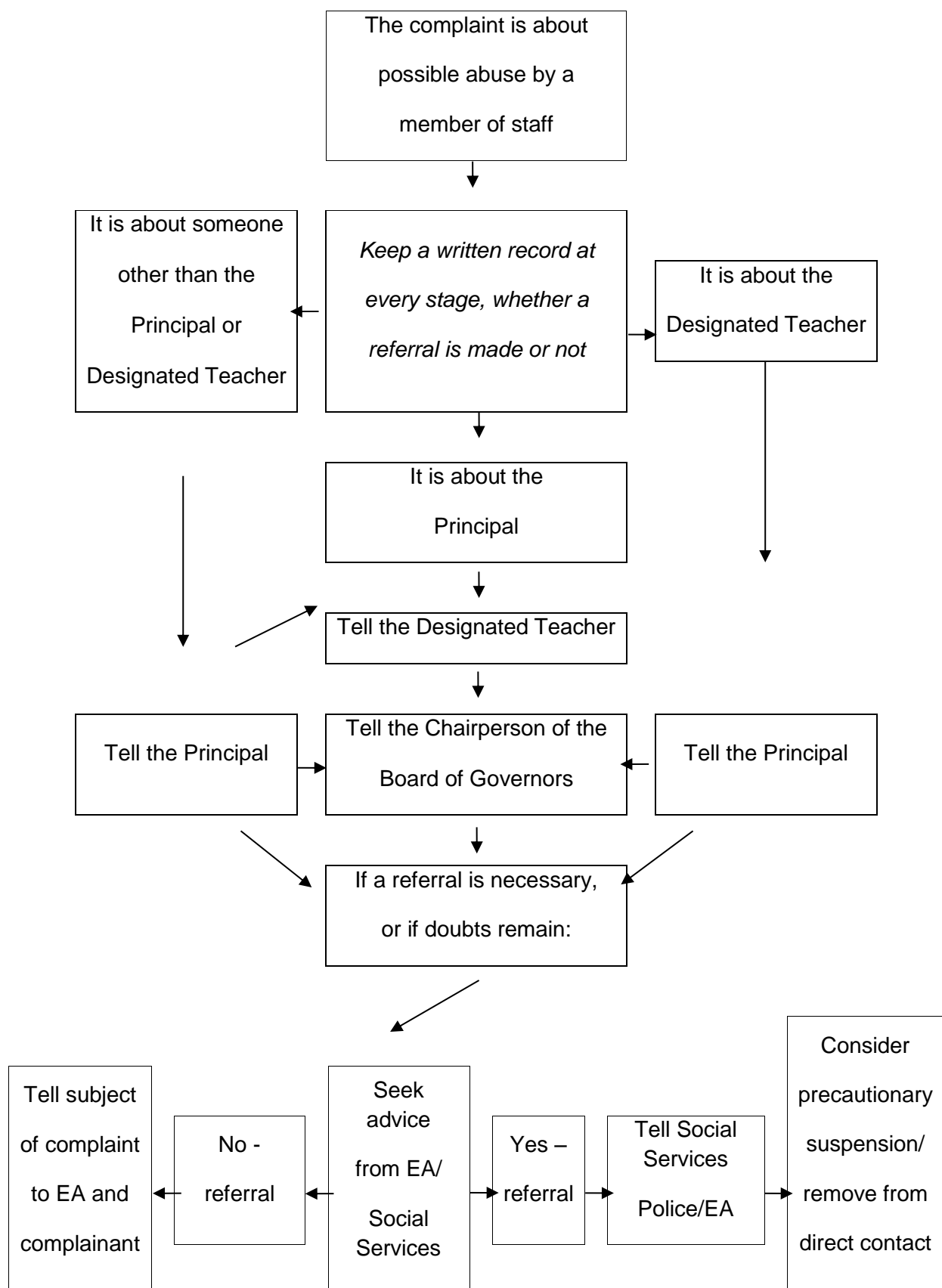
\*In seeking clarification please use the following guidelines: -

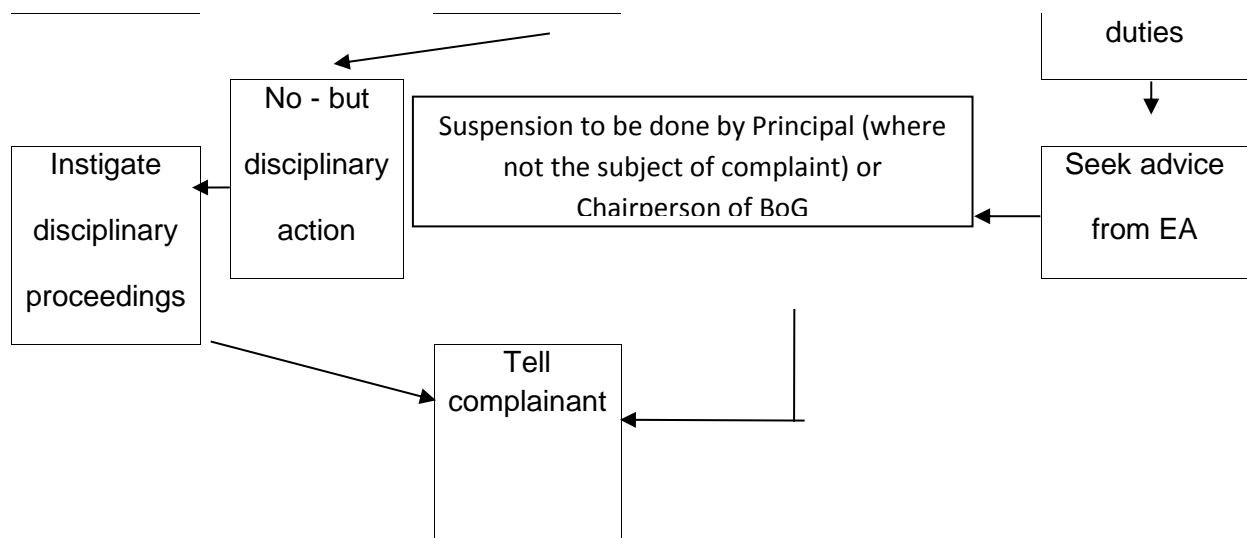
- Note down any comment(s) made by the child in his/her own words as far as possible
- Avoid asking the child leading questions
- Avoid asking questions which encourage the child to change his/her version of events
- Do **not** guarantee confidentiality
- Reassure the child that **only** those who need to know will be informed
- Reassure the child that they have done the **right** thing
- Do not make assumptions or judgements

**The safety of the child is the first priority.**



**Procedure where a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of the College staff**





## Summary of Advice to Staff and Volunteers on How to Respond to a Child Making a Disclosure (5 Rs)

### 1. Receive

- Stay calm.
- Go at the child's pace.
- Listen without displaying shock or disbelief or interrupting.
- Accept what the child is saying without judgement.

### 2. Reassure

- Reassure the child that he/she have done the right thing by talking to you.
- **Do not make promises that you cannot keep** (e.g. everything will be alright now, I'll stay with you).
- **Do not promise confidentiality.**
- Explain that you will need to talk to the Designated Teacher of Child Protection who will know what to do.
- **Do not investigate, make assumptions or speculate.**

### 3. Respond

- Respond to the child only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer the matter to the Designated teacher
- Do ask open questions (Can you tell me what happened? Anything else you wish to tell me?)
- Do not ask closed questions (those that will evoke a yes/no response). Never ask why or how. Such questions invalidate evidence where a subsequent court action is necessary.
- Do not criticise the perpetrator.
- Do explain what you will do next (talk with the Designated teacher who will know how to get help).

### 4. Record

- Make notes as soon as possible after the disclosure and write them up.
- Do not destroy the original notes.
- Record the date, time, place, people present and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour.
- Record the words the child used as much as possible. – if the child uses 'pet' words record those rather than translating them into 'proper' words.
- Any injuries or marks noticed can be depicted on a diagram showing position and extent.
- Record statements and observable things, rather than your interpretations and assumptions.
- Sign the record and hand it the Designated teacher

### 5. Refer

- **Concerns about possible abuse must be referred to the Designated Teacher as soon as possible within the working day.** He/she will liaise with the Principal in the decision making process regarding referral to statutory services, if appropriate.

