LAGAN COLLEGE BELFAST

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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Related Documents

1. LCB AEN Policy
2. LCB Attendance Policy
3. LCB Addressing Bullying in School Policy
4. LCB Critical Incident Policy
5. LCB Digital Devices Policy
6. LCB Drugs Policy
7. LCB Educational Visits Policy
8. LCB E-Safety, ICT Acceptable Use and Digital Media Policy
9. LCB Health and Safety Policy
10. LCB Intimate Care and Period Dignity Policy
11. LCB Medical Policy
12. LCB Parental Complaints Policy
13. LCB Pastoral Care Policy
14. LCB Positive Behaviour Policy
15. LCB Record Retention and Destruction Policy
16. LCB Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy
17. LCB Safe Handling Policy
18. LCB Staff Code of Conduct
19. LCB Use of Reasonable Force Policy
20. LCB Whistleblowing Policy
21. DE Annual Child Protection Evaluation

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Section 1 – Overview

Lagan College Ethos

We in Lagan College have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge, and we will carry out this duty through our pastoral care policy, which aims to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment, valuing individuals for their unique talents and abilities, in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential. One way in which we seek to protect our pupils is by helping them learn about the risks of possible abuse, helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe. To this end guidance is printed in each pupil's student planner.

Safeguarding is more than child protection. Safeguarding begins with promotion and preventative activity which enables children and young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and wellbeing is not adversely affected. It includes support to families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and continues through to child protection. Child protection refers specifically to the activity that is undertaken to protect individual children or young people who are suffering, or are likely to suffer significant harm.

All our staff and volunteers are subject to appropriate background checks. The staff of our school have also adopted a Code of Practice for our behaviour towards pupils. Guidelines for staff are set out in the Staff Handbook. The purpose of the following procedures on Child Protection is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in our school - teachers, support staff and volunteers - has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The overriding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child, and the welfare of each child is our paramount consideration. The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school, and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Legislation

This policy links with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) by taking into consideration the below articles of the UNCRC.

Article 19: Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for, and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 20: Children who cannot be locked after by own family must be looked after properly, by people who respect their religion, culture and language.

Article 25: Children who are looked after by their local authority, rather than their parents, should have their situation reviewed regularly.

Article 32: The government should provide ways of protecting children from work that is dangerous, or might harm their health or their education. Article 34: The Government should protect children from sexual abuse.

Article 36: Children should be protected from any activities that could harm their development.

Article 39: Children who have been neglected or abused should receive special help to restore their self-respect.

The general principles that underpin safeguarding work, are enshrined in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, "Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland" (DHSSPSNI, 2017 and 2024), the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) guidance, "Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools" circular 2017/04 (and subsequent amendments) and the SBNI Core Child Protection and Procedures (2017).

Section 2 - Key Principles and Aims of Safeguarding and Child Protection

2.1 Key Principles

The following principles underpin all Safeguarding and Child Protection practice within Lagan College.

- The child or young person's welfare is paramount.
- The welfare of vulnerable adults is paramount.
- The voice of the child or young person should be heard child or young person and, where possible, to achieve their preferred outcome.
- Parents are supported to exercise parental responsibility and families helped to stay together.
- Partnership - Safeguarding is a shared responsibility and the most effective way of ensuring that a child's needs are met is through working in partnership.
- Prevention - The importance of preventing problems occurring or worsening through the introduction of timely supportive measures.
- Responses should be proportionate to the circumstances.
- Protection - Children should be safe from harm and in circumstances where a parent or carer is not meeting their needs, they should be protected by the State.
- Evidence-based and informed decision making that take account of, the child or young person's specific circumstances, risks to which they are exposed, and their assessed needs.

2.2 Adult Safeguarding

For further information see: https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/adult-safeguarding-prevention-and-protection-partnership-key-document

Adult safeguarding is based on fundamental human rights and on respecting the rights of adults as individuals, treating all adults with dignity and respecting their right to choose. It involves empowering and enabling all adults, including those at risk of harm, to manage their own health and well-being and to keep themselves safe. It extends to intervening to protect where harm has occurred or is likely to occur and promoting access to justice. All adults at risk should be central to any actions and decisions affecting their lives.

We are committed to:

- Ensuring that the welfare of vulnerable adults is paramount.
- Maximising the student's choice, control and inclusion, and protecting their human rights.
- Working in partnership with others in order to safeguard vulnerable adults.

We will follow the procedures outlined in this policy when responding to concerns or disclosures of abuse relating to our students who are 18 years or over.

2.3 Aims

The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy aims:

- To ensure that staff act in the best interests of the child at all times.
- To inform all staff (teaching and support) and volunteers of statutory requirements re suspected or alleged child abuse.
- To provide all staff and volunteers with definitions of abuse and the potential signs and symptoms of abuse.
- To enable students and parents to make a complaint or report of child abuse if necessary.
- To provide clear procedures for staff and volunteers to follow in a case of suspected abuse.
- To explain the roles and obligations of personnel involved in reporting suspected abuse.
- To provide guidelines for the protection of staff/volunteers dealing with students.
- To provide support for staff/volunteers to cope with the anxieties of initial reporting, and the aftermath of involvement in suspected abuse.
- To help create a protective and supportive environment for all students, staff and volunteers.
- To promote safeguarding through the preventative curriculum.

Section 3 - Managing Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools

Everyone in education plays a part in keeping children and young people safe from harm and abuse. All Lagan College staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have a responsibility to ensure the protection and welfare of children is paramount. This also extends to any volunteers accepted to work in the school during school hours when pupils are on the premises.

3.1 Safeguarding Team

In the best interests of the children, and as a support for the Designated Teachers, Lagan College has a Safeguarding Team. (Appendix 1 – College Safeguarding Team poster)

Chair of the Board of Governors	Francis Martin	
Designated Governor for Child Protection	Teresa Geraghty	
Principal	Mrs Amanda McNamee	
Designated Teacher for Child Protection	Miss Danielle Collins	Vice Principal (Pastoral Care)

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection	Mrs Hilda Thompson Mrs Laura Mulholland Mrs Lisa Grant Mrs Darina Ward Mrs Deborah Carlisle	Head of Junior School Head of Senior School Head of Sixth Form Head of Additional Educational Needs Vice Principal (Curriculum)

The responsibilities of the team should include:

- The monitoring and periodic review of Safeguarding and Child Protection arrangements in the school.
- Support for the DT in the exercise of their child protection responsibilities, including recognition of the administrative and emotional demands of the post.
- Ensuring attendance of Governors and staff at relevant training - including refresher training - in keeping with legislative and best practice requirements.

3.2. Responsibilities of Board of Governors

The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 places a statutory duty on Boards of Governors (BoG) to:

- Safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.
- Have a written child protection policy.
- Specifically address the prevention of bullying in school behaviour management policies.
- All Governors should have initial Child Protection Support Service (CPSS) child protection training with the Chair and Designated Governor for Child Protection undertaking full CPSS training. All Governors should undertake refresher Child Protection training every term of office (four years).

