



Stranmillis Primary School & **Stranmillis Nursery Unit**

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Date: August 2024

Rationale

This policy has been written in accordance with *Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for schools*, DENI 2019 and in conjunction with *Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland*, DHSSPSNI (August 2017) and Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) Procedures Manual - 2017)

Stranmillis Primary School's Child Protection Policy aims to provide a caring, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social, physical and emotional development of the individual pupil.

All staff and volunteers fully recognise the contribution they make to safeguarding the children in our care and in protecting ourselves from false accusations.

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 states that *'the welfare of the child must be of paramount consideration'*. Schools have a safe guarding responsibility towards the children and young people in their charge. *'In all matters relating to safeguarding and child protection procedures or policies, the best interests of the child must be the paramount consideration'*. (Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for schools, DENI 2019)

Our central concern, therefore, will at all times be the safety of our children. In any conflict of interests, the children's safety must and will override all other considerations including the good name of the school or loyalty to our colleagues. **Every concern about the welfare of a child will be followed up by staff in the school.**

The purpose of the procedures set out in this policy is to protect our pupils by ensuring that every adult who works in our school – teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers - has clear guidance on the action to take when abuse or neglect is suspected. The issue of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school and we will work with relevant agencies for the benefit of the child.

The Safeguarding Team at Stranmillis Primary School

(Chair) Principal: Mrs Linda Wilson

Designated Teacher for Child Protection: Mrs Linda Wilson

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection: Mr Peter McKane

Chair of Governors: Dr Maureen Thatcher

Designated Governor for Child Protection: **To be appointed**

Definitions of Abuse

Child abuse occurs when a child/young person is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. 'Impairment of health' in the definition of harm includes *impairment to a child as a result of ill treatment of another person or abusive behaviour directed at another person, regardless of whether the child has seen, heard or been present during the ill-treatment or behaviour*. Children/young people may be abused in many settings, in a family, in an institution or community setting, by those known to them, or, by a stranger. There are different types of abuse and a child/young person may suffer more than one of them. (Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) Procedures Manual - 2017)

There are different types of abuse; 5 definitions and 4 categories (the categories being for registration purposes on the Child Protection Register):

Physical Abuse – is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child. (DHSSPS August 2017)

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

Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

Emotional abuse may involve bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers. (DHSSPS revised 2017)

Possible signs or symptoms of emotional abuse include:

- Bullying of others

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

Sexual Abuse – is when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via e-technology). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. (DHSSPS revised 2017)

Possible signs or symptoms of sexual abuse include:

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

Neglect – is the failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse. (DHSSPS 2017)

Possible signs or symptoms of neglect include:

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

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) ¹ - 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.

¹ Although 'exploitation' is not included in the categories of registration for the Child Protection Register, professionals should recognise that the abuse resulting from or caused by the exploitation of children and young people can be categorised within the existing CPR categories as children who have been exploited will have suffered from physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or a combination of these forms of abuse.

(DHSSPS 2017)

A child may suffer or be at risk of suffering from one or more types of abuse; abuse may take place on a single occasion or may occur repeatedly over time.

Grooming and Images of Child Abuse

Grooming is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be male or female. They could be any age. Many children and young people do not understand that they have been groomed, or that what has happened is abuse. (NSPCC)

If school staff, parents or pupils suspect or are made aware of any of the following illegal acts it must be reported to the Designated Teacher immediately:

- a child under 16 enticed or coerced to engage in sexually explicit conduct on-line;
- importing or transporting obscenity using telecommunications public networks; or
- knowingly receiving images of child abuse whether via the internet or other digital device (e.g. mobile phone);

Images which appear to be photographs whether made by computer graphics or otherwise are also covered under Sexual Offences legislation.

Refer to section headed E-SAFETY POLICY (revised 2023)

CONFIDENTIALITY

Where a child confides in a member of staff or a volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret it is important that the child is told sensitively that it may be necessary to share the information with those who need to know about it, and explain that this is important to ensure the child's safekeeping.