## Appendix 1: Documents Relevant to Child Protection

DENI circulars and other documents which are relevant to Child Protection can be obtained from the DENI website: [www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk)

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| DENI circular 1999/9  | Pastoral Care: Guidance on the Use of Reasonable Force to Restraint or Control Pupils.                                   |
| DENI circular 1999/17 | Parental Responsibility; Guidance for Schools.   |
| DENI circular 2003/13 | Welfare and Protection of Pupils: Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003.   |
| DENI circular 2004/09 | Drugs: Guidance for Schools  |
| DENI circular 2006/6  | Guidance for Schools on safer recruitment practices for education authorities.   |
| DENI circular 2006/7  | Guidance for School on the employment of substitute teachers.  |
| DENI circular 2006/8  | Child Protection: Guidance for Schools on the requirement for training in relation to interviewing and selection panels. |
| DENI circular 2006/9  | Child Protection: Guidance on the vetting of paid and unpaid staff.  |
| DENI circular 2006/25 | Child Protection: Vetting of School Governors.   |
| DENI circular 2007/1  | Guidance on Internet and Digital Technologies.   |
| DENI circular 2008/3  | Pre- Employment checking of Persons to Work in Schools.  |
| DENI circular 2008/10 | Employment of Substitute teachers.   |
| DENI circular 2010/01 | RSE guidance   |
| DENI circular 2010/07 | Pupil Attendance; Absence Recording by Schools   |
| DENI circular 2010/18 | The Governors' Role.   |
| DENI circular 2011/22 | Internet Safety.   |
| DENI circular 2012/18 | Pupil Attendance; Absence Recording by Schools.  |
| DENI circular 2012/19 | Pre-employment checks  |
| DENI circular 2013/01 | Pre-employment checks  |
| DENI circular 2013/1  | Child Protection: Guidance on pre-employment vetting checking and safer recruitment practices.                           |
| DENI circular 2013/16 | Relationship and Sexuality Education Policy in Schools.  |
| DENI circular 2013/25 | Guidance on eSafety.   |
| DENI circular 2014/14 | Pupil Participation  |
| DENI circular 2014/24 | Education Otherwise at School – Guidance   |
| DENI circular 2014/27 | Managing Information on persons who pose a risk to pupils.   |
| DENI circular 2015/13 | Dealing with allegations of abuse against a member of staff  |
| DENI circular 2015/22 | RSE guidance   |
| DENI circular 2015/23 | Drugs  |
| DENI circular 2016/05 | Harmful Sexual Behaviour   |

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| DENI circular 2016/11 | Class Sizes in Post Primary and Practical Subjects      |
| DENI circular 2016/20 | Child Protection Record Keeping in Schools              |
| DENI circular 2016/26 | Effective Educational Uses of Mobile Digital Devices    |
| DENI circular 2016/27 | Online Safety   |
| DENI circular 2017/04 | Safeguarding and Child Protection – A Guide for Schools |

The Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) Regional Policy and Procedures (2005)

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (2016)

Disposal of Records Schedule

#### **DE Letters of Information**

Sexting and the law - letter  
Sexting and the law – leaflet  
ICT Provision in Schools - letter  
E-Safety guidance circular letter  
Preventing child sexual exploitation – Circular letter issued to schools  
Disposal of child protection records – letter to principals  
Multi-Agency practice guidelines on FGM – letter from DE  
Concussion and Second Impact Syndrome  
Provision of free School Meals on Humanitarian Grounds – letter from DE  
Sexual Offences Order 2008 – DE letter to Schools  
Child Protection School Holiday Procedures – Letter to Schools

# E-Safety

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## Introduction

The Preparatory Department recognises that ICT and the internet are powerful, worthwhile tools for learning and communication that can be used in school to enhance the curriculum, challenge students, and support creativity and independence.

Using ICT can benefit everyone in the school community, but it is important that students, staff and parents practise good eSafety.

eSafety is short for Electronic Safety and highlights the responsibility of school staff, governors and parents to mitigate risk through reasonable planning and action. eSafety covers all use of the internet and electronic communications through mobile phones, email, games consoles and wireless technology.

There is a 'duty of care' for any person working with children to educate them on the risks and responsibilities of using the internet and other technologies, and to ensure technical safeguards are maintained, while making technology accessible and of worthwhile educational value.

We know that some adults and young people will use these technologies to harm children. The SBNI Report *'An exploration of e-safety messages to young people, parents and practitioners in Northern Ireland'* (January 2014) defines the risks around online safety under four categories:

- **Content risks:** exposure to harmful materials
- **Contact risks:** adult-initiated online activity including risk of grooming
- **Conduct risks:** bullying, entrapment or blackmail
- **Commercial risks:** exposure to inappropriate advertising, marketing schemes or hidden costs/fraud

Technical safeguards can partly protect users, but, no matter how rigorous such measures may be, they will never be completely effective. Therefore, education of all members of the school community in safe, effective practices is a key goal for the school.

## Roles & Responsibility

eSafety is a whole-school issue and responsibility. Each school has a designated eSafety co-ordinator, who is part of a wider safeguarding team.

### The e-safety co-ordinators are:

Downey House: Mrs D. Doherty

Fullerton House: Mrs R. Watson

In Methodist College, Ms. H. McHugh takes responsibility for Child Protection, including eSafety, on the Board of Governors.

The Designated Teacher in charge of Child Protection is Mrs A. Logan.

## Communicating school policy

This policy is available from the school office for parents, staff and pupils to access when they wish.

All parents and pupils will receive a full copy of this policy on entry to the school, and a summary at the beginning of each subsequent school year.

All pupils and their parents will be required to sign that they have read, discussed and will abide by

an Acceptable Use of the Internet agreement on an annual basis. They are reminded that all C2k systems are monitored and that security reports can be accessed by the Principal or designated senior member of staff.

### **Making use of ICT and the internet in school**

The internet and other technologies are powerful resources that can enhance teaching and learning when used well. Technology is advancing rapidly and is now a huge part of everyday life, education and business.

We aim to use these resources effectively and appropriately in school to raise educational standards, to promote pupil achievement, to support the professional work of staff and to enhance the school's management functions.

We want to equip our students with all the necessary ICT skills that they will need in order to enable them to progress confidently into the next stage of their school career.

### **Some of the benefits of using ICT and the internet in schools may include**

#### **For students:**

- Access to worldwide educational resources and institutions such as art galleries, museums and libraries.
- An enhanced curriculum; interactive learning tools; collaboration, locally, nationally, and globally; self-evaluation; feedback and assessment; updates on current affairs as they happen.
- Access to subject experts, role models, inspirational people and organisations. The internet can provide a great opportunity for pupils to interact with people that they otherwise would never be able to meet.
- Access to learning whenever and wherever convenient.
- Freedom to be creative.
- Freedom to explore the world and its cultures from within a classroom.
- Access to case studies, videos and interactive media to enhance understanding.
- Individualised access to learning.

#### **For staff:**

- Professional development through access to national developments, educational materials and examples of effective curriculum practice and classroom strategies.
- Immediate professional and personal support through networks and associations.
- Improved access to technical support.

### **Professional development for teachers**

Teachers are the first line of defence in eSafety and should ensure that pupils in their class are aware who they can approach with any concerns.

All teaching and non-teaching staff will receive regular training and support on recognising and reporting online safety issues within the school. Up to date eSafety training is currently delivered to all teachers and pupils on a two-year cycle.

The eSafety Co-ordinator and the Deputy Head in each school are responsible for ensuring that eSafety training is part of induction for new staff.

Each school's eSafety co-ordinator is responsible for the training of staff and can be approached for advice.

### **Education of pupils**

Pupils should be taught to understand and use technologies in a positive way. They should be supported to develop safer online behaviours both in and out of school, to recognise unsafe situations and to respond to risks appropriately.

Online safety is actively promoted through the school through a progressive eSafety programme including workshops at each Key Stage and celebration of Internet Safety Day. A display giving advice on eSafety is displayed prominently.

It is also important that pupils learn how to evaluate internet content for accuracy and intent. This is built in to the delivery of the curriculum.

**Students will be taught:**

- the risks and benefits of the internet through an age-appropriate, relevant and engaging eSafety programme integrated across the curriculum.
- what to do if they are uncomfortable or unsure about something they have seen so that they feel confident online
- to use age-appropriate tools to search for information online.
- in key stage 2, to be critically aware of materials they read, and shown how to validate information before accepting it as accurate.
- in key stage 2, to acknowledge the source of information used and to respect copyright.

**Education of parents**

Information evenings for parents on online safety are delivered by an appropriate training provider on a two-yearly basis.

**Managing information systems**

The school is responsible for reviewing and managing the security of the computers and internet networks as a whole; and takes the protection of school data and personal protection of our school community very seriously.

All computer access to the internet in school should be through the C2k network.