Boards of Governors must ensure that:

- A Designated Governor for Child Protection is appointed.
- A Designated and Deputy Designated Teacher are appointed in their schools.
- They have a full understanding of the roles of the Designated and Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection.
- Safeguarding and child protection training is given to all staff and governors including refresher training.
- Relevant safeguarding information and guidance is disseminated to all staff and BOG with the opportunity to discuss requirements and impact on roles and responsibilities.
- The school has a Child Protection Policy which is reviewed annually and parents and pupils receive a copy of the child protection policy and complaints procedure every two years.
- The school has an Addressing Bullying Policy which is reviewed at intervals of no more than four years and maintains a record of all incidents of bullying or alleged bullying.
- The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (2016), places a statutory duty on BOG to keep records of all incidents og bullying involving a registered pupil at the school.
- The school ensures that other safeguarding policies, are reviewed at least every three years, or as specified in relevant guidance.
- There is a code of conduct for all adults working in the school.
- All school staff and volunteers are recruited and vetted, in line with DE Circulars.

- They receive a full annual report on all child protection matters (It is best practice that they receive a termly report of child protection activities). This report should include details of the Preventive Curriculum and any initiatives or awareness raising undertaken in LCB, including training for staff.
- The school maintain Safeguarding and Child Protection records in line with DE Circulars 2015/13 Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Against a Member of Staff and 2020/07 Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools: Safeguarding and child protection concerns; Disclosures of abuse; Allegations against staff and actions taken to investigate and deal with outcomes; Staff induction and training.

3.3 Role of Chair of Board of Governors

The Chairperson of the BoG plays a pivotal role in creating and maintaining the safeguarding ethos within the school environment.

In the event of a safeguarding or child protection complaint being made against the Principal, it is the Chairperson who must assume lead responsibility for managing the complaint/allegation in keeping with guidance issued by the Department (and relevant guidance from other Departments when it comes to other early years settings), employing authorities, and the school's own policies and procedures.

The Chairperson is responsible for ensuring child protection records are kept and for signing and dating annually the Record of Child Abuse Complaints against staff members even if there have been no entries.

3.4 Role of Designated Governor for Child Protection

The BoG delegates a specific member of the governing body to take the lead in safeguarding/child protection issues in order to advise the governors on: -

- The role of the designated teachers;
- The content of child protection policies;
- The content of a code of conduct for adults within the school;
- The content of the termly updates and full Annual Designated Teachers Report;
- Recruitment, selection, vetting and induction of staff.

3.5 Role of School Principal

The Principal, as the Secretary to the BoG, will assist the BoG to fulfil its safeguarding and child protection duties, keeping them informed of any changes to guidance, procedure or legislation relating to safeguarding and child protection, ensuring any circulars and guidance from DE are shared promptly, and timely inclusion of child protection activities on the BoG meeting agenda. In addition, the Principal takes the lead in managing child protection concerns relating to staff.

The Principal has delegated responsibility for establishing and managing the safeguarding and child protection systems within the College. This includes the appointment and management of suitable staff to the key roles of DT and DDT Designated Teacher posts and ensuring that new staff and

volunteers have safeguarding and child protection awareness sessions as part of an induction programme.
It is essential that there is protected time and support to allow the DTs to carry out this important role effectively and that DTs are selected based on knowledge and skills required to fulfil the role.

The Principal must ensure that parents and pupils receive a copy, or summary, of the Child Protection Policy at intake and, at a minimum, every two years.

3.6 Role of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection
The Designated Teacher for Child Protection meets termly with the Designated Governor for Child Protection and delivers annually to the Chair of the Board of Governors in regard to Safeguarding and Child Protection issues. The responsibilities involve:

- The induction and training of all school staff including support staff.
- Being available to discuss safeguarding or child protection concerns of any member of staff.
- Ensuring staff are aware that CP Note of Concern should be completed using the template provided in DE Circular 2020/07.
- Having responsibility for record keeping of all child protection concerns.
- Ensuring staff aware of that Notes of Concern should be completed using the template provided in DE Circular 2020/07.
- Maintaining a current awareness of early intervention supports and other local services e.g. Family Support Hubs.
- Making referrals to Social Services or PSNI where appropriate.
- Liaison with the EA Designated Officers for Child Protection.
- Keeping the school Principal informed.
- Lead responsibility for the development of the school's child protection policy.
- Promotion of a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school.
- Compiling written monthly reports to the BoG regarding child protection

3.7 Role of the Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection
The role of the Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT) is to work co-operatively with the Designed Teacher (DT) in fulfilling her responsibilities.

It is important that the DDT works in partnership with the DT so that they develops sufficient knowledge and experience to undertake the duties of the DT when required. DDTs must attended the same specialist training by CPSS to help them in their role.

3.8 College Staff
Members of staff **must** refer concerns or disclosures initially to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection or to the Deputy Designated Teacher if he/she is not available.

If any member of the support staff has concerns about a child or staff member they should report these concerns to the Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher if he/she is not available. A detailed written record of the concerns will be made and any further necessary action will be taken.

Class teachers and Year Heads should complete the Note of Concern (**See Appendix 4)** if there are safeguarding concerns such as: poor attendance and punctuality, poor presentation, changed or unusual behaviour including self-harm and suicidal thoughts, deterioration in educational progress, discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child, concerns about pupil abuse or serious bullying and concerns about home circumstances including disclosures of domestic abuse.
Staff should not give children a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures, should not investigate nor should they ask leading questions.

3.9 Child Protection Support Services (CPSS)
The CPSS is a regional service for schools, based within the EA's Directorate of Children and Young People's Services.

The CPSS primary role is to provide:

- Daily helpline to advise, guide and support DTs/DDTs/Principals in relation to concerns about individual children with safeguarding/child protection concerns and on wider policy and training matters.
- Initial, refresher and cluster group training on child protection issues.
- Support visits to schools where required.
- Advice and guidance on assessing and managing children who pose a significant risk of harm to themselves, other pupils and staff.
- Dissemination of new information on training, DE Circulars and guidance.
- Support in developing or reviewing the school's child protection policy.
- Follow up to ETI inspections where safeguarding/child protection is identified as an area for improvement.

The CPSS will also:

- Offer training to the Chairperson and Designated Governor for Child Protection in relation to their statutory safeguarding/child protection responsibilities.
- Offer support, advice and training to other services within the EA.
- Assist EA Human Resource Managers in dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and other EA officers/employees.
- Liaise with Social Services and PSNI where appropriate.
- Represent the education sector at multi-agency meetings including Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) meetings which are a co-ordinated inter-agency response to domestic violence and abuse.

Section 4 – Recruitment, Vetting and Induction of Staff and Volunteers

Vetting checks are a key preventative measure in preventing unsuitable individuals access to children and vulnerable adults, Lagan College ensures that all persons on school property are vetted, inducted and supervised as appropriate, if they are engaged in regulated activity.