All staff and volunteers who receive sensitive information about children or parents in the course of their professional duties should be aware that such information is confidential, and is not to be made the subject of general conversation, or disclosed to others outside the school other than statutory officials, as required by this policy.

All records of a safeguarding / child protection nature are held securely within the school. Access to such records is restricted to the Principal and the Designated Teacher (DT) /Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT) for Child Protection.

The Role Of The Designated Teacher (DT) And Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT)

The DT will:

- provide initial induction and training to all school staff including support staff on the safeguarding and child protection policy;
- be available to discuss the child protection concerns of any member of staff;
- be responsible for managing and keeping records of all child protection concerns;
- make referrals to Social Services or PSNI Public Protection Units where appropriate;
- develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at case conferences;
- liaise with EA/CCMS Designated Officers for child protection;
- keep the school Principal informed;
- develop and update the school's child protection policy;
- ensure parents receive a summarised copy of the main details of The Safeguarding Policy every year, which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the school's role in this;

(The full policy will be available on the school website. A hard copy can be obtained from the school office on request.)

- promote a child protection ethos in the school;
- write termly reports to the Board of Governors regarding child protection;

- maintain all records pertaining to child protection in a secure location (accessed only by the safeguarding team as appropriate);
- ensure, when a pupil on the child protection register changes school, that the designated teacher in the receiving school is informed of the child's circumstances and who the social worker is; and
- ensure that when a child on the child protection register has missed two consecutive days from school, the child's social worker is informed of the situation (following regionally agreed protocols).

The DDT will:

Support and undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection as required.

Procedures for Reporting Suspected (or Disclosed) Child Abuse

The designated teacher for child protection (DT) is Mrs Wilson. **In her absence, the deputy designated teacher (DDT) Mr McKane will assume the role of the DT.**

If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, **the member of staff must act promptly. He/she should not investigate** – this is a matter for social services – but should report these concerns immediately to the DT, discuss the matter with her, make full notes (signing and dating them), and hand the note to the DT. (See page 11 for advice on what to record etc.) In the event of the DT not being available, staff should report their concerns to the Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT) Mr McKane. On the rare occasion that neither the DT nor DDT are in the school the Vice Principal, Mr Arneill, will assume responsibility for child protection.

The DT will discuss the matter with the Principal as a matter of urgency to plan a course of action, and ensure that a written record of decisions is made.

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

The DT may seek clarification or advice and consult with a Designated Officer for Child Protection at the EA, or a senior social worker before a referral is made. No decisions to refer a child to social services will be made without full consideration and on appropriate advice. **The safety of the child is our priority.**

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

- Social Services - using the regional UNOCINI (Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland) framework
- The EA's Designated Officer for Child Protection

* The UNOCINI referral will be made within 24 hours of the initial telephone referral to social services Gateway Team. **(This will be done in an envelope marked 'CONFIDENTIAL - CHILD PROTECTION')**

UNOCINI pro-formas will be destroyed in line with the school's records retention policy and the guidance provided in DE circular 2016/20 "Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools".

The CPSS can offer advice as required.

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

It should be noted that the information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held 'in confidence'.

Where applicable, continuous monitoring for a pupil at risk of neglect may be required. This will be decided by the DT and completed by the class teacher using a given proforma (Continuous monitoring for a pupil at risk of neglect).

Complaint against a Staff Member

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or the DT if the Principal is unavailable) must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the designated teacher or the Principal).

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

If a complaint is made against the designated teacher, the principal must be informed immediately. She will inform the Chairperson of the Board of governors and together they will ensure that the necessary action is taken.

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

Child Protection Case Conferences

The Principal will attend case conferences as necessary. Case conference reports will be prepared by the child's class teacher. Reports should focus on the child's educational progress and achievements, attendance, behaviour, participation, relationships with other children and adults within the school and where appropriate the child's appearance.

- Reports should be objective and based on evidence.
- They should contain only fact, observations and reasons for concern.

Reports may be made available to parents at case conferences and may be used in court.