C2k provides an effective filtering system, as a result of which the following categories of websites should not be available in school:

- adult
- violence
- hate material
- illegal drug taking and the promotion of illegal drug use
- criminal skill/activity
- gambling

Resources or materials downloaded by teachers at home should come from sites that are accessible through the C2k network. Any downloaded material brought into school by pupils, parents or visitors should be checked first by the class teacher to ensure it is suitable for the classroom.

A case-by-case decision will be made by the Head of Department and the Principal on whether it is necessary to inform parents if a website is blocked or if an accessible resource is considered unsuitable for pupils.

If the school has retained otherwise unobjectionable printed materials downloaded from sites that are subsequently blocked by C2k or the College, a decision should be made on whether these resources should continue to be used. In making such a decision, the school should consider wider implications, such as whether continued use of such materials could be interpreted as endorsing an undesirable organisation or person. The approval of the Board of Governors may be sought if necessary.



If there is a potential breach of online safety, the URL should be reported to the eSafety Coordinator who will pass it on to the Head of the Preparatory Department and the College ICT Manager; the Head of the Preparatory Department or the Principal (or his deputy) should then report the matter immediately to the C2K Helpdesk. An up-to-date record of any potential breach will be recorded in an Online Safety Risk Register.

Any material found by members of the school community that is believed to be unlawful will be reported immediately by the Head of the Preparatory Department to the Principal, Board of Governors, parents and the Police. Where an incident is likely to involve media interest, the Department should be informed.

The security of the school information systems will be reviewed regularly by the ICT Manager in Methodist College and virus protection software will be updated regularly. Regular software and broadband checks will take place to ensure that filtering services are working effectively. This protects the school network, as far as is practicably possible, against viruses, hackers and other external security threats.

Cloud storage means that secure access to C2k data and files is available at home for staff. This removes the need to carry such information on insecure data pens or portable devices.

**Some safeguards that the school takes to secure our computer systems are:**

- ensuring that unapproved software is not downloaded to any school computers.
- files held on the school network will be regularly checked for viruses.
- the use of user logins and passwords to access the school network will be enforced.

**Mobile digital devices**

Both Preparatory Departments have access to school-owned wireless technologies, e.g. iPads and other tablets, provide educational opportunities for both pupils and teachers.

However, management challenges are different from those afforded by desktop and laptop computers. At present we do not permit a 'Bring Your Own Device' system and only school owned tablets are permitted in for use by pupils.

All tablets should use the Meru Wireless coverage that allows controlled secure guest access.

Pupils are not permitted to download apps on to tablet computers, or to delete existing apps. Staff may download free apps that can be used to enhance teaching and learning experiences for themselves or their pupils. Any apps that need to be purchased should be requested from the College's ICT Manager in consultation with the UICT co-ordinator.

While mobile phones and personal communication devices are commonplace in today's society, their use and the responsibility for using them should not be taken lightly.

**Some issues surrounding the possession of these devices are:**

- they can make pupils and staff more vulnerable to cyberbullying
- they can be a distraction in the classroom
- they are valuable items that could be stolen, damaged, or lost
- they can have integrated cameras, which can lead to child protection, bullying behaviour and data protection issues.

The school takes certain measures to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly in school. These are outlined in the school's mobile phone policy.

Pupils are not permitted to access the internet using a mobile phone in school.

The school expects staff to lead by example. Personal mobile phones should be switched off or on 'silent' during school hours.

Staff should not use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or videos of pupils. They must use only cameras or devices provided by the school.

### **Email**

All staff use the C2k email system internally to communicate. The C2k Education Network filtering system provides security and protection, ensuring that all messages are checked for viruses, malware, spam and inappropriate content.

Key Stage 2 pupils may use their school email account in supervised lessons to communicate with their teacher, each other or children in other schools as part of their work across the curriculum.

Staff and pupils should be aware that school email accounts should only be used for school-related matters. The school has the right to monitor emails and their contents but will only do so if it feels there is reason to.

It is preferable that staff make contact with parents in person or by telephone through the school office. If a message is to be sent to a larger group, this should be done through the Schoolcomms system.

### **Staff should be aware of the following when using email in school:**

- Staff should only use official school-provided email accounts to communicate professionally. Personal email accounts should not be used to contact pupils or parents and should not be accessed during school hours.
- Emails sent from school accounts should be professionally and carefully written. Staff are representing the school at all times and should take this into account when entering into any email communication.
- Staff must tell a member of the senior management team if they receive any offensive, threatening or unsuitable emails either from within the school or from an external account. They should not attempt to deal with it themselves.
- The forwarding of chain messages is not permitted in school.

### **Students should be aware of the following when using email in school, and will be taught to follow these guidelines through the UICT curriculum and in any instance where email is being used within the curriculum or in class:**

- in school, pupils should only use school-approved email accounts
- social emailing is unnecessary using their school account and is prohibited.
- pupils should tell a member of staff if they receive any offensive, threatening or unsuitable emails either from within the school or from an external account. They should not attempt to deal with the problem themselves.
- pupils must be careful not to reveal any personal information over email; or arrange to meet up with anyone who they have met online.

### **The school website, published content and photographs**

The school website is viewed as a useful tool for communicating our school ethos and practice to the wider community. It is also a valuable resource for parents, students, and staff for keeping up-to-date with school news and events, celebrating whole-school achievements and personal achievements, and promoting school projects.

The website is in the public domain and can be viewed by anybody online. Any information published about the Preparatory Departments on the website will be carefully considered in terms of safety for

the school community, copyrights and privacy policies. No personal information on staff or pupils will be published, and details for contacting the school will be for the school office only.

Colour photographs and pupils work bring our school to life, showcase our student's talents, and add interest to publications both online and in print that represent the school.

However, the school acknowledges the importance of having safety precautions in place to prevent the misuse of such material. The vast majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons.

Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images, so we must ensure that we have some safeguards in place. It is important that published images do not identify students or put them at risk of being identified. Only images created by or for the school will be used in public and children may not be approached or photographed while in school or doing school activities without the school's permission.

All content on the school website is managed by the Methodist College web master, Ms Niamh Taylor.

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 images of pupils and staff will not be displayed in public, either in print or online, without consent.

On admission to the school parents/carers will be asked to sign a photography consent form. This consent form will outline the school's policy on the use of photographs of children, including:

- **How and when the photographs will be used.** Consent will cover the use of images in all school publications, on the school website, in newspapers as allowed by the school and in videos made by the school or in class for school projects.
- **School policy on the storage and deletion of photographs.** Electronic and paper images will be stored securely, and names of stored photographic files will not identify the child. Parents will be contacted annually to reconfirm consent while their child is at the school.

Images will be carefully chosen to ensure that they do not pose a risk of misuse. This includes ensuring that pupils are appropriately dressed. Photographs of activities which may pose a greater risk of potential misuse (for example, swimming activities) will focus more on the sport than the pupils.

For public documents, including in newspapers, full names will not be published alongside images of the child. Groups may be referred to collectively by year group.

Staff are not permitted to take photos or videos of pupils on their own devices. If photos or videos are being taken as part of the school curriculum or in a professional capacity, school equipment must be used for this.

Events recorded by family members of the students such as school plays or sports days must be used for personal use only.

Pupils may take photographs of each other using only school cameras or tablets in a supervised lesson with their teacher's permission. Pupils are not permitted to use their own personal devices to take photographs or videos in school.

Any photographers that are commissioned by the school will be fully briefed on appropriateness in terms of content and behaviour. They will wear identification at all times and will not have unsupervised access to the pupils.

Pupils are encouraged to tell a member staff if they are concerned or uncomfortable with any

photographs that are taken of them or they are being asked to participate in. Parents should follow standard school complaints procedure if they have a concern or complaint regarding the misuse of school photographs. Any issues or sanctions will be dealt with in line with the school's child protection and positive behaviour policies.

### **Social networking, social media and personal publishing**

Personal publishing tools include blogs, wikis, social networking sites, bulletin boards, chat rooms and instant messaging programmes.

These online forums are the more obvious sources of inappropriate and harmful behaviour and where pupils are most vulnerable to being contacted by a dangerous person. It is important that we educate students so that they can make their own informed decisions and take responsibility for their conduct online.

Any sites that are to be used in class will be risk-assessed by the teacher in charge prior to the lesson to ensure that the site is age-appropriate and safe for use.

Most social media sites have a recommended 13-years lower age limit which rules out their direct use by primary school age pupils. Pupils should not be allowed to access such sites in school on any device.

Social media sites have many benefits for staff, both for personal use and professional learning; however, staff should be aware of how they present themselves online. Staff are encouraged not to publish specific and detailed private thoughts, especially those that might be considered hurtful, harmful or defamatory.

Official school blogs may be created as part of the school curriculum. They will be password-protected and run by a member of staff.