All staff paid or unpaid who are appointed to positions in the College are vetted/supervised in accordance with relevant legislation and Departmental guidance.

It is the responsibility of the BOG to ensure that there is an official record kept of when vetting checks completed for all staff. An Enhanced Disclosure Certificate (EDC) from AccessNI is undertaken before staff take up post.

4.1 Volunteers

The engagement of volunteers will only be undertaken with the knowledge and agreement of the Principal. Acceptance of any individual's offer of help should not be automatic. Appropriate areas of work and the duties attached to these, the supervisory arrangements, the implications for Child Protection and the conditions attached to the volunteer's role will be clearly established before any volunteer is accepted by the school.

There are two types of volunteers working in schools: those who work unsupervised and those who work under supervision. **Volunteers who work unsupervised are required to have an EDC**. A volunteer who works under supervision is not required to obtain an EDC.

All potential volunteers will be asked to provide the following information:

- Personal details such as name (including any previous names) and address, date of birth and any relationship with the school e.g. parent, relative of member of staff;
- Details of any qualifications and of any previous work with children;
- A declaration that they have never been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound-over Order;
- A declaration as to whether they have been investigated by Social Services for child protection (and the outcome of the investigation) or had a child removed from their care;
- A current qualification through a national governing body coaching award (if relevant);
- The names of two referees who are not family members or members of the staff of the College.

Supervision

- The volunteer will be supervised by a person who is in Regulated Activity e.g. teacher.
- The supervision must be regular and day to day.
- The supervision must be "reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children".

4.2 Visitors to Schools

All visitors to the College are required to report to Reception. Visitors to Lagan College, such as parents, suppliers of goods and services, to carry out maintenance etc do not routinely need to be

vetted before being allowed onto school premises. However, such visitors must be managed by school staff and their access to areas and movement within the school should be restricted as needs require.

Visitors should be:

- Met/directed by school staff/representatives.
- Signed in and out of the school by school staff.
- If appropriate, be given restricted access to only specific areas of the school.
- Where possible, escorted by a member of staff/representative.
- Clearly identified with visitor/contractor passes.
- Access to pupils restricted to the purpose of their visit.
- If delivering goods or carrying out building/maintenance or repair tasks their work should be cordoned off from pupils for health and safety reasons.

4.3 Pupils on Work Experience and Residential Situations

The welfare of their pupils on work experience and on residential trips will be considered. Guidance on organising work experience is available from the Education Authority (EA) and from the Health and Safety Executive

Pupils coming into the school on work experience do not require AccessNI clearance if they are fully supervised by school staff. The normal child protection induction processes should apply.

Section 5 - Parents and Carers

The primary responsibility for safeguarding and protection of children rests with parents who should feel confident about raising any concerns that have in relation to their child. As part of the on-going work of fostering trust and good relationships with parents/carers, Lagan College will work with parents/carers to understand the responsibility of the College for the welfare of all the children and young people in its charge.

Lagan College recognises that the student's welfare is paramount, however, good child protection practice and outcome relies on a positive, open and honest working partnership with parents/carers. We will ensure that all parent/carers are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. We respect parents/carers rights to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information unless we have permission to do so or it is necessary to do so in order to protect a student.

We will share any concerns we may have about their children with them unless to do so may place the student at risk of harm. We encourage parents/carers to discuss any concerns the may have with the relevant Year Head or Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

Parents/Carers are required to inform the school:

- If the child has a medical condition or educational need.
- If there are any Court Orders relating to the safety or wellbeing of a parent or child.
- If there is any change in a child's circumstances for example - change of address, change of contact details, change of name, change of parental responsibility.
- Parents should contact the school if their child is absent and send in a note on the child's return to school. This assures the school that the parent/carer knows about the absence. More information on parental responsibility can be found on the EA website at: www.eani.org.uk/schools/safeguarding-and-child-protection/
- It is essential that the school has up to date contact details for the parent/carer.

We make parents/carers aware of our Child Protection policy by providing a summary copy of the policy at point of entry into the College (usually in Year 8) and every two years thereafter. The full Safeguarding Policy is also available on request. The school will, in most circumstances, endeavour to discuss all concerns with parents/carers about their children.

If a parent/carer has a potential child protection concern:

I have a concern about my /a child's safety



I can talk to the Form Tutor/Head of Year



I can contact to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection
Miss Danielle Collins
or the Deputy Designated Teachers
Mrs H Thompson, Mrs L Mulholland, Mrs L Grant,
Mrs D Carlisle or Mrs Darina Ward



If I am still concerned I can contact the Principal
Mrs Amanda McNamee, Tel. 028 9040 1810



If I am still concerned, I can contact the Safeguarding Officer of the Board of Governors
Mrs Teresa Geraghty, Tel. 028 9040 1810



If I am still concerned, I can contact the Chairperson of the Board of Governors
Mr Francis Martin, Tel. 028 9040 1810



If I am still concerned, I can contact the NI Public Service Ombudsman
Tel: 0800 343 424



At any time, I can speak to:
Children's Services Gateway Team on **028 9050 7000** or Out of Hours **0800 1979 995**
Adult Protection Gateway Service **028 9250 1227** or Out of Hours **028 9504 9999**
PSNI Central Referral Unit at **028 9025 9299**

Section 6. Child Protection Definitions

6.1 Definition of Harm

(*Co-operating to Safeguard Children and young People in Northern Ireland August 2017*)

Harm can be suffered by a child or young person by acts of abuse perpetrated upon them by others. Abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health, or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Abuse can also occur outside of the family environment. Evidence shows that babies and children with disabilities can be more vulnerable to suffering abuse.

Although the harm from the abuse might take a long time to be recognisable in the child or young person, professionals may be in a position to observe its indicators earlier, for example, in the way that a parent interacts with their child. Effective and ongoing information sharing is key between professionals.

Harm from abuse is not always straightforward to identify and a child or young person may experience more than one type of harm.

6.2 What is Child Abuse?

We use the following definition:

"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. There are different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them."

(Area Child Protection Committees' (ACPC) Regional Policy and Procedures 2005)

Staff need to be aware of all types of abuse and to their legal obligations, including reporting of offences - Section 5 of the Criminal Law Act (NI) 1967 makes it an offence to fail to disclose an arrestable offence. This includes crimes against children.

Observation of signs and symptoms of possible abuse can do no more than give rise to concern - they are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred. It must always be remembered that alternative medical, psychological or social explanations may exist for the signs and symptoms of possible abuse. However, staff should be aware of the possible implications of, and alert to, all such signs, particularly if they appear in combination or are repeated regularly.

Where a member of staff is concerned that abuse may have occurred, he/she must report this immediately to the Designated Teacher who has specific responsibility for child protection. The designation of a teacher for this purpose should not be seen as diminishing the role of all members of staff in being alert to signs of abuse and being aware of the procedures to be followed, including those in cases where an allegation is made against any member of the school's staff, teaching or non-teaching.