Responding to a child who makes a disclosure

1. Receive

- Stay calm
- Listen to what the child is saying without displaying shock or disbelief
- Accept what the child is saying
- Be discreet

2. Reassure

- Reassure the child that they 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. Staff have a duty to refer the matter to the designated teacher for child protection. Explain that you will need to talk to Mrs McLaughlin or, in her absence, Mrs Wilson who will know what to do next.
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt if the child refers to it

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 for child protection
- **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, e.g. Did _____ do this to you?). Such questions invalidate evidence where a subsequent court action is necessary.
- Do not criticise the perpetrator as the child may love that person
- 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 hearing what the child has said
- Do not destroy these 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 to the designated teacher

(All written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately, are securely maintained, separate from the main pupil file, and in a locked location.)

5. Refer

Concerns about possible abuse must be referred to the designated teacher as soon as possible within the working day. She will liaise with the Principal in the decision making process regarding possible referral to statutory services.

(It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies, following a referral from the designated teacher for child protection in the school.)

Record Keeping

- The School will keep accurate records of concerns expressed and the action, which has been taken. These will be maintained in a secure location, separately from the general records.
- **It will be the responsibility of the Designated Teacher to ensure that such records are kept up-to-date and forwarded when a child moves school (in compliance with DE guidance)**
- Only the Principal and the Designated/Deputy Teachers will have access to child protection records.

Refer to: 'Child Protection Records Management Policy 2017'

What to do if you have concerns about a child's safety or welfare

If you have a concern about a child's safety



You can talk to the class teacher



If you are still concerned, you can talk to

- **Mrs Wilson** (Principal & Designated Teacher)
- **Mr McKane** (Deputy Designated Teacher)

Stranmillis Primary School Telephone 028 9038 1164



If you are still concerned you can talk or write to the Chairperson of our Board of Governors - **Dr Maureen Thatcher** (chair)



At any time, you can write or talk to a **Gateway Duty Social Worker**
028 9050 7000 / 028 9504 9999 (out of hours)

or

Contact **PSNI Central Referral Unit** - 02890259299 (or 101 extension 30299) Email: cru@psni.police.uk

Staff Code of Conduct

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the young person as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust and that their behaviour towards the children and young people in their charge must be above reproach.

1. Setting an Example

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

2. Private Meeting with pupils

- a. Staff should be aware of the dangers, which may arise from private interviews with individual pupils. It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential interviews must take place. As far as possible, staff should conduct such interviews in a room with visual access, or with the door open.
- b. Where such conditions cannot apply, staff are advised to ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place. It may be necessary to use a sign indicating that the room is in use, but it is not advisable to use signs prohibiting entry to the room.
- c. Where possible another pupil or (preferably) another adult should be present or nearby during the interview.
- d. If you take children on journeys, always have two along.

3. Physical Contact with Pupils

- a. As a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with their pupils. Never do something of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves.

- b. It is unrealistic and unnecessary however, to suggest that staff should touch pupils only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed child, especially a young child, may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. Staff should not feel inhibited from providing this.
- c. Staff should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that s/he would be uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm.
- d. Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of restraint.
- e. Staff who have to administer first aid to a pupil should ensure whenever possible that this is done in the presence of other children or another adult. However, no member of staff should hesitate to provide first aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present.
- f. Any physical contact, which would be likely to be misinterpreted, by the pupil, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.
- g. Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the principal.
- h. Staff should be particularly careful when supervising pupils in a residential setting, or on approved out-of school activities, where more informal relationships tend to be usual and where staff may be in proximity to pupils in circumstances very different from the normal school environment.

4. Choice and use of Teaching Materials

- a. Teachers should avoid teaching materials, the choice of which might be misinterpreted and reflect upon motives for the choice.
- b. When using teaching materials of a sensitive nature a teacher should be aware of the danger that their application, either by pupils or by the teacher, might be criticised.
- c. If in doubt about the appropriateness of a particular teaching material, the teacher should consult with the principal before using it.

5. Relationships and attitudes

- a. Staff should ensure that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought.