The school expects all staff and pupils to remember that they are representing the school at all times.

### **Cyber bullying**

Cyber bullying, as with any other form of bullying behaviour, is taken very seriously by the school. The appearance of anonymity that can come with using the internet can sometimes make people feel safe to say and do hurtful things that they otherwise would not do in person. However, most messages can be traced back to their creator and may constitute a criminal offence.

#### **Cyber bullying can take many different forms and guises including:**

- email
- instant messaging/chat rooms
- social networking sites
- online gaming
- mobile phone texts, videos and photo messages
- abusing personal information

#### **If an allegation of cyber bullying is made, the school will:**

- take it seriously.
- act as quickly as possible to establish the facts. It may be necessary to examine school systems and logs or contact the service provider in order to identify the bully.
- keep good records of the incident.
- provide support and reassurance to the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour.
- make it clear to the 'bully' that this behaviour will not be tolerated. If there is a group of people involved, they will be spoken to individually and as a whole group. It is important that children who have harmed another, either physically or emotionally, redress their actions and the school will make sure that they understand what they have done and the impact of their

actions.

- If a sanction is used, it will correlate to the seriousness of the incident and the 'bully' will be told why it is being used. They will remove any harmful or inappropriate content that has been published, the service provider may be contacted to do this if they are unable to remove it. They may have their internet access suspended in school.

### **Managing emerging technologies**

New technologies are emerging all the time. The school will risk-assess all new technologies before they are allowed in school; and will consider any educational benefits that they might have. The school aims to keep up-to-date with new technologies and to develop appropriate strategies for dealing with new technological developments.

### **Protecting personal data**

Methodist College Preparatory Department believes that protecting the privacy of our staff and pupils and regulating their safety through data management, control and evaluation is vital.

The school collects personal data from pupils, parents, and staff and processes it using ICT in order to support teaching and learning, monitor and report on pupil and teacher progress, and strengthen our pastoral provision. Through effective data management we can monitor a range of school provisions and evaluate the well-being and academic progression of our school body to ensure that we are doing all we can to support both staff and students.

We take responsibility for ensuring that any data that we collect and process is used correctly and only as is necessary. Pupil assessment, attendance and registration records, special educational needs data, and any relevant medical information are examples of the type of data that the school needs.

**In line with the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2018, and following principles of good practice when processing data, the school will:**

- ensure that data is fairly and lawfully processed
- process data only for limited purposes
- ensure that all data processed is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- ensure that data processed is accurate
- not keep data longer than is necessary
- process the data in accordance with the data subject's rights
- ensure that data is secure

There may be circumstances where the school is required, either by law or in the best interests of our students or staff, to pass information onto external authorities. These authorities are up-to-date with data protection law and have their own policies relating to the protection of any data that they receive or collect.

**This policy is guided by, and takes account of, DE circulars:**

- 2007/1
- 2011/22
- 2013/25
- 2016/26
- 2016/27

# Addressing Bullying

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Every pupil at this school is entitled to be protected from bullying behaviour of any description. This school is completely opposed to this behaviour in any form. It is entirely contrary to the values and principles we work and live by. All members of our school community have a right to work and learn in a safe and caring environment. They also have a responsibility to contribute, in whatever way they can, to the protection and maintenance of such a learning environment.

The staff of Methodist Preparatory Department believe that the whole school community should be made aware of the school's Anti Bullying Policy. This policy is not merely a list of regulations and sanctions, it is also a statement of the school's values and beliefs.

Bullying behaviour occurs in all schools but it is completely against the ethos of Methodist College Prep Department and it is not tolerated. For any organisation to achieve its aims there have to be accepted standards of behaviour and rules. For this to be maintained discipline is key and the Prep Department promotes positive behaviour. Good discipline practices create conditions for effective learning in a positive learning environment where pupils develop responsible attitudes and values. Our discipline policy is a positive policy of encouraging good behaviour and attitudes.

Maintaining good behaviour is essential in every school and all our pupils are expected to behave in a responsible manner; to themselves, to others and to the environment. To achieve this goal, we believe parents must work in partnership with all staff and support the expectations of behaviour for every pupil. We must expect the same standards of behaviour from all children and must therefore ask for the support and co-operation of parents in implementing this policy. This is a policy for staff, pupils and parents.

## What is bullying behaviour?

Bullying behaviour is unacceptable, unkind or hurtful behaviour, which is recurrent or persistent over a period of time and is aimed at an individual or a group of pupils. This could be repeated behaviour that intentionally causes distress to others or makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened.

It may be:

- **Physical** - e.g. hitting, kicking, taking or hiding things
- **Verbal** - e.g. name calling, teasing, insulting
- **Social Exclusion** - e.g. excluding someone from a group
- **Emotional** - e.g. giving 'looks', being unfriendly, causing someone to lose self-esteem
- **Cyber bullying** - e.g. use of social media to name call / threaten.

These examples are unacceptable behaviour BUT only constitute bullying behaviour when they are recurrent / persistent, targeted with intent and where a power imbalance between pupils is evident.  
**Not all unkind or unacceptable behaviour is bullying behaviour.**

Pupils may be targeted on the basis of their:

- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| ● personal appearance | ● race                 |
| ● religion            | ● disability / ability |
| ● sexuality           | ● cultural             |
| ● gender              | ● other?               |

## THE SCHOOL WILL ENDEAVOUR TO:

*(according to the age of the children and, when appropriate)*

- Create an open atmosphere and be proactive in minimising the risks
- Establish procedures to create a safe and secure environment for all
- Treat bullying behaviour as a serious matter which can have a serious impact on the pupil who is being bullied
- Encourage the pupils experiencing bullying behaviour (or their friends or parents/guardians or those who witness this type of behaviour) to speak to an adult in school and to be confident that appropriate action will be taken
- Treat the pupil who has been bullied in a supportive manner
- Take swift and appropriate actions
- Involve parents/guardians as early as possible, if deemed appropriate
- Alert staff to the dangers of bullying behaviour and the need for vigilance
- Include other agencies as required
- Highlight bullying behaviour and ways of combating it in the curriculum of each year group
- Conduct a survey in each class and discuss ways to help.

#### **ACTION TO REDUCE BULLYING BEHAVIOUR:**

- Ensure through the Positive Behaviour Policy that pupils, staff and parents are aware of their responsibilities
- Communicate the Anti-Bullying Policy to all members of the school community
- Agreed procedures for responding to incidents - staff report to Pastoral Care Co-ordinator who will inform Deputy Head and Head if required
- Procedures for logging incidents - Pastoral Care Book and Pastoral Care Records
- Use of staff meetings and Pastoral Care Book to make staff aware of incidents and concerns
- Staff follow agreed procedure when dealing with a pupil believed to be bullying
- Swift and considered action
- Talk to parents of the pupil being bullied and or the pupil displaying bullying behaviour if deemed appropriate
- Encourage pupils to tell and report any case of bullying behaviour
- Encourage positive attitudes to Anti-Bullying within the school e.g. assemblies and class discussions
- Encourage positive relationships; teacher - pupil, pupil - pupil and school - parents
- Aim to persuade a pupil who is displaying bullying behaviour to feel or show some concern for the pupil being bullied and to change his or her behaviour
- Use of Yearly Transition forms by teachers to inform staff about pupils in their class
- Adequate supervision in playgrounds
- Opportunities for developing positive peer relationships - e.g. prefect system
- Class Council and School Council can be used to raise issues
- Use of PDMU materials and Circle Time if appropriate
- The Head of Department and SMT to monitor behaviour in school.

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT will:

- Establishes the ethos of the school and sets the climate of mutual support and praise for success, so making bullying less likely
- Responsible for implementing the anti-bullying strategy
- Ensures all staff are aware of the school policy and know how to deal with incidents of bullying behaviour
- Ensures that the pupils know that bullying behaviour is wrong and is unacceptable in school
- Ensures that staff have sufficient training to be equipped to deal with incidents of bullying behaviour
- Can report to governors on the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy on request.

#### STAFF will:

- Demonstrate by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect of our pupils
- Foster in our pupils self-esteem, a sense of their rights and their responsibilities to others
- Emphasise the importance of telling a trusted adult about bullying behaviour when it happens or is observed
- Discuss bullying behaviour and the impact it can have on the pupil being bullied and the pupil displaying bullying behaviour
- Acknowledge appropriate behaviour
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying behaviour
- Take all reports of this type of behaviour seriously and act promptly - listen and respond
- Follow up any complaint by a parent and report back on the action taken
- Record all incidents and pass on to Pastoral Care Co-ordinator
- Inform the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator of all incidents
- Communicate with all concerned, in line with procedures
- Attend meetings with pupils or parents if deemed appropriate
- Monitor the situation following immediate actions and talk to the pupils concerned after action has been taken
- The Pastoral Care Co-ordinator together with the teacher will investigate the incident, speaking to pupils concerned
- The Pastoral Care Co-ordinator or teacher will inform parents (of the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour and or the pupil displaying bullying behaviour) if deemed appropriate
- The Pastoral Care Co-ordinator or teacher will discuss action to be taken and sanctions with the Deputy Head and or Head of Department.