It is imperative that any disclosure by a child, or concern that indicates a child may be at immediate risk, is reported immediately to the PSNI and Social Services to ensure that emergency protection measures are put in place. This is particularly important if there is a risk of the child at home.

6.3 Types of Abuse

Child abuse may take a number of forms, including:

- **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.

- **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.

- **Sexual Abuse** occurs 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.

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

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

- **Exploitation** is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfishor unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

  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 child and young people can be categorised with 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.

Reference: **DENI circular 2017/4 (Update September 2025) – Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools – Section 6** for further information on Specific Types of Abuse:

- Grooming
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Forced Marriage
- Children who display harmful sexualised behaviour
- E-Safety/Internet Abuse
- Managing the Risks (of the Twenty-first Century)
- Sexting

https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Safeguarding%20%26%20Child%20Protection%20in%20Schools%20%28September%202024%29.pdf

6.4 Children with Increased Vulnerabilities

Some children have increased risk of abuse due to specific vulnerabilities such as disability, lack of fluency in English or sexual orientation. The above types of abuse apply equally to children with disabilities, but the abuse may take slightly different forms, for example, lack of supervision, or the use of physical restraints such as being confined to a wheelchair or bed.

Children with a Disability.

Children and young people with disabilities (ie any child or young person who has a physical, sensory or learning impairment or a significant health condition) may be more vulnerable to abuse and individuals and organisations working with children with disabilities should be aware of any vulnerability factors associated with risk of harm, and any emerging child protection issues. Staff must be aware that communication difficulties can be hidden or overlooked making disclosure particularly difficult.

Children with a special educational need should be given the chance to express themselves to a member of staff or other professional with appropriate language/ communication skills, especially where there are concerns that abuse may have occurred.

Children with limited fluency in English

As with children with a special educational need, children who are not fluent in English should be given the chance to express themselves to a member of staff or other professional with appropriate language/communication skills, especially where there are concerns that abuse may have occurred.

Gender Identity Issues/Sexual Orientation
Schools should strive to provide a happy environment where all young people feel safe and secure. All pupils have the right to learn in a safe and secure environment, to be treated with respect and dignity, and not to be treated any less favourably due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Lagan College's Relationships and Sexuality Education and Supporting the LGBTQI+ Community policies clearly set out how the College will address issues relating to relationships and sexuality, including those affecting LGB&T children and young people.

Reference: DENI circular 2017/4 – Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools – Section 7 for further information on Statutory Responsibilities for schools.
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Safeguarding%20%26%20Child%20Protection%20in%20Schools%20%28September%202023%29_0.PDF

6.5 Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse
Reference: Appendix 2: Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse

6.6 Adult Safeguarding
An '**Adult at risk of harm'** is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:
a) Personal characteristics and/or
b) Life circumstances
Personal characteristics may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain.
Life circumstances may include, but are not limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions.

An **'Adult in need of protection'** is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their:
a) Personal characteristics and/or
b) Life circumstances and
c) Who is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests; and
d) Where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or is likely to cause, him/her to be harmed.

Section 7. Responding to Safeguarding and Child Protection Concerns

Safeguarding is more than child protection. Safeguarding begins with promotion and preventative activity which enables children and young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and wellbeing is not adversely affected. It includes support to families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and continues through to child protection. Child protection refers specifically to the activity that is undertaken to protect individual children or young people who are suffering, or are likely to suffer significant harm[1].

7.1 If a parent has a potential child protection concern within the school

In Lagan College, we aim to work closely with parents/carers in supporting all aspects of their child's development and well-being. Any concerns a parent may have will be taken seriously and dealt with in a professional manner.

If a parent has a concern, they can talk to a member of the College Safeguarding Team.

If they are still concerned, they may talk to the Chair of the Board of Governors.

At any time, a parent may talk to a social worker in the local Gateway team or to the PSNI Central Referral Unit.

7.2 Where School Has Concerns or Has Been Given Information about Possible Abuse by Someone Other Than a Member of Staff

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 will complete a Note of Concern and act promptly. **They will not investigate** - this is a matter for Social Services - but will discuss these concerns with the Designated Teacher or with the Deputy Designated Teacher if she is not available.

The Designated Teacher will consult with the Principal or other relevant staff **always taking care to avoid due delay.** If required advice may be sought from the Education Authority Designated Officer for Child Protection. The Designated Teacher may also seek clarification from the child or young person, their parent/carer.

If a child protection referral is not required the school may consider other options including monitoring, signposting or referring to other support agencies e.g. Family Support Hub with parental consent and, where appropriate, with the child/young person's consent.

If a child protection referral is required the Designated Teacher will seek consent from the parent/carer and/or the child {if they are competent to give this} unless this would place the child at risk of significant harm.

[1] Co-Operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland (March 2016)
https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/co-operating-safeguard-children-and-young-people-northern-ireland

The Designated Teacher will phone the Gateway team and/or the PSNI and will submit a completed UNOCINI referral form.

If the concern relates to a student over the age of 18, the Designated Teacher may discuss the concerns with the Trust Adult Safeguarding Team or the Team with responsibility for Vulnerable Adults which will assess the level of risk.

Where appropriate the source of the concern will be informed of the action taken.

7.3 Talking to Children where there are Concerns about Possible Abuse

Where staff see signs which cause them concern, they should, as a first step, seek some clarification from the child with tact and understanding. Where a classroom assistant or another member of the school's non-teaching staff sees such signs, he/ she should immediately bring them to the attention of either the class teacher or the Designated Teacher, and it may be appropriate for the necessary clarification to be carried out by the teacher.

Such clarification may reassure teachers that abuse has not occurred; but signs and symptoms which cause concern, while perhaps not a result of abuse, may nevertheless indicate that the child or his/her family is in need of intervention by statutory, voluntary or community based services through a 'child in need' referral (with parental consent).

Care must be taken in asking, and interpreting children's responses to, questions about indications of abuse. The same considerations apply when a child makes an allegation of abuse, or volunteers information which amounts to that. In some circumstances, talking to the child will quickly clarify initial concerns into a suspicion that abuse has occurred, and point to the need for an immediate referral. Staff should be aware that the way in which they talk to a child can have an effect on the evidence which is put forward if there are subsequent criminal proceedings, and the extent of questioning should, therefore, be kept to a minimum:

- Staff should not ask the child leading questions, as this can later be interpreted as putting ideas into the child's mind.

- Staff should not, therefore, ask questions which encourage the child to change his/her version of events in any way, or which impose the adult's own assumptions. For example, staff should say, "Tell me what has happened", rather than, "Did they do X to you?".

- The priority at this stage is to actively listen to the child, and not to interrupt or try to interpret if he/she is freely recalling significant events (the child must not be asked to unnecessarily recount the experience of abuse), and as soon as possible afterwards to make a record of the discussion to pass on to the Designated Teacher, using for example, the template 'Note of Concern' from the DE 'Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools' circular 2016/20. The note should record the time, date, place and people who were present, as well as what was said. Signs of physical injury observed should be described in detail, but under no circumstances should a child's clothing be removed nor a photograph taken.

