



St. Mary's Primary School and Nursery Class



Child Protection Procedure Child Protection Policy

Date: August, 2014

Introduction

St. Mary's Primary School and Nursery Class is committed to the protection of children and regards the safeguarding and promoting of the interests and wellbeing of children as of paramount concern. We are also committed to the protection of vulnerable children from exploitative relationships.

St. Mary's Primary School and Nursery Class consider it the duty of all those employed or involved with the organisation, to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of all children with whom they come into contact, including reporting any abuse discovered or suspected.

Who needs protection?

Children and young people under the age of 16 and young people between the ages of 16 and 18 who are affected by disability or are vulnerable.

What is child abuse?

The general definition of child abuse adopted in Scottish Office guidance refers to circumstances where "a child or young person's basic needs are not being met in a manner which is appropriate to his or her individual needs and stages of development and the child is, or will be, at risk through avoidable acts of commission or omission on the part of their parent(s), sibling(s) or other relative(s) or a carer. (i.e. the person(s) while not a parent who has actual custody of, charge of, or control over a child)." Additional information in Appendix 1.

What to do if you think a child or young person is at risk of abuse

Be supportive to the child or young person. Listen with care, but do not ask any unnecessary questions. Take what the child or young person is saying seriously, and advise them you will have to pass the information on;

Write down the nature of your concern (using the school's Record of Concern paperwork) and anything the child or young person may have told you using, so far as possible, the words used by the child or young person. Remember to sign and date the notes taken;

Immediately report the grounds of your concern to the Head Teacher (Brendan Duffy) who will take steps to pass the information on to the appropriate person or organisation who will investigate the concerns. **Do not delay in reporting your concerns. Where possible, advise the Head Teacher (Brendan Duffy) on the same day the concern arises;** and

If you are unhappy with the response from the named person, you should contact the local Social Work Services Office and outline your concerns and the basis for them. (See important contacts).

Confidentiality

If a child or young person may be at risk of harm, this will always override a professional or organisational requirement to keep information confidential. Those employed or involved with the organisation have a responsibility to act to make sure that a child whose safety or welfare may be at risk is protected from harm. Children, young people and their parents will always be told this.

Action to be taken by the named person

If there is direct evidence or suspicion of child abuse the matter must be reported immediately. The employee should not wait to gather evidence, nor agree to keep the information secret or discuss the matter with others.

Heads/Managers/CP Co-ordinators should immediately notify the duty senior social worker at the social work area office all cases where there are grounds

for concern about child abuse. A medical emergency should be reported immediately to the Medical Services and, if required, first aid should be administered before reporting the incident to the duty senior social worker.

Urgent circumstances may require help from the police, for example to immediately avoid further abuse, to ensure the immediate pursuit of an alleged abuser or to avoid destruction of evidence.

What happens next?

It is the duty of Social Work Services to investigate matters of concern in relation to the protection of the child or young person. Where it is alleged a crime has been committed against a child, the matter is likely to be investigated jointly with the Police.

The investigating Social Worker / Police Officer may require to speak to the person with whom the concerns originated. You should co-operate fully with any future enquiries.

What if it is someone within the organisation that you are concerned about?

If you have observed a member of the organisation acting in a way that has caused you to be concerned, and feel the matter needs to be investigated you should contact the Head Teacher (Brendan Duffy) outlining your concerns and the basis for them. The named person will take your concerns seriously and decide on an appropriate course of action. This may involve the use of the organisations disciplinary procedures and / or a referral to Social Work Services / Police.

If the concerns involve the manager / named person, this should be reported to the Director / Chief Executive of the organisation or to Social Work Services / Police.

Supporting the child or young person

The child or young person is likely to continue to be involved with the organisation following the reporting of the concerns. Links should be maintained with the Social Work Services office involved in any investigation, in order to offer the appropriate support to the child / family.

It is important that employees and those involved with the child or young person act in a supportive manner. You should

Continue to listen with care;

Reassure the child or young person he / she was right to tell, if appropriate;

Affirm the child or young person's feelings as expressed by them;

Do not question / interrogate the child or young person;

Do not show disbelief;

Avoid being judgmental;

Do not introduce personal or third party experiences of abuse;
and

Avoid displaying strong emotions.