#### PUPILS

We expect our pupils to:

- Refrain from bullying behaviour
- Intervene in bullying behaviour unless it is unsafe for them to do so
- Report all incidents of bullying behaviour and speak out
- Respect and support peers
- Adhere to the School's Positive Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy.



## PARENTS

We ask our Parents to support their children and the school by:

- Watching for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children which might be evidence of something going on
- Encouraging their child to report any incidents of bullying behaviour
- Explaining the implications of allowing this type of behaviour to continue unchecked
- Telling children not to retaliate to any forms of bullying behaviour
- Being sympathetic and supportive towards their children
- Keeping a written record of any incidents of bullying behaviour
- Informing the school of any suspected incidents, even if their child is not involved
- Co-operating with the school, if their child is involved in bullying behaviour, to resolve the difficulty in a way which stops it from recurring
- Supporting the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

## PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH INCIDENTS

- Class teachers will attempt to deal with incidents of unacceptable behaviour
- Teachers will assess if it is bullying behaviour using the school definition
- Teachers will pass concerns of any bullying behaviour onto the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator
- Teachers will record noteworthy events in writing for the Pastoral Care Records
- Any written notes made by teachers on incidents will be given to the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator and placed in Pastoral Care Record book
- Teachers and Pastoral Care Co-ordinator will gather as much reliable information as possible to be clear as to whether the incident represents bullying behaviour
- Teachers will support the child who is being bullied
- Bullying behaviour incidents will be recorded in the Pastoral Care book for other staff to be made aware of
- The situation is monitored by the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator and class teacher
- Teachers and the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator may meet with parents to discuss incidents
- Staff assess appropriate interventions and plan with reference to the Positive Behaviour Policy and NIABF guidance document, 'Responding to Alleged Bullying Behaviour'
- Further steps will be taken to support and respond to the needs of the pupils; they are the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour and the pupil displaying bullying behaviour as and when appropriate
- The Deputy Head and Head of Department are informed of all cases of bullying behaviour
- If the behaviour continues, the case will be referred to the Head of Department, who will contact the parents to arrange a formal interview
- The Head of Department may need to discuss the necessity of involving outside agencies, such as Education Welfare Officer, Behaviour Support Team or Educational Psychologist
- In the event of sustained bad/bullying behaviour the Head of Department of the College and the Board of Governors will be informed
- Even with a positive behaviour approach there are times when sanctions will be necessary. The sanctions outlined in the Positive Behaviour Policy will be referred to

- The teacher and Pastoral Care Co-ordinator will continue to monitor the situation.

### **MONITORING AND REVIEWING**

Behaviour on a whole school and individual basis will be monitored by the following means:

- Class teachers record incidents of bullying behaviour for the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator
- Bullying behaviour is recorded by the Pastoral Care co-ordinator
- Individual Education Plans
- Reports - written and oral
- The Head of Department and Pastoral Care Co-ordinator will monitor implementation of this policy
- The Head of Department monitors this policy on a day-to-day basis.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF**

Pastoral Care Co-ordinator will attend any relevant training days and inform staff of any changes.

### **LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES**

Pupil welfare embraces all aspects of pastoral care, including anti-bullying. The welfare of all our pupils is addressed through our other school policies.

- Child Protection
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy
- SEN Policy
- Acceptable Use of the Internet
- E - Safety Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy

### **ADVICE TO FAMILIES**

- Do not confront each other
- Be aware of danger signs - not wanting to come to school, bed wetting etc.
- Talk calmly to your child if he/she is the bully
- Work out the underlying cause
- Help the child to change their behaviour

### **SUGGESTION FOR PARENTS**

The aim should be that each child eventually acquires a high standard of self- discipline

- Do not encourage your child to look for **one best friend**. It is very difficult if they fall out or if one child leaves the school. It is better for the development of healthy social relationships that you encourage your child to have a wide variety of friends in different social situations. If one group has a disagreement it is not the end of the world!
- Provide opportunities for your children to continue their friendship with various classmates outside school
- Encourage friendly behaviour e.g. sharing their toys, ideas for games, playing by the rules, taking turns to decide what to do next etc.
- Try to encourage some friendships with children of similar interests/personalities
- Try to ensure that your children do not dominate other children
- Try to ensure that your children learn to stand up for themselves and think about the consequences of their actions

- Try to ensure that your children do not tease or hurt other children in any situation
- Try to teach your children what an acceptable and considerate standard of behaviour is
- Accept that all children misbehave to a greater or lesser degree and can get caught up in situations without thinking
- Do not take it personally if your child is involved in an incident
- Do not automatically believe your child to be **completely** innocent
- Accept that the school has often to implement one punishment for all involved because conflicting stories make it difficult to discover the 'absolute truth'.
- Accept that if you disagree with the school's handling of a matter you should speak to the class teacher, the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator or the Head of Department. It is vitally important that you do not discuss your feelings on the matter in front of the child
- Accept that the school and parents should support each other so that the child receives a clear message about duty, discipline and standards of civilised behaviour.

## **How Can You Tell If a Child Is Being Bullied?**

### **Behavioural Symptoms**

- ◆ Does not want to come to school
- ◆ Has damaged or lost clothing or possessions
- ◆ Asks for extra money
- ◆ Arriving late for school
- ◆ Avoiding friends at school
- ◆ Is doing poorly at their work
- ◆ Refusing to tell what's wrong

### **Physical Symptoms**

- ◆ Sleeps badly or cries at night
- ◆ Stops eating
- ◆ Unexplained bruises
- ◆ Has mystery illness
- ◆ Feels sick frequently in class

### **Emotional Symptoms**

- ◆ Becomes easily startled, irritable or aggressive
- ◆ Is quieter than usual, withdrawn or distressed
- ◆ Loss of confidence
- ◆ Bursts into tears

# Intimate Care

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## Introduction

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up a pupil after they have soiled themselves) to intimate personal areas. In most cases such care will involve cleaning for hygiene purposes as part of a staff member's duty of care.

The issue of intimate care is a sensitive one and will require staff to be respectful of the child's needs. There shall be a high awareness of child protection issues. Staff behaviour must be open to scrutiny and staff must work in partnership with parents/carers to provide continuity of care to children/young people wherever possible.

When an incident occurs, all staff, teaching and ancillary, must follow these steps in as professional a manner as possible, ensuring that they focus on preserving the child's welfare, privacy and dignity throughout while giving the child control over the procedure.

Intimate care in the school will address one of the following areas -

- Supporting a child with dressing/undressing
- Supporting a child with toileting
- Providing comfort or support for a distressed pupil
- Cleaning a child who has soiled him/herself, has vomited or feels unwell

## Supporting dressing/undressing

Sometimes it will be necessary for staff to aid a child in getting dressed or undressed. Staff will always encourage children to attempt undressing and dressing unaided.

## Supporting a child with toileting

Young children may require support when toileting. Staff will encourage children when cleaning themselves but will not enter the toilet stall. Staff members will make the teacher in charge aware that they are doing so. Parents will be informed at the open evening that staff will not clean their children on a daily basis; only in the event of a toilet accident.

## Providing comfort or support

Extremely distressed children may seek physical comfort from staff. Where children require physical support, staff need to be aware that physical contact must be kept to a minimum and be child initiated. When comforting a child or giving reassurance, the member of staff's hands should always be seen and a child should not be positioned close to a member of staff's body which could be regarded as intimate. If physical contact is deemed to be appropriate staff must provide care which is suitable to the age, gender and situation of the child.