- Any comment by the child, or subsequently by a parent or carer or other adult, about how an injury occurred, should be written down as soon as possible afterwards, quoting words actually used.

- Staff should not give the child or young person undertakings of confidentiality, although they can and should, of course, reassure that information will be disclosed only to those professionals who need to know.

- Staff should also be aware that their note of the discussion may need to be used in any subsequent court proceedings. Subsequent sections of this booklet give guidance on record-keeping. It should be emphasised that lack of proper records will not, of itself, exempt the school from any subsequent requirement to give evidence in court. It is therefore essential that accurate contemporaneous records are maintained.

- Staff should not ask the child to write an account of their disclosure for the record.

7.4 Child Displaying Symptoms of, or School alerted to, Possible Abuse

In all cases where symptoms displayed by a child give rise to concerns about possible abuse, or about the welfare of the child, staff should report these concerns to the designated teacher. A parent or other carer may also give information to a member of staff which gives rise to concern about possible child abuse by someone outside the school, or by a person working in the school in a volunteer capacity. The person making the complaint should be advised of their responsibility to refer to the local Health and Social Care Trust Gateway Team. The staff member should also inform the designated teacher responsible for child protection matters in the school who will refer, if necessary to the appropriate statutory authorities.

In order to form a view on whether a child or children may indeed be being abused, or at risk of possible abuse, the Principal/DT/DDT may need to seek discreet preliminary clarification from the person making the complaint or giving the information, or from others who may have relevant information.

While such clarification will often help to confirm or allay concerns, it is not the responsibility of teachers and other education staff to carry out investigations into cases of suspected abuse, or to make extensive enquiries of members of the child's family or other carers. Under Articles 65 and 66 of the Children (NI) Order, this is the statutory responsibility of the investigating agencies, Children's Social Services and/or Police. Schools should not take action beyond that set out in the procedures in this guidance, and those established by the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) and employing authorities, to be followed in handling suspected cases of abuse.

7.5 <u>Operation Encompass</u>

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 make contact with 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. Office staff are 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.

7.6 Dealing with Allegations of Abuse made Against a Member of Staff or Volunteer

Where a complaint about possible abuse is made against a member of staff of the school, the procedures in DE Circular 2015/13 – *Dealing with allegation of abuse against a member of staff should be followed.*
www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-201513-dealing-allegations-abuseagainst-member-staff

In all decisions the child's welfare is the paramount consideration and the child should be listened to and his/her concerns taken seriously. The possible risk of harm to children posed by a member of staff must be evaluated and managed and in some cases this will require consideration of suspension as a precautionary measure.

Statutory Responsibilities

Principals and Boards of Governors have a duty of care for the welfare of pupils and any allegation needs to be effectively evaluated and managed. However, as employers, they also have a duty of care to their staff and should ensure they provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation of abuse.

All allegations should be reported immediately, normally to the Principal or Designated Teacher for Child Protection/Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection. A Lead Individual should be identified to manage the handling of the allegation from the outset. This would normally be the

Principal or a designated senior member of staff. If the Principal is the subject of concern the allegation should be reported immediately to the Chair of the Board of Governors, Deputy Chairperson, Designated Governor for Child Protection and the person about to be the Lead Individual.

In the interests of all involved the issue should be dealt with as a priority and unnecessary delays should be avoided. Every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity must be made. Allegations should not be shared with other staff or children.

All allegations of a child abuse nature must be recorded in the hard backed and bound Record of Child Abuse Complaints book, which must be retained securely. A record of this should be placed on the relevant pupil's Child Protection File. For more information on recording of child protection complaints see DE Circular 2016/20 *Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools*.

Section 8 - Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held "in confidence". In the interests of the child, staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly the investigative agencies. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with school staff will be on a 'need to know' basis.

Where there have been, or are current, child protection concerns about a pupil who transfers to another school we will follow DE guidance in determining what information should be shared with the Designated Teacher in the receiving school.

8.1 Process for Referral

Responsibility for referral of suspected abuse cases lies with the Designated Teacher who will find it helpful to establish a good working relationship with colleagues from the other agencies, especially the Social Services and the Police. These agencies have wide experience in dealing with such cases, and regular communication should help to build the understanding, trust and confidence which will help to secure effective co-operation in cases of actual or suspected abuse.

8.2 Understanding the Needs of Children in Northern Ireland

The UNOCINI referral form must be completed whenever staff wish to refer a child or young person to children's social services for support, safeguarding or a fuller assessment of a child's needs.

If you are concerned that a child may be suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm, then an urgent referral to children's social services through the local Gateway Service must be made. When making an urgent referral by telephone, the Duty Social Worker will advise you that you will be required to confirm your referral in writing on a UNOCINI within 24 hours.

Consent

Prior to making a referral to Social Services the consent of the parent/carers and/ or the young person (if they are competent to give this) will normally be sought. The exception to this is where to seek such consent would put that child, young person, or others at increased risk of significant harm or an adult at risk of serious harm, or it would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.

In circumstances where the consent of the parent/carer and/or the young person has been sought and is withheld, consideration where possible to respect their wishes will be undertaken. However, the primary consideration must be the safety and welfare of the child and a referral will be made in cases where consent is withheld if it is believed on the basis of the information available that it is in the best interests of the child/young person to do so.

Non-urgent referrals ie child in need/family support referrals must have the consent of the parent/carers and/or the young person (if they are competent to give this) and should be made in writing using the UNOCINI referral form.

The welfare of the child is paramount and, if you are unable to contact the parent/ carers, you should not delay but progress the referral with Social Services. Issues of consent (including when consent is not forthcoming) must always be clearly recorded.

There is a difficult balance between gaining consent for a referral into Adult Protection Gateway Services and also ensuring a vulnerable adult is protected from harm. Consent will always be sought from the person for a referral to statutory agencies.

If consent is withheld then a referral will not be made into the Adult Protection Gateway unless there is reasonable doubt regarding the capacity of the adult to give/withhold consent. In this case contact will be made with the local Adult Protection Gateway to seek further advice.
In situations where there is reasonable doubt regarding an individual's capacity, they will be informed of the referral, unless to do so would put them at any further risk.

The principle of consent may be overridden if there is an overriding public interest, for example in the following circumstances:

- the person causing the harm is a member of staff, a volunteer or someone who only has contact with the adult at risk because they both use the service; or
- consent has been provided under undue influence, coercion or duress;
- other people are at risk from the person causing harm;
- or a crime is alleged or suspected.

The outcomes of a Social Services investigation may include the Principal/DT/DDT being invited by Social Services to attend a child protection case conference to participate in the decision-making process regarding Child Protection registration.