- b. Never keep suspicions of abuse or inappropriate behaviour by a colleague to yourself; you could be implicated in the silence.
- c. Ensure that you have the opportunity to discuss your own feelings, if possible, with other members of staff.

6. Honesty and Integrity

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

7. Conduct outside of Work

- a. Staff and volunteers should not engage in conduct outside work which could damage the reputation and standing of the school or the staff/ volunteer's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

8. E-Safety and Internet Use

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

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

Physical Restraint

Our policy on physical restraint by staff is set out in a separate policy **Safe Handling and the Use of Reasonable Force** in accordance with guidelines from BELB. It acknowledges that staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to the child or to another person.

Vetting Procedures

The selection and appointment process is the starting point for ensuring that only those who are suitable are employed to work in close proximity with children, in either a paid or unpaid capacity in our school.

In order that all reasonable steps are taken to employ and engage suitable staff to work with the children in our care we follow the guidance on pre-employment checking and safe recruitment practices provided by the Department of Education and have adopted the new arrangements for vetting and checking of staff prior to appointment or use as volunteers within the school:

- DE Circular 2006/06. Child Protection : Recruitment of People to Work with Children and Young People in Educational Settings
- DE Circular 2006/07. Child Protection: Employment of Substitute Teachers
- DE Circular 2006/08 Child Protection: Training Requirements for School Governors on Staff Recruitment and Selection Panels
- DE Circular 2006/09 Child Protection: Criminal Background Checking of Staff in Schools – Programme to Extend Coverage
- DE Circular 2006/25 Child Protection: Vetting of School Governors
- DE Circular 2008/03 Pre-Employment Checking of Persons to Work in Schools – New Arrangements
- DE Circular 2008/10 Employment of Substitute Teacher
- DE Circular 2012/19
- DE Circular 2013/01 Guidance for schools and employing authority
- Access NI Unit Education Authority, 2017

All staff are inducted in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy prior to contact with the pupils in our school. All staff are involved in annual retraining.

Any volunteers who will be working with children in situations that may not be directly supervised by members of staff, and any coaches for clubs etc, will be vetted through Access NI. However, parents volunteering to accompany groups on school trips do not need to be vetted, as long as the volunteer will not be expected to have personal, unsupervised responsibility of the children in a group.

Guidelines for Volunteer Helpers during School Trips

Thank you for your help; it is greatly appreciated.

Please note the following points:

- There will always be a nominated leader of the group; this will be a member of staff
- Volunteer helpers will not be expected to have personal responsibility of the children in a group
- All incidences, injuries or illnesses should be reported to the teacher in charge
- Two adult supervisors should accompany children to the toilet at all times
- All helpers accompanying school trips should safeguard children from any dangerous situations. Please ensure that children listen carefully and follow instructions. Children should not be permitted to move away from their group.

STRANMILLIS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Child Protection Concerns

Name of child _____

DOB _____

Address _____

Class _____

Details of Concern / Disclosure (if possible, quote the words actually used)

Signature _____

Position _____

Date _____

Signature of DT _____

Date _____

Principal _____

Date _____

Action Taken

Continuous monitoring for pupil at risk of neglect

Observations	Comment	Update	Update	Update
Appearance – Clothing, footwear – cleanliness and adequacy				
	Name and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date
Personal hygiene – Cleanliness, body odour, halitosis, hair, fingernails				
	Name and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date
Attendance and punctuality				
	Name and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date
Behaviour				
	Name and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date

Observations	Comment	Update	Update	Update
Relationships with peers				
	Name and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date
Relationships with staff – positive, antagonistic, overly familiar, distrustful				
	Name and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date
General health, including hearing, sight, weight, pallor				
	Name and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date

Observations	Comment	Update	Update	Update
Emotional health, including self-harm, risktaking, anxiety				
	Name and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date
Attitude to life – optimistic, pessimistic, detached, apathetic, fearful				
	Name and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date
Educational development including speech and language				
	Name and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date	Reviewer and date