## Soiling

### Permission

- The parents or carers will be asked to come and clean/change the child
- If parents/carers cannot come, then their permission must be sought and given on every occasion for a staff member to clean the child.
- If the parents/carers cannot be contacted, then the Head of Department will be consulted as to the next step to be taken
- If the child is at risk, then the staff will act appropriately. If they need to come into some level of physical contact in order to aid the child, they will record everything in detail

## **Procedure**

- The child is comforted in a separate area to ensure privacy but the member of staff assigned should not be alone or should be visible to other staff at all times.
- The child should be kept fully clothed as much as possible, throughout the cleaning process
- When touching a child, staff should always be aware of the possibility of invading a child's privacy and will respect the child's wishes and feelings.
- The procedure is discussed in a friendly and reassuring way with the child throughout the process
- The child should be asked and give permission for any part of the cleaning process, encouraging him/her to clean him/herself as far as possible
- Physical contact must be kept to the minimum possible to carry out the necessary cleaning
- Privacy is arranged, appropriate to the child's age and the situation
- The incident and the action taken should be recorded in the log book and also in the child's homework book

## **Hygiene**

- Staff must follow basic hygiene procedures to avoid infection
- Protective disposable gloves and an apron should be worn
- All vomit, blood or excrement must be wiped up and flushed down the toilet where possible
- Soiled clothing should be put in a plastic bag, unwashed and sent home with the child
- A change of clothes should be provided for the child to wear

## **Protection for staff**

Members of staff need to have regard to the danger of allegations being made against them and take precautions to avoid this risk. These should include:

- Gaining a verbal agreement from another member of staff that the action being taken is necessary
- Allowing the child, wherever possible, to express a preference to choose his/her carer and encouraging them to say if they find a carer to be unacceptable
- Allow the child a choice in the sequence of care
- Be aware of and responsive to the child's reactions
- If a child touches a member of staff in a way that makes him/her feel uncomfortable, this must be gently but firmly discouraged.

## **Students/Volunteers**

- Should not carry out intimate care procedures but if required, should do so only under the supervision of a trained member of staff following consultation with the student's college supervisors. (Please see Adult Code of Conduct for further information.)

# Mobile Phone

The possession and use of mobile phones by primary school pupils is increasing in Primary Schools. The use of mobile phones, particularly with the advent of increasingly sophisticated equipment and camera phones, presents a number of issues. Mobile phones are valuable items *which can be lost, stolen or damaged*. The use of mobile phones with integrated cameras when *used inappropriately, can lead to cyber bullying and other child protection issues*.

## Rationale

Methodist College Preparatory Department accepts that it is not realistic to have a policy which prohibits pupils from taking phones to school. Not only would it be impractical to forbid pupils from carrying them, but it is believed that a number of parents would be concerned for health and safety reasons if their child were not allowed to carry a phone at all and might therefore be unable to contact their parents in respect of any situation that might arise.

However, it is the Methodist College Preparatory policy to:

- Discourage and ask parents to discourage all pupils from bringing mobile phones to schools on the grounds that they may be lost or stolen and they can be used inappropriately,
- Include a statement on this policy in the School Information Handbook, which is issued annually to parents.
- 

Where a pupil does bring a mobile phone to school it must be given to the class teacher. The phone will remain switched off during the school day and may not be used, for any purpose, on school premises, grounds or during off-site school activities (such as school swimming or sports activities.)

## POLICY

### Pupils:

- Pupils are not to bring mobile phones to school unless a parent feels that it is absolutely necessary,
- If necessary P7 pupils may bring a mobile phone to school. This is considered to be a privilege for Primary 7 children and is a privilege that can be removed,
- A form, available from the school office, needs to be filled in by the parent stating the reason why their child needs to bring a phone to school,
- The school principal grants permission for a mobile phone to be brought into school.
- Under special circumstances, Mr Jennings may give permission for a younger pupil to bring a mobile phone to school,
- All such authorised phones must be switched off and be given to the class teacher at 8:45am each day and the phone will be returned to the child at 3.00pm,
- It is the responsibility of the child to remember to collect the phone. This policy also applies to children participating in after school classes and activities,
- Should parents need to contact pupils or vice versa, this should be done following the usual school procedures via the school office.

**Telephone numbers:**            **Fullerton House 028 9020 5217**  
   **Downey House 028 9028 6660**

**If parents are asked to accompany children on school trips they are requested not to use any digital device.**

- If a pupil is found to have an unauthorised phone either on them, or in their school bag etc. between the hours of 8:45am and 3:00 pm the phone will be confiscated. The mobile phone will be stored by the class teacher and kept until a parent comes and collects the phone.

Permission to have it in school may be withdrawn by the principal. Unauthorised phones will be confiscated and returned only to parents.

- If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other pupils or teachers, this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to the school's Discipline Procedures. The phone will only be returned to a parent.
- If images of other pupils or teachers have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil in the presence of a teacher and a parent.
- Parents are advised that Methodist College Preparatory accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones which are brought into the school or school grounds.

Please talk to your child about who is entitled to use his/her mobile number. Text messages can be used to bully pupils.

This policy supports the, Anti-bullying, Child Protection and Internet Acceptable Use policies. It has been endorsed by the Board of Governors, staff, parents and pupils and will be monitored, reviewed and amended as required.

**Staff:**

Staff members do not give out their phone number or that of any other staff member to pupils or parents/guardians. Mindful of the duties and responsibilities assigned to staff in working with children, it is vital that staff be engaged with children at all working times. Staff are trusted to use their phones accordingly. Use of phones should be discreet and not in the presence of pupils, unless unavoidable.

**Work Calls**

Calls to parents should be kept as short as possible using only school phones. Where a lengthy conversation with parents/guardians is required, appointments should be made to meet parents.

**Personal Calls**

In general, personal calls should be carried out outside of teaching time. In cases of urgency, a staff member should use discretion in making calls and ensure that their classroom is supervised during the call. Incoming personal calls should be reserved for urgent matters only.



## MCB Preparatory Department



### MOBILE PHONE PERMISSION FORM FOR PUPILS

Pupil's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

*To safeguard all pupils in our school we discourage mobile phones being brought to school. When used inappropriately they can lead to cyber bullying and other child protection issues.*

I would like to request permission for my child to have a mobile phone in school for the following reason:

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|                        |           |                          |
|------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| On the following days: | Monday    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                        | Tuesday   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                        | Wednesday | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                        | Thursday  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                        | Friday    | <input type="checkbox"/> |

I have read and discussed the Mobile Phone Policy with my child and he/she understands the requirements stated in the policy.

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Pupil signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Permission granted: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*The pupil's class teacher will receive a copy of this form.*

Please return to the office.



# Positive Behaviour & Discipline

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Methodist College Preparatory Department promotes a high standard of behaviour and an ethos where all members of the school are valued as individuals. The school believes in the development of self - esteem, respect for others and self- discipline.

Great emphasis is placed on positive reinforcement of behaviour through praise. Children's confidence and self-esteem are developed through encouragement, incentives and rewards, both verbal and written.

This policy sets out the expectations of behaviour where staff, pupils and parents seek to create an environment which encourages and reinforces positive behaviour and the fostering of positive attitudes. In addition, it sets out the consequences for poor behaviour, should it arise.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Methodist College Preparatory Department Anti-Bullying and Safe Handling Policies.

## Aims

- To foster an environment in which everybody feels safe and secure and where each person is treated fairly
- To ensure that every member of the school community feels valued and respected
- To create an environment where good behaviour is encouraged and valued
- To define acceptable standards of behaviour
- To promote self-esteem, self- discipline, and positive relationships
- To ensure that every member of the school community behaves in a considerate way towards others.

Methodist College Preparatory Department believes that all children, regardless of race, gender, religion and disability have the right to learn in a caring, nurturing and supportive environment.

We have a high regard for our children's spiritual, moral, emotional and psychological well-being. We endeavour to provide a caring and creative learning environment. We promote the right for children to speak out and seek help in all aspects of their well-being. We foster an environment in which everyone feels safe, secure and respected.

## How will we achieve our aims?

- Praise and reward is the key to creating a positive atmosphere where children have the opportunity to succeed.
- Establish a set of school rules that children know and understand.
- In addition to the school rules, each class also has its own 'Classroom Charter', which is agreed by the children and displayed on the wall of every classroom. If there are incidents of anti-social behaviour, the class teacher can discuss these with the whole class or in a circle time activity.
- The class teacher discusses with the class guidelines and expectations for pupils when in the corridors, classroom, playground, swimming pool, the dining hall/canteen, assembly and representing the school off site.
- Establish a praise and reward system.
- Adults will lead by example and model good practice.
- All children will undertake PDMU<sup>1</sup> and RSE<sup>2</sup> activities.

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<sup>1</sup> PDMU: Personal Development & Mutual Understanding

<sup>2</sup> RSE: Relationships and Sexuality Education

## **The Curriculum and Learning**

We believe that an appropriately structured curriculum and effective learning contribute to good behaviour. Thorough planning for the needs of individual children and structured feedback, all help to avoid the alienation and disaffection which can lie at the root of poor behaviour.

Marking and record keeping will be used both as a supportive activity and providing feedback to children on their progress and achievements. The children's efforts are valued and their progress is important.