Processes for Referral are set out in the Flowcharts below:

Procedure where the school has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of staff:

Member of staff completes the Child Protection Concern sheet on what has been observed or shared and must ACT PROMPTLY. Source of concern is notified that the school will follow up appropriately on the issues raised.

⇩

Staff member discusses concerns with the Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher in his/her absence and provides note of concern.

⇩

Designated Teacher should consult with the Principal or other relevant staff before deciding upon action to be taken, always taking care to avoid undue delay. If required advice may be sought from a CPSS officer.

⇩ ⇩ ⇩

Child Protection referral is required

Designated Teacher seeks consent of the parent/carer and/or the child (if they are competent to give this) unless this would place the child atrisk of significant harm then telephones the Children's Services Gateway Team and/or the PSNI if a child is at immediate risk.

He/she submits a completed UNOCINI referral form within 24 hours.

Designated Teacher clarifies/discusses concern with child/ parent/carers and decides if a child protection referral is or is not required.

Child Protection referral is not required

School may consider other options including monitoring the situation within an agreed timescale; signposting or referring the child/parent/carers to appropriate support services such as the Children's Services Gateway Team or local Family Support Hub with parental consent, and child/young person's consent (where appropriate)

⇩ ⇩ ⇩

Where appropriate the source of the concern will be informed as to the action taken. The Designated Teacher will maintain a written record of all decisions and actions taken and ensure that this record is appropriately and securely stored

Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against a Member of Staff

Key Points

Lead individual learns of an allegation against a member of staff and informs the Chair/Vice Chair of BoG as appropriate.

Guidance on the Next Steps

Lead individual then establishes the facts, seeks advice from the key agencies as appropriate, usually through informal discussion.

Possible Outcomes

Following on from establishing the facts, seeking advice from Key Agencies and discussion with the Chair and/or BoG to agree a way forward from the options below.

- Precautionary suspension is not appropriate and the matter is concluded.
- Allegation addressed through relevant disciplinary procedures.
- Precautionary suspension under Child Protection procedures imposed
- Alternatives to precautionary suspension imposed

Section 9 – Preventive Curriculum

The statutory personal development curriculum requires schools to give specific attention to pupils' emotional wellbeing, health and safety, relationships, and the development of a moral thinking and value system. The curriculum also offers a medium to explore sensitive issues with children and young people in an age-appropriate way which helps them to develop appropriate protective behaviours. (DE guidance "Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools" Circular 2017/04 and subsequent amendments).

In recent years, the use of "keeping safe messages" and the term "preventative curriculum" have become more widely used to denote the proactive promotion of positive emotional health and wellbeing of pupils within and across the broader school community. This is achieved by raising awareness of social, emotional, and health issues, developing the confidence, resiliencies and coping skills of pupils, and in offering early intervention when pupils are experiencing certain difficulties.

The Governors and the Senior leadership team of the College are committed to developing positive relationships and a caring ethos across the whole school. The personal development curriculum and wellbeing of pupils has a high priority in the College's school development plan and keeping safe messages are embedded throughout the school. Form tutors delivering the programme are trained in both pastoral care and personal development and there are effective links across the wider curriculum. The College consults with parents, pupils and community organisations and external providers are carefully selected and evaluated prior to delivering their programmes in the school.

9.1 Relationships and Sexuality Education

All young people have a right to an education which adequately prepares them for adult life and quality Relationships and Sexuality Education is of paramount importance. LCB Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy clearly sets out the College's practice within this area.

9.2 Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse

DENI is committed to the 'Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse' strategy. The Strategy aims to help improve understanding of domestic and sexual violence and stopping it happen in the first place by helping people change how they act, supporting victims and holding people responsible for their actions.

Domestic Violence and Abuse is:
'Threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation) by a current or former intimate partner or family member'.

Sexual Violence and Abuse is:
'Any behaviour (physical; verbal, virtual/digital) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful, or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender or sexual orientation) without their informed consent or understanding.

There are five key Strands in the Strategy which focus on leadership, prevention, support, services and justice. DE commitments relate to Strand 2, 'Prevention and Intervention':

- Teachers will have the necessary skills to teach about sensitive subjects, including child abuse, and domestic and sexual violence and abuse.
- Teachers will be alert to pupils experiencing distress and trained to respond appropriately.
- Teachers will have access to a range of age appropriate and evaluated resources to support the teaching of sensitive subjects.
- Quality assurance arrangements will be established to ensure that the preventative curriculum offered in schools is effective.

9.3 General Role for Education

While it is important that those at risk are identified and interventions are put in place, it is equally important that children and young people are provided with information and skills in building healthy behaviours and relationships. At Lagan College, students are provided with the opportunity to develop good mental health and emotional resilience to enable them to identify abuse and exercise prevention skills.

The statutory curriculum provides the opportunity for specific attention to be given to a pupil's emotional wellbeing, health and safety, relationships and the development of a moral thinking and value system. It also offers a vehicle for exploring with children and young people sensitive issues such as domestic violence and sexual abuse in an age appropriate way and appropriate protective behaviours.

Teachers or other school staff who suspect that a pupil is a victim of domestic violence or sexual abuse should raise their concerns with the designated teacher. The procedures to be followed are the same as for any other type of abuse.

Section 10 – Child Protection – Record Keeping in Schools

10.1 Child Protection File

The DT should store each Child Protection Concern Sheet (and copy UNOCINI documents) in the child's Child Protection File and supplement it with all other records created and acquired as the management of the concern progresses. A Child Protection File is separate to the School Pupil/ Educational Record and must be stored securely. Safeguarding staff will use paper format or CPOMS to record information. It is recommended that the School Pupil/ Educational Record is marked in some way to indicate the presence of a separate confidential file. A coloured sticker is one means of doing this and staff should be aware of who to contact in this instance.

Child Protection Files should be factual, objective and include what was seen, said, heard or reported. They should include details of the place and time and who was present and should be given to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

The Child Protection File should contain:

- Chronology of events/ action taken
- All records of concern
- Any notes initially recorded, including in the form of notebooks/diaries3 which should be kept securely with the child protection file
- Records of discussions and telephone calls (with colleagues, parents and children/young people and other agencies or services)
- Correspondence with other organisations - sent and received
- Referral forms – both for support services and specialist services (irrespective of outcome)
- Formal plans linked to the child e.g. child protection plan, child in need plan
- Risk assessments
- Risk Management Plans/ Individual Safety and Support Plans
- School reports to interagency meetings and conferences
- Minutes of interagency meetings e.g. child in need, strategy, child protection conference
- Any other relevant notes/ papers

10.2 Storage of Child Protection Information

Child Protection information is confidential and is stored in a separate secure confidential filing cabinet in the Designated Teacher's office. The school's confidential Record of Child Abuse Complaints is also stored in the Principal's office. If any Child Protection Record information needs to be taken out of the school, it must be transported securely and a record should be kept of when it was removed, by whom, for what purpose, and when it was returned. In accordance with DE guidance on the disposal of child protection records these records will be stored from child's date of birth plus 30 years.