STRANMILLIS PRIMARY SCHOOL
Report for Case Conference

Pupil's name _____ DOB _____ Class _____

Parent(s)/Guardians _____

Address _____

Attendance in current school year _____ %

Punctuality: _____

School work and Behaviour: _____

Relationship with other children and adults _____

General remarks (eg. Personal appearance) _____

Signed _____ (class teacher)

Date _____

Operation Encompass (updated 2023)

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

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

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

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

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

E-SAFETY POLICY (updated 2024)

1. Rationale

The rapidly changing nature of the Internet and new technologies means that eSafety is an ever-growing and changing area of interest and concern. At Stranmillis Primary School, the staff, governors and parents have a duty of care to enable pupils to use online systems safely. This policy highlights the responsibility of the staff, governors and parents to mitigate risk through reasonable planning and actions. It covers not only Internet technologies, but also electronic communications via other mobile devices. This policy reflects the guidance in DENI Circular 2007/1 *'Acceptable Use of the Internet and Digital Technologies in Schools'*, DENI Circular 2011/22 *'Internet Safety'*, DENI Circular 2016/26 *'Effective Educational Uses of Mobile Digital Devices'*, DENI Circular 2013/25 *'eSafety Guidance'* and DENI Circular 2016/27 *'Online Safety'*.

Aims: What is eSafety?

1. eSafety is short for electronic safety.
2. eSafety in the school context is concerned with safeguarding children and young people in the digital world, with emphasis on learning to understand and use technologies in a positive way. It is less about restriction and focusses on the risks, as well as the benefits, so that the users feel confident online. Furthermore, eSafety is concerned with supporting pupils to develop safer online behaviours, both in and out of school. It also helps pupils recognise unsafe situations and how to respond to risks appropriately.

Roles and Responsibilities

Our eSafety committee.

Mrs Linda Wilson (Principal)

Dr Maureen Thatcher (eSafety Nominated Rep on Board of Governors)

Mr Carl Bell (eSafety Co-ordinator, ICT Co-ordinator)

Mrs Orlaith McLaughlin (Nursery – P3 Co-ordinator and SLT)

Mrs Jenny McKay (P4 – P7 Co-ordinator, SLT)

Mr Peter McKane (Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection)

Mr Terry McCorry School Support Northern Ireland

Primary 7 School Council Representatives

The policy has been approved by the Board of Governors and is available to all parents via the school website and as a hard copy, if requested. The policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually.

Internet Services

Connectivity and Filtering: The school has two Internet services in its infrastructure. Internet access is filtered for all users.

- 1.1. C2k is responsible for the provision of ICT managed services to all schools in Northern Ireland. It provides a safety service which should ensure educational use made of resources is safe and secure, while protecting users and systems from abuse. Forcepoint (formally Websense) filtering is in place for Internet access. Customised filtering is managed by Mr McCrory and Mr Bell (ICT Co-ordinator) and approved by the eSafety committee. Internet use is monitored, and access to the Internet via the C2k Education Network is fully auditable and reports are available to the school Principal. The monitoring process alerts the school to breaches of the filtering policy, which are then acted upon. Staff and pupils accessing the Internet will be required to authenticate using their C2k username and password.
- 1.2. The school installed a BT Internet line in 2013 to enable a consignment of iPads to access online Internet services. We have taken appropriate measures, including carrying out a risk assessment, to safeguard this equipment against security breaches. The school works with an Information Technology and Outsourcing company (School Support Northern Ireland) and they installed a Draytek router with cyen filter.

Making use of the Internet in School

The Internet is used 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.

Technology is advancing rapidly and is now a huge part of everyday life, education and business. At Stranmillis, we equip our students with all the necessary ICT skills that they will need to help them progress confidently into a professional working environment. Students will be taught to be critically aware of materials they read and how to validate information. They

use age-appropriate tools to search for information online. Pupils are made aware of copyright and plagiarism and encouraged to validate the accuracy of information which they research.