Historical Abuse

Where a child or adult discloses historical abuse, the organisation's child protection reporting procedure must be followed. A full discussion should take place with the named person within the organisation to agree what action is required to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the individual and others.

Training and awareness:

Employees / volunteers will be made aware of the existence of the Child Protection Policy, and their responsibilities in relation to the child protection process.

For example:

Through the provision of training

Or

By issuing a copy of the policy to all new staff members.

Or

Publicising its existence in strategic parts of the office

Staff can access this policy at all times at the following location (provide details)- Child Protection Noticeboard (in the school and nursery).

Named Responsible Person	
Name	<i>Brendan Duffy</i>
Position within Organisation / Title	<i>Head Teacher</i>
Address	St. Mary's Primary School, Dundyvane Road, Whifflet, Coatbridge, ML5 4BA
Tel No (Day)	01236 794 860
In absence of responsible person, please contact	<i>Roberta McAvoy</i> <i>(DHT)</i>

Social Work Local Offices (CHCP's)	622 100 (Coatbridge Social Work)
Social Work Services – Out of Hours Service	0800 121 4114

Appendix 1

The lists below are by no means exhaustive but are designed to give employees and people involved with the organisation some guidance on how to recognise child abuse. Any information has to be seen in the context of the child or young person's whole situation and circumstances.

Different types of abuse may overlap or co-exist.

Physical Abuse

Defined as "**actual or attempted physical injury to a child, under the age of 16 where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented**".

Signs of possible physical abuse:-

Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent;

Implausible excuses given to explain injuries;

Refusal to discuss injuries;

Untreated injuries or delay in reporting them;

Excessive physical punishment;

Arms and legs kept covered even in hot weather;

Fear of returning home;

Aggression towards others;

Running away;

Administration of toxic substances.

Physical Neglect

Defined as occurring **"when a child's essential needs are not met and this is likely to cause impairment to physical health and development. Such needs include food, clothes, cleanliness, shelter and warmth. A lack of appropriate care results in persistent or severe exposure, through negligence, to circumstances which endanger the child."**

Signs of possible physical neglect:

Constant hunger or inappropriate/ erratic eating patterns;

Poor personal hygiene;

Constant tiredness;

Lack of adequate clothing;

Failure to seek appropriate/necessary medical attention;

Unhygienic home conditions.

Non-Organic Failure to Thrive

Defined as **"children who significantly fail to reach normal growth and developmental milestones (i.e. physical growth, weight, motor skills, organic reasons must have been medically eliminated and a diagnosis of non-organic failure to thrive has been established."**

Signs of possible non-organic failure to thrive

Significant lack of growth;

Weight loss;

Hair loss;

Poor skin or muscle tone;

Circulatory disorders;

Lethargy;

Emotional Abuse.

Defined as **"failure to provide for the child's basic emotional needs such as to have a severe effect on the behaviour and development of the child"**.

Signs of possible emotional abuse;

Low self esteem;

Continual self deprecation;

Sudden speech disorder / refusal to speak;

Fear of carers;

Severe hostility / aggression towards other children;

Significant decline in concentration span;

Self harm.

Sexual Abuse Defined as **"any child below the age of 16 may be deemed to have been sexually abused when any person(s), by design or neglect exploits the child, directly or indirectly, with any activity intended to lead to the sexual arousal or other forms of gratification of that person or any other person(s) including organised networks."**

This definition holds whether or not there has been genital contact and whether or not the child is said to have initiated, or consented to, the behaviour.

Signs of possible sexual abuse

Sleep disturbances or nightmares;

Complaints of genital itching or pain;

Self harm;

Eating disorders;

Unexplained pregnancy;

Acting in sexually explicit manner;

Anxiety / depression / withdrawn;

Fear of undressing e.g. for physical exercise;

Low self esteem;

Inappropriate sexual awareness;

Running away;

Developmental regression;

Lack of trust in adults or over familiarity with adults.