Records can be stored electronically on the C2k system and on CPOMS. Any Child Protection information is stored in Private 3. This folder can only be accessed by the Principal, Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher.

10.3 Retention Periods for Child Protection Records

Record	Retention Period
Student Child Protection Case Files	D.O.B + 30 years
The school's confidential Record of Child Abuse Complaints	Indefinitely
If Social Services inform the school that a child's name has been placed on the Child Protection Register.	Maintain a record of this fact and associated documentation from Social Services on the child's file while he/she continues to attend. On transfer, the school should inform the new school and destroy all social services records. The record on the Child Protection File will remain until D.O.B + 30 years.
If Social Services inform the school that a child's name is removed from the Child Protection Register.	On transfer to a new school, the school should destroy any child protection records on the child supplied by Social Services, including records of case conferences. The record on the Child Protection File will remain until D.O.B + 30 years.
Complaint against a member of staff Staff members file Child's Child Protection File Record of Child Abuse Complaints	 Indefinitely, unless totally exonerated D.O.B + 30 years Indefinitely
Complaint to be pursued under the school's disciplinary procedures. Staff members file Child's Child Protection File Record of Child Abuse Complaints	 7 years D.O.B + 30 years Indefinitely

10.4 Sharing Information with Others

If a student attends an EOTAS provision, a member of the safeguarding team will share any child protection concerns they have with the DT in the centre. If child protection concerns arise when a student is attending an EOTAS provision, the DT in EOTAS will follow child protection procedures and will advise a member of LCB's Safeguarding Team of the concerns and any actions taken. It is the responsibility of EOTAS staff to maintain their records in accordance with DE circular 2020/07 Child Protection: Record Keeping in Schools and any subsequent updates.

Information must always be shared with other agencies where there is a legal duty to do so e.g. PSNI and Social Services. It should, however, be noted that the PSNI have no automatic right to access data and must complete Form 81, stating the data they require and the specific case to which it relates.

Where it is necessary to safeguard children, information will be shared with other statutory agencies in accordance with the requirements of this policy, the school data protection policy and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

10.5 Disposal of Child Protection Records

In accordance with DENI advice on the Disposal of Child Protection Records, all child protection records for a child will be held in a separate locked cabinet until the child is 30 years old. When a child whose name is on the Child Protection Register changes school, the College will inform the receiving school immediately that his/her name is on the Register and advise the designated teacher to contact the child's social worker. Reference: LBC Record Retention and Destruction Policy

Reference: DENI Guidance

- DE Circular 2016/20 Child Protection: Record Keeping Schools
- DE Circular 2015/13 Dealing with allegations of abuse against a member of staff

Section 11 – LCB Pastoral Policies

11.1 Overview

The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy complements and support a range of other policies including:

- Additional Educational Needs.
- Addressing Bullying.
- Attendance.
- CRED
- Critical Incident
- Christian Ethos
- Digital Devices Policy
- Drugs
- Educational Visits
- E-Safety Policy.
- First Aid and Administration of Medicines
- Healthy Eating
- Health and Safety
- Intimate Care and Period Dignity
- Nut Allergy
- Parental Complaints.
- Positive Behaviour.
- Pastoral Care.
- Record Retention and Destruction
- Relationships and Sexuality Education.
- Restorative Practice
- Safe Handling
- School Aged Mothers.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Support Trans Gender and Non-Binary Youth
- Suspension and Expulsions
- Uniform
- Whistleblowing Policy

All policies must be kept up to date, with regular risk assessments carried out where required.
Reference: Policy Overview document

The following policies are available on the College Website:

- Anti-Bullying.
- Attendance.
- Complaints.
- Drugs.
- E-Safety Policy.
- Positive Behaviour.
- Pastoral Care.
- Relationships and Sexuality Education.
- Safeguarding and Child Protection.
- Uniform.

All pastoral policies are available to parents with hard copies available on request.

11.2 Physical Contact with Pupils/Safe Handling/Use of Reasonable Force

All staff have a responsibility to maintain confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. Integral to this is a clear understanding of standards of behaviour expected and in particular the acceptable boundaries of physical contact with pupils. School staff must accept that all physical contact can be open to scrutiny and that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misconstrued.

The Staff Code of Conduct makes it clear that whilst, as a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with children and young people, it is also unnecessary and unrealistic to suggest that physical contact should only happen in emergencies.

It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one child in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child. Staff should, therefore, use their professional judgement at all times. As a general rule, when physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Appropriate physical contact may occur most often with younger pupils, for example, physical comforting can give welcome reassurance to a distressed younger child.

In extreme cases, a staff member might have to restrain a pupil physically to prevent him or her from committing an offence, from causing injury to him or herself, to others or to property, or otherwise from behaving in an undisciplined way. Staff are empowered to use reasonable force in these circumstances, either on school premises or anywhere else where the member of staff is in lawful charge of the pupil concerned. In such instances no more than the minimum necessary force should be used. Staff should act within the Department's and the Education Authority's (EA) guidelines on the use of reasonable force and should seek to avoid causing injury to the pupil.

Statutory Responsibilities

The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998, Article 4, outlines the powers a member of school staff can use in restraining pupils. Through this legislation, staff of a grant-aided school may use reasonable force for the purposes of preventing the pupil from:

- committing an offence;
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself); or
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs during a teaching session or otherwise.

The legislation extends to the premises of the school and when a member of school staff has lawful control or charge of the pupil concerned.

Reference:

- LCB - Use of Reasonable Force Policy
- DE Circular 1999/9 Use of Reasonable Force.

Section 12 - MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Safeguarding Team and approved by the Board of Governors for dissemination to parents, pupils and staff. It will be implemented through the College's staff induction and training programme and as part of day to day practice. Compliance with the policy will be monitored on an on-going basis by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and periodically by the Schools Safeguarding Team.

The Board of Governors will also monitor child protection activity and the implementation of the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy on a regular basis through the provision of reports from the Designated Teacher.

Conclusion

This policy is a working document and will be reviewed annually in line with updates issued by the DENI – Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools – A Guide in Schools.

The information within this policy was correct as of October 2025.

Appendix 1

Safeguarding Team



Appendix 2

Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse

This section contains information for all professionals working with children and families and is not an exhaustive list. The following pages provide guidance only and should not be used as a checklist.

The first indication that a child is being abused may not necessarily be the presence of a severe injury. Concerns may become apparent in a number of ways e.g.

- by bruises or marks on a child's body
- by remarks made by a child, his parents or friends
- by overhearing conversation by the child, or his parents
- by observing that the child is either being made a scapegoat by or has a poor relationship/bond with his parents.
- by a child having sexual knowledge or exhibiting sexualised behaviour which is unusual given his age and/or level of understanding.
- by a child not thriving or developing at a rate which one would expect for his age and stage of development.
- by the observation of a child's behaviour and changes in his behaviour.
- by indications that the family is under stress and needs support in caring for their children.
- by repeat visits to a general practitioner or hospital.