Acceptable use of the Internet

1. Code of Practice: The school has a Pupil Code of Practice (Appendix 1) and a Staff Code of Practice (Appendix 2) containing eSafety rules which make explicit to all users what is safe and acceptable and what is not. This Code of Practice will be issued to each pupil at the start of each school year and consent must be obtained before the pupil can access the Internet. The Staff Code of Practice is agreed by all members of staff and is signed at the beginning of the new school year.
2. Pupil Sanctions: Minor school related incidents (whether in school or out of school) will be dealt with by Mr Bell and the School Leadership Team. Mr Bell will keep a record of all reports. This may result in parents being informed and a temporary ban on Internet use. Incidents involving child protection issues will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Users will understand their responsibilities to report eSafety incidents. Incident reports will be logged by Mrs Wilson for future auditing and monitoring, to allow the school to review and update eSafety policy and practices. Pupils are aware that any misuse of mobile phones/websites/email/social media should be reported to a member of staff immediately.

Internet Safety Awareness

1. Education of Pupils: Pupils are educated in the safe and effective use of the Internet, and eSafety guidelines are displayed prominently around the school. A planned eSafety education programme for Years 1-7 takes place through assemblies, discrete lessons and wider curriculum opportunities. The Pupil Code of Practice is discussed at the beginning of each school year and referred to on other occasions as appropriate. Primary 7 School Council Representatives sit on the eSafety Committee. A list of Guidelines for online safety is shared with all staff, who in turn, share the information with their class (Appendix 3).
2. Professional Development for Teachers: Teachers are the first line of defence in eSafety. Their observation of behaviour is essential in recognising concerns about pupils and in developing trust so that issues are reported. eSafety training is an

essential element of staff induction and on-going Professional Development. It is linked with Safeguarding training at the beginning of every school year and it is compulsory for all staff to attend.

The ICT Co-ordinator keeps informed and updated on issues relating to eSafety. Staff have been advised of available resources to facilitate the teaching of eSafety. These include:

- www.thinkuknow.co.uk
 - www.childnet.com
 - <https://projectevolve.co.uk>
3. Governors: Mrs Wilson keeps governors updated on eSafety issues. The Board of Governors has appointed Dr Maureen Thatcher as their representative on the school eSafety Committee.
 4. Parents, Carers and the Community: Parents and carers are encouraged to discuss the Pupil Code of Practice with their children before signing the acceptable use of the internet agreement. The eSafety Policy is available on the school website. The school organises sessions on eSafety which may be delivered by a member of staff or outside agency. For example, the PSNI or NSPCC. Parents are informed how to highlight issues, as detailed in the Bullying and Safeguarding policies. Parents are informed of the school's complaints policy which is on the website.
 5. Community use of school ICT resources: Anyone using the school's ICT resources must agree to the Staff Code of Practice Policy before participating, and only access pre-selected and appropriate websites.
 6. ICT/esafety co-ordinator, Designated teacher and School staff use Safer schools NI App to keep update with current safety issues and developments

Health and Safety

1. Risk Assessments: Life in the 21st century presents dangers including violence, racism and exploitation, from which pupils need to be reasonably protected. The school endeavours to help the children to become "Internet-wise" and responsible "digital citizens". We have considered all new technologies wisely, to ensure that we are fully aware of, and can mitigate against, the potential risks involved with their use. Mr

McCorry and Mr Bell complete an annual risk assessment for the use of the BT Internet line.

2. Cyber Bullying: Staff are made aware that pupils may be subject to Cyber Bullying via electronic methods of communication both in and out of school. This form of bullying is addressed within the school's overall Anti-Bullying Policy. Cyber Bullying can take many different forms and guises including:
 - Email – nasty or abusive emails including viruses or inappropriate content.
 - Instant Messaging (IM) and Chat Rooms – transmitting, threatening or abusive messages.
 - Social Networking Sites – posting or publication of nasty or upsetting comments.
 - Online Gaming – abuse or harassment of someone using online multi-player gaming sites.
 - Mobile Devices – abusive texts, video or photo messages, including sexting (where someone is encouraged to share intimate photographs or videos of themselves which are subsequently transmitted to other people).
 - Abusing personal information – posting of photographs, personal information, fake comments and blogs, or pretending to be someone online without permission.