## **Classroom Management**

Classroom management and teaching methods have an important influence on children's behaviour. The classroom environment gives clear messages to the children about the extent to which they and their efforts are valued.

Classrooms should be organised to develop independence and personal initiative. Furniture should be placed to provide an environment conducive to on-task behaviour. Materials and resources should be arranged to aid accessibility and reduce uncertainty and disruption.

Displays should help to develop self-esteem through demonstrating the value of each individual's contribution. Overall the classroom should provide a welcoming environment.

Teaching methods should encourage enthusiasm and active participation for all. Lessons should aim to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding which will enable the children to work and play in co-operation with others.

## **Rewards**

Our approach is to treat children positively by praising them, offering them encouragement and acknowledging their achievements. We praise and reward effort, achievement and good behaviour in a variety of ways.

In assemblies, as well as acknowledging and celebrating the individual efforts and successes in Pupil of the Week Awards, classes are awarded certificates for Playground Line - up Awards. Personal achievements achieved outside the school are also celebrated.

In the classroom, private/class praise and encouragement, stamps and stickers and written comments in books by teachers, are a regular occurrence. End of year reports are used to comment on the behaviour and general attitudes of the pupils.

## **Positive Behaviour Reward Charts Foundation Stage / Key Stage 1 and 2**

An individual sticker chart for each child to collect stickers is used to promote positive behaviour. The sticker charts will vary in design from class to class to retain interest and to increase expectation. Stickers may be awarded for a wide variety of reasons decided by class teachers. These may include stickers for good manners, kindness, improvement in work, handwriting, pupil of the week and homework.

## **Suggested guidelines for sticker reward system**

- P1 - 10 stickers to complete their chart and receive a reward agreed with the class
- P2 - 12 stickers to complete their chart and receive a reward agreed with the class
- P3 - 14 stickers to complete their chart and receive a reward agreed with the class
- P4 - 16 stickers to complete their chart and receive a reward agreed with the class
- P5 - 18 stickers to complete their chart and receive a reward agreed with the class
- P6 - 20 stickers to complete their chart and receive a reward agreed with the class
- P7 - prefect point award system agreed with the class (see DH & FH Prefect policies)

### Measures for those children who do not respond to rewards:

Staff will:

- Keep teaching/stating the behaviour expected
- Initially ignore the unacceptable behaviour, praising and rewarding good behaviour.
- Highlight good behaviour by others in the presence of the pupil.
- Look for the trigger for unacceptable behaviour.
- Learn what is rewarding to individual pupils.
- If a child is disruptive in class, the teacher will reprimand him or her. The child will be asked to think about what he/she has done.
- If a child has received three consequences, sanctions will be implemented appropriately.
- If a child threatens, hurts or bullies another child, the class teacher records the incident and takes appropriate action.
- If a child repeatedly acts in a way that disrupts or upsets others, the school contacts the child's parents or carers and seeks an appointment in order to discuss the situation, with a view to improving the behaviour of the child.
- The severity of the offence will determine which sanction is imposed.

### Visual Behaviour Charts

The school uses these to encourage good behaviour. The charts will be reviewed daily and throughout all stages, a rule expectation reminder will be given. Children will be encouraged to consider alternative choices they could have made which would have resulted in a more positive outcome. As children progress through the stages, sanctions will be applied which will be immediate, fair, and have a hierarchy appropriate to the behaviour.

In Foundation Stage / Key Stage 1, Visual Charts (e.g. traffic lights or other images chosen by teachers) will be displayed and used to encourage and reward **good behaviour** in each classroom.

In Key Stage 2, 'It's Good to be Green' Behaviour Charts will be displayed and used to encourage and reward **good behaviour**

### Stages:

1. First visual stage – all children start here. Good behaviour is expected. Immediate checking of behaviour with a look, then rule reminder.
2. **Warning** given to child for behaviour.
3. Second visual stage - **(consequence)**.
4. **Warning** given to child for behaviour.
5. Third visual stage – **(consequence)**. Time out in playground during break. Staff on duty should walk child around with them and discuss consequence so that the child can understand why it has happened.
6. Send record of behaviour to Mrs Doherty / Mrs Johnston which will be recorded in The Pastoral Care Incident Book. **Three** behavioural incidents recorded will result in class teachers liaising with parents.

**\*At the end of the week pupils with a 'clean' record of behaviour on their Positive Behaviour Reward Chart will receive an additional sticker.**

Children will have an opportunity to move back a stage in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 if they demonstrate excellent behaviour for the rest of the day.

If a child demonstrates inappropriate behaviour on a daily basis a warning card may be issued.

## **Suggested guidelines for Specialist Teachers**

### **Stages:**

1. Good behaviour is expected. Immediate checking of behaviour with a look, then rule reminder
2. Oral warning will be given to child for behaviour
3. Following two oral warnings the child can be given a warning card to give to class teacher. Specialist to let class teacher and Mrs Doherty / Mrs Johnston know details of misdemeanour.
4. If inappropriate behaviour continues a further warning card can be given followed by a consequence card. \*\*Reference inappropriate behaviour hierarchy on page 8.
5. Warning cards will be held over a 2-week period (due to number of classes each week with specialist) before being cancelled and students starting afresh.

### **Sanctions**

Children will proceed through the list of sanctions below. More serious behaviours will result in Head of Key Stage, Vice Principal and Principal involvement at an early stage. Class teachers will be contacted by teachers on duty on incidents that happen during break and lunchtime. This will also be recorded by Mrs Doherty / Mrs Johnston in the Pastoral Care Incident Book. At all times, staff professional judgement should be used to determine the most appropriate action to take.

1. Card movement on Class Behavioural Charts / Time out from activity if appropriate
2. Position moved in class if deemed appropriate
3. Loss of privilege e.g. missing a playtime
4. A child may be sent to another class for "timeout" to reflect on their behaviour
5. Loss of Friday Treat/ time out in playground during break
6. Head of Key Stage to be informed of bad behaviour

### **Beginning of sanctions / behaviour chart may be introduced**

7. When repeated misbehaviour occurs, parents informed
8. Vice-Principal/Principal to be informed if misbehaviour is significant
9. Vice-Principal / Principal to talk to children about behaviour
10. If inappropriate behaviour continues it becomes a discipline matter. Head of Key Stage, along with class teacher and Pastoral Care Co-ordinator will construct a suitable discipline record. Positive comments to be made as and when appropriate. Chart to be reviewed on a weekly basis.
11. IEP for behaviour drawn up as appropriate
12. Exclusion from school trips and school teams
13. Suspension
14. Expulsion

**Parents may be consulted at any stage throughout the sanction procedure.**

### **The role of the class teacher - It is the responsibility of each teacher to:**

1. Have available a copy of the Positive Behaviour Policy and sanctions to be available in all classrooms
2. Display sanction levels on teachers' desks as guidance for substitute teachers
3. Model appropriate behaviour (in language, self-control and punctuality)
4. Promote honesty and courtesy by example
5. Provide a caring and effective learning environment
6. Encourage relationships based on kindness, respect and understanding of the needs of others
7. Ensure that the school rules are enforced in their classes, and that their classes behave in a responsible manner during lesson time
8. Have high expectations of the children with regard to behaviour, and strive to ensure that all children work to the best of their ability

9. Enforce the 'Classroom Charter' consistently and treat all children in their classes with respect, fairness and understanding
10. Deal with misbehaviour /incidents him / herself in the normal manner and record consequences given by them and specialist teachers. However, if misbehaviour continues, the class teacher should seek help and advice from the other staff, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, SMT or Head of Department
11. Liaise with the SENCO and/or outside agencies such as the educational psychologist, as necessary,
12. Support and guide the progress of each child
13. Report to parents and carers about the progress/behaviour/welfare of each child in their class, in line with the whole-school policy
14. Be familiar with the regulations regarding the use of force by teachers, and in particular the Methodist College Use of Force Policy.

**The role of the Head of Department - It is the responsibility of Head of Department to:**

1. Ensure that this policy is implemented consistently throughout the school and to report to the Principal and/or governors, when requested, on its effectiveness.
2. Ensure the health, safety and welfare of all children in the school.
3. Celebrate examples of exemplary behaviour with the whole school.
4. Support the staff in their implementation of the policy/setting the standards of behaviour.
5. Keep records of all reported serious incidents of misbehaviour. To give fixed-term suspensions to individual children for serious acts of misbehaviour in line with College policies and Education Authority guidelines. For repeated or very serious acts of anti-social behaviour, the Board of Governors may permanently exclude a child.