There may be a series of events which in themselves do not necessarily cause concern but are significant, if viewed together. Initially the incident may not seem serious but it should be remembered that prompt help to a family under stress may prevent minor abuse escalating into something more serious.

It is important to remember that abused children do not necessarily show fear or anxiety and may appear to have established a sound relationship with their abuser(s). Staff should familiarise themselves on 'attachment theory' and its implications for assessing the bond between parents and their children.

Suspicions should be raised by e.g.

- discrepancy between an injury and the explanation
- conflicting explanation, or no explanation, for an injury
- delay in seeking treatment for any health problem
- injuries of different ages
- history of previous concerns or injuries
- faltering growth (failure to thrive)
- parents show little, or no, concern about the child's condition or show little warmth or empathy with the child
- evidence of domestic violence
- parents with mental health difficulties, particularly of a psychotic nature
- evidence of parental substance abuse

Signs and symptoms are indicators and simply highlight the need for further investigation and assessment.

Parental Response to Allegations of Child Abuse Which Raise Concern

Parents' responses to allegations of abuse of their child are very varied. The following types of response are of concern:

- there may be an unequivocal denial of abuse and possible non-compliance with enquiries.
- parents may over-react, either aggressively or defensively, to a suggestion that they may be responsible for harm to their child.
- there may be reluctance to give information, or the explanation given may be incompatible with the harm caused to the child, or explanations may change over time.
- parents may display a lack of awareness that the child has suffered harm, or that their actions, or the actions of others, may have caused harm.
- parents may seek to minimise the severity of the abuse, or not accept that their actions constitute abuse.
- parents may fail to engage with professionals.
- blame or responsibility for the harm may be inappropriately placed on the child or an unnamed third party.
- parents may seek help on matters unrelated to the abuse or its causes (this may be to deflect attention away from the child and his injuries).
- the parents and/or child may go missing.

Physical Abuse

Children receive bumps and bruises as a result of the rough and tumble of normal play. Most children will have bruises or other injuries, therefore, from time to time. These will be accidental and can be easily explained.

It is not necessary to establish intent to cause harm to the child to conclude that the child has been subject to abuse. Physical abuse can occur through acts of both commission and/or omission.

Insignificant but repeated injuries, however minor, may be symptomatic of a family in crisis and, if no action is taken, the child may be further injured. All injuries should be noted and collated in the child's records and analysed to assess if the child requires to be safeguarded.

If on initial examination the injury is not felt to be compatible with the explanation given or suggest abuse it should be discussed with a senior paediatrician.

A small number of children suffer from rare conditions, e.g. haemophilia or brittle bone disease, which makes them susceptible to bruising and fractures. It is important to remain aware, however, that in such children some injuries may have a non-accidental cause. A "clotting screen" only excludes the common conditions which may cause spontaneous bleeding. If the history suggests a bleeding disorder, referral to a haematologist will be required.

Recognition of Physical Abuse

a) Bruises + Soft Tissue Injuries

Common sites for accidental bruising depend on the developmental stage of the child. They include:

- forehead
- crown of head
- bony spinal protuberances
- elbows and below
- hips
- hands
- shins

Less common sites for accidental bruising include:

- Eyes
- Ears
- Cheeks
- Mouth
- Neck
- Shoulders
- Chest
- Upper and Inner Arms
- Stomach
- Genitals
- Upper and Inner Thighs
- Lower Back and Buttocks
- Upper Lip and Frenulum
- Back of the Hands.

Non-accidental bruises may be:

- frequent
- patterned, e.g. finger and thumb marks
- in unusual positions, (note developmental level and activity of the child).

Research on aging of bruises (from photographs) has shown that it is impossible to accurately age bruises although it can be concluded that a bruise with a yellow colour is more than 18 hours old. Tender or swollen bruises are more likely to be fresh. It is not possible to conclude definitely that bruises of different colours were sustained at different times.

The following should give rise to concern e.g.

- bruising in a non-mobile child, in the absence of an adequate explanation,
- bruises other than at the common sites of accidental injury for a child of that developmental stage,
- facial bruising, particularly around the eyes, cheeks, mouth or ears, especially in very young children.
- soft tissue bruising, on e.g. cheeks, arms and inner surface of thighs, with no adequate explanation.
- a torn upper lip frenulum (skin which joins the lip and gum).
- patterned bruising e.g. linear or outline bruising, hand marks (due to grab, slap or pinch may be petechial), strap marks particularly on the buttocks or back.
- ligature marks caused by tying up or strangulation.

Most falls or accidents produce one bruise on a single surface, usually a bony protuberance. A child who falls downstairs would generally only have one or two bruises. Children usually fall forwards and therefore bruising is most usually found on the front of the body. In addition, there may be marks on their hands if they have tried to break their fall.

Bruising may be difficult to see on a dark skinned child. Mongolian blue spots are natural pigmentation to the skin, which may be mistaken for bruising. These purplish-blue skin markings are most commonly found on the backs of children whose parents are darker skinned.

b) Eye Injuries

Injuries which should give cause for concern:

- black eyes can occur from any direct injury, both accidental and non-accidental. Determining how the injury occurred is vital, therefore; bilateral "black eyes" can occur accidentally as a result of blood tracking from a very hard blow to the central forehead (Injury should be

evident on mid-forehead, bridge of nose). It is rare for both eyes to be bruised separately, accidentally however and at the same time.

- sub conjunctival haemorrhage
- retinal haemorrhage.

c) Burns and Scalds

Accidental scalds often:

- are on the upper part of the body
- are on a convex (curved) surface
- are irregular
- are superficial
- leave a recognisable pattern.

It **can be difficult to distinguish between accidental and non-accidental burns. Any burn or scald with a clear outline should be regarded with suspicion e.g.**

- circular burns
- linear burns
- burns of uniform depth over a large area
- friction burns
- scalds that have a line which could indicate immersion or poured liquid
- splash marks
- old scars indicating previous burns or scalds.

When a child presents with a burn or scald it is important to remember:

- a responsible adult checks the temperature of the bath before a child gets in to it.
- a child is unlikely to sit down voluntarily in too hot water and cannot accidentally scald his bottom without also scalding his feet.
- "doughnut" shaped burns to the buttocks often indicate that a child has been held down in hot water, with the buttocks held against the water container e.g. bath, sink etc.
- a child getting into too hot water of its own accord will struggle to get out and there are likely to be splash marks.
- small round burns may be cigarette burns but can often be confused with skin conditions. Where there is doubt, a medical/dermatology opinion should be sought.

d) Fractures

The potential for a fracture should be considered if there is pain, swelling and discoloration over a bone or joint or a child is not using a limb, especially in younger children. The majority of fractures normally cause pain, and it is very difficult for a parent to be unaware that a child has been hurt. In infants, rib and metaphysical limb fractures may produce no detectable