Pupils will be reminded that cyber bullying can constitute a criminal offence. They are encouraged to report incidents to their parents and the school. If appropriate, the PSNI may be informed to ensure the matter is properly addressed and the behaviour ceases. The school will keep records in accordance with our Anti-Bullying and eSafety policies.

3. Pupil use of Mobile Phones and Personal Devices: Pupils are not permitted to bring mobile phones or personal devices to school. In exceptional circumstances, they must inform their class teacher and the device must then be switched off and kept in a locked cupboard until the end of the school day. Pupils who breach this rule may have their device confiscated. The school accepts no liability for the loss or damage of any electronic device which is in the pupil's possession during the school day.
4. Staff use of Mobile Phones and Personal Devices: Staff should not use their own personal devices to contact pupils or parents in or out of school time. They are not permitted to take photographs or videos of pupils with their own devices. This should be done using school equipment. The school expects staff to lead by example when using personal devices. Mobile phones should be switched off or on 'silent' during working hours.

5. Digital and Video Images: Parental permission is gained for the publication of personal images for display, use on the school website or use by outside media. Digital and video images are stored securely on the school network in the 'Staff' folder.
6. Email Security: Staff and pupils should only use their C2k email accounts for school purposes. It is strongly advised that staff should not use home email accounts for school business. The C2k Education Network filtering solution provides security and protection to C2k email accounts, ensuring that incoming and outgoing messages are checked for viruses, malware, spam and inappropriate content.
7. Personal Data: The school ensures all staff know and understand their obligations under the Data Protection Act (1998) and comply with these to ensure the safe keeping of personal data, minimising the risk of loss or misuse of personal data.
8. Passwords: Pupils and staff should only log on under their own username and password. Staff and pupils shouldn't share their passwords.

Published Content (Twitter - X) and the School Website

The school website www.stranmillisprimary.org.uk and X are used to celebrate pupils' work, promote the school and provide information. The following rules apply:

- The point of contact on the website is the school address, school email and telephone number.
- Staff or pupils' home information will not be published.
- Online photographs which include pupils will be selected carefully in line with parental consent.
- Pupils' full names will not be used in association with photographs.
- Mr Arneill, Mrs Wilson and KS co-ordinators will take editorial responsibility and ensure content is accurate and appropriate.
- The copyright of all material must be held by the school or be attributed to the owner where permission to reproduce has been obtained.

Social Media

C2K Forcepoint Internet filtering filters out social networking sites and blocks attempts to circumvent their filters, leaving it relatively safe in the school environment. Concern, in relation to inappropriate activities, tends to emanate from use outside of school. (See Anti-Bullying and Safeguarding Policies for reporting procedures) We make staff, pupils and parents aware of the risks associated with social media and encourage responsible use outside of school.

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 very seriously. This means protecting the school network against viruses, hackers, and other external security threats. The security of the school information systems will be reviewed by C2K and virus protection software is updated automatically.

Monitoring and Self Evaluation

eSafety is evaluated in the overall ICT and Safeguarding Child Protection Policy reviews. Pupils offer a voice through their representation on the E-Safety Committee. The 360° Safe eSafety Self Review Tool has enabled the school to identify areas for development. Monitoring records of eSafety incidents are presented to the Governors. This policy will be reviewed and amended considering evidence provided by monitoring, updated technologies or new DE Guidance.

Appendix 1

Acceptable Use of the Internet Agreement: Pupil

Acceptable Use of the Internet Agreement – Pupil Guidance

Parents/Guardians should read through this document with their children. Internet access will only be granted after this document is signed and returned to school.