**Role of Parents and carers – It is hoped parents will:**

1. Inform the class teacher of any changes in circumstances which may affect their child's behaviour.
2. Attend parents'/class/school meetings about school expectations.
3. Co-operate with the teachers to build a supportive dialogue.
4. Support their child in adhering to the school rules and the expectations of good behaviour.
5. Ensure that their child fully understands the school rules and the consequences of not adhering to them.
6. Discuss any concerns with the class teacher promptly. If parents have any concerns about the way that their child has been treated, they should contact the class teacher, Head of Department, College Principal and school governors.

**Role of Pupils**

1. Treat others as they would like to be treated.
2. Respect others regardless of age, gender, race, ability and disability.
3. Accept responsibility for their choices.
4. Follow the agreed behaviour expectations.
5. Follow school rules.
6. Demonstrate good manners.
7. Take care of their personal appearance and belongings.
8. Work collectively with their peers and teams.

**The role of governors**

1. The governing body through the Head of the Department has the responsibility of setting down these general guidelines on standards of discipline and behaviour, and of reviewing their effectiveness. The governors support the Head of Department in adhering to these guidelines.
2. The Head of Department. has the day-to-day authority to implement the school's policy on behaviour and discipline, but should take into account, any advice from the Principal, the Board of Governors and DENI, when making decisions about matters of behaviour.

### Fixed-term and permanent exclusions

1. The Board of Governors has the power to exclude a child from school.
2. If the Board of Governors excludes a child, it will inform the parents or carers immediately, giving reasons for the exclusion. The Head of Department, will inform the parents or carers on how to make an appeal against this decision, to the governing body.

### Drug- and alcohol-related incidents

1. It is the policy of this school that no child should bring any illegal drug, tobacco or alcohol to school. Parents or guardians should notify the school and ask permission in writing, for any prescribed medication to be brought for use by the child. This should be taken directly to the class teacher for safekeeping. The class teacher, or a responsible adult, will supervise the administration of the medication.
2. The school will take very seriously misuse of any substances such as glue, other solvents, or alcohol. The parents or guardians of any child involved will always be notified.

### Monitoring and review

1. The Head of Department monitors the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis and reports to the governing body through the Principal, about major concerns and, if necessary, makes recommendations for further improvements.
2. The school keeps a variety of records concerning incidents of misbehaviour depending on the age of the children involved. Serious incidents are recorded in the Pastoral Care Incident Book or the Bullying Behaviour Book.

### INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR:

#### HIERARCHY OF SUGGESTED SANCTIONS (FOR GUIDANCE) TO ENSURE CONSISTENCY IN ALL CLASSROOMS

| SUGGESTED SANCTIONS<br>1-4                                   | SUGGESTED SANCTIONS<br>1-6                                   | SUGGESTED SANCTIONS 1<br>- 6+ |
|--|--|-------------------------------|
| NOT STAYING IN SEAT  | ARGUING BACK   | KICKING                       |
| FIDGETING  | THROWING THINGS  | FIGHTING                      |
| TEASING  | RUDENESS TO STAFF  | BAD LANGUAGE TO STAFF         |
| TELLING TALES  | RUDENESS TO PEERS  | STEALING (EG MONEY)           |
| PUSHING IN CLASS   | BAD LANGUAGE TO PEERS  | VERBAL ABUSE (STAFF)          |
| PUSHING IN LINES   | DEFIANCE   | PHYSICAL ABUSE (STAFF)        |
| RUNNING / SHOUTING IN<br>CORRIDORS                           | OFFENSIVE GESTURES   |                               |
| INTERRUPTING TEACHER   | SPITTING   | VANDALISM                     |
| OPTING OUT OR REFUSAL TO<br>COMPLY                           | DESTROYING OWN WORK/<br>OTHERS' WORK                         | BULLYING BEHAVIOUR            |
| NAME CALLING   | CONTINUOUS TEASING   |                               |
| SULKING  | STEALING (EG FOOD)   | STEALING                      |
| FAILURE TO BRING<br>HOMEWORK/BOOKS/EQUIPMENT                 | CONTINUOUS FAILURE TO BRING<br>HOMEWORK/BOOKS/EQUIPMENT      |                               |
| INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR IN<br>CLOAKROOMS / CHANGING<br>ROOMS | INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR IN<br>CLOAKROOMS / CHANGING<br>ROOMS |                               |
| INAPPROPRIATE QUESTIONS                                      |  |                               |
| ANSWERING BACK   |  |                               |
| HIDING WORK  |  |                               |
| WEARING INCORRECT UNIFORM                                    |  |                               |
| CHEEKINESS   |  |                               |
| ANY OTHER MINOR INCIDENCES                                   |  |                               |

# Complaints

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## **METHODIST COLLEGE BELFAST**

### **PARENTAL CONTACT WITH THE SCHOOL ABOUT CONCERNS OR PROBLEMS - COMPLAINTS POLICY**

#### **Stage 1 – Contact a Teacher**

Any problem or concern should be raised promptly with your son's/daughter's Tutor. If your concern is of a particularly serious or sensitive nature, you may prefer to discuss it with a member of staff responsible for the area you are concerned about, for example, the relevant Head of Form, Head of Department or Deputy Head of Pastoral Care. All staff will make every effort to resolve your problem promptly at this informal stage. It is our experience that most concerns and potential complaints can best be resolved through informal discussion.

Members of staff will make sure that they understand what you feel went wrong, and will explain their own actions to you. They will discuss how the concern can be best addressed. Of course, this does not mean that in every case they will come round to your point of view but it will help both you and the school to understand both sides of the question. It may also help to prevent a similar problem arising again.

#### **Stage 2 – Contacting a Senior Member of Staff**

If you are dissatisfied with the response you receive, you can bring the matter to the attention of the senior member of staff with responsibility for the particular area in which you have a concern: the relevant Head of Department or Head of Section or the Head of Pastoral Care. This should be done within the five working days of the first discussion about your concern. You may be invited to come into school to discuss your concern and it may be appropriate for another member of staff to be present. The senior member of staff will carry out an investigation where this is necessary or would prove helpful and will seek to resolve the matter to your satisfaction.

#### **Stage 3 – Contacting the Principal**

If you remain dissatisfied after your contact with the senior member of staff, you can bring the matter to the attention of the Principal. This can be done by making an appointment to discuss the problem or you may wish to put your concerns in writing to the Principal. You should make contact with the Principal's Office within ten working days of your discussion with the senior member of staff, making it clear if you wish the matter to be dealt with as a complaint.



The Principal may ask a Vice-Principal to conduct a full investigation of the complaint and to interview any members of staff or pupils involved or he may deal with the matter himself. In both cases, you will receive a written response to your complaint which you may wish to discuss with the Vice-Principal or the Principal.

If the matter has been investigated by a Vice-Principal and you remain dissatisfied, you should arrange an appointment with the Principal.

If your original concern was about an action by the Principal, you should put your complaint in writing to the Chairman of the Board of Governors (stage 4).

#### **Stage 4 – Contacting the Chairman of the Board of Governors**

If you are not satisfied with the Principal's response, you may contact the Chairman of the Board of Governors. The Chairman's name and how to contact him/her, is available from the Principal's Office. You must provide details of the complaint in writing and this should be lodged with the Chairman within ten working days of the issue of the written response by the Principal.

The Chairman will investigate your complaint and, in most cases, seek to resolve the matter through discussion with you and the Principal. At the end of this stage the Chairman will provide you with a written response.

#### **Stage 5 – Contacting the Board of Governors**

If you are not satisfied with the Chairman's response at the end of stage 4, the complaint can be referred to the Board of Governors by writing to the Chairman or Secretary of the Board. You must provide full details of your complaint, setting out the specific grounds for dissatisfaction with the handling or the outcome of the complaint. The Board of Governors will ask a small panel of governors to investigate your complaint. You may be invited to speak to the panel at a meeting and be accompanied by a friend or representative. After the meeting you will be advised of the outcome in writing.

The decision of the Board of Governors is final.

If you remain dissatisfied you may refer your complaint to the Northern Ireland Public Service Ombudsman.



## Safeguarding Consultation

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Please state your response to this consultation below.

I have a query concerning the following policy ☒

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| <b>Pastoral Care</b>                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Child Protection</b>                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>E-Safety</b>                            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Anti-Bullying</b>                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Intimate Care</b>                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Mobile Phone</b>                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Positive Behaviour &amp; Discipline</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Complaints</b>                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |

My comment or question is \_\_\_\_\_

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Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please forward this to either of the school offices for attention.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this consultation.

Kind regards

*Mr Alan Jennings*

*Head of MCB Preparatory Department*

May 2019