- ✓ I will only use ICT, including the Internet, email, iPad, digital camera, mobile technologies etc. for school purposes.
- ✓ I know that my use of ICT is monitored and that my parent/guardian will be contacted if a member of staff is concerned about my e-Safety.
- ✓ I will log onto the My School Platform with my own username and password.
- ✓ I will not share my username or password with other people.
- ✓ I will only access the Internet when given permission by a member of staff.
- ✓ I will not deliberately look for, save or send anything that could be unpleasant or nasty. If I accidentally find anything like this, I will tell my teacher immediately.
- ✓ I will not give out my own details such as my name, phone number or home address. I will not arrange to meet someone through an online activity, unless this is part of a school project and a responsible adult comes with me.
- ✓ I will only open/delete my own documents and folders.
- ✓ I am not permitted to use any form of social media when in school.
- ✓ I understand that I am not permitted to post photographs or videos from a school activity on social media.
- ✓ I will ensure that all ICT contact with other children and adults is responsible, polite and sensible.
- ✓ I will always reference the source of any information gained from the Internet.
- ✓ I am not permitted to bring or use a mobile device when in school.

Pupil's Name		Class Teacher	
<i>I accept the rules and guidelines detailed above, and I will endeavour to be a responsible and safe user of ICT at Stranmillis Primary School.</i>			
Pupil's Signature		Date	
Parent/Guardian		Signature	
<i>I have discussed the guidelines and rules detailed above, and I give permission for my child to use ICT at Stranmillis Primary School.</i>			

Appendix 2

Acceptable Use of the Internet Agreement: Staff

Acceptable Use of the Internet Agreement – Staff Guidance

- ✓ I will only use ICT, including the Internet, email, iPad, digital camera, mobile technologies etc. for school purposes. All Internet activity, and electronic communications with pupils and staff, should be appropriate to staff professional activity or the pupils' education.
- ✓ I will comply with the ICT system security and not disclose or share passwords provided to me by the school or other related authorities.
- ✓ I am responsible for all email sent and for contacts made that may result in email being received. I will use the approved c2k secure email system for school business.
- ✓ I will not give out personal details e.g. mobile phone number and personal email address, to pupils.
- ✓ Copyright of materials must be respected and I will always reference the source of any information gained from the Internet.
- ✓ I will not use social media on the c2k network. Neither will I post images or videos from a school activity on social media.
- ✓ I understand that any personal mobile device I have in school must be kept on silent during school hours.
- ✓ Photographs and videos of pupils and staff must only be taken using a school digital camera or iPad. They can only be stored and used for professional purposes in line with school policy and with written consent of a parent or guardian (Data Collection sheet at the start of each new school year). Photographs or videos will not be distributed outside the school network without the permission of parent/guardian, staff member or Principal.
- ✓ I will not install any hardware or software on the c2k system without the permission of Mr Bell.
- ✓ I will support and promote the school's e-Safety and Data Security policies and help pupils to be safe and responsible in their use of ICT and related technologies. I will report any concerns, or misuse of ICT by pupils or staff, to Mr Bell.

I agree to follow this code of practice and to support the safe and secure use of ICT throughout the school.		
Staff member:	Signature:	Date:

Appendix 3

Online Safety Guidelines for pupils at SPS

CONDUCT

- Only use the Internet when we have permission from an adult.
- Always be polite and friendly. Don't post comments or send an email that is nasty or inappropriate – remember it is written down and can be printed out.
- If you wouldn't say it in real life, don't say it online.
- Information you put online leaves a permanent "digital footprint".
- Don't make your email address your full name or date of birth.
- Try to create strong and secure passwords.
- Ask your parent/guardian to set appropriate privacy settings for any Apps you are using.
- Don't purchase anything online without permission – including in-App purchases.

CONTENT

- Immediately close any page we are not sure about.
- Don't deliberately look for, save or send anything that could be unpleasant or nasty. If I accidentally find anything like this, I will tell my parent or guardian immediately. (Or teacher if in school)
- Only use apps or websites approved by my parent/guardian. (Or teacher if in school)
- Always respect, and adhere to, the age restrictions on games, websites and Apps.

CONTACT

- Meeting someone you have been in touch with online can be dangerous. NEVER do this.
- Don't make friends with someone online, if you haven't met that person in real life.
- Don't open messages, emails, pictures or texts from people you don't know.
- Don't share personal information online.
- Only email people an adult has approved.

TELL

- You must tell a parent, carer or trusted adult if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable, worried, angry, hurt or fearful, or if someone you know is being bullied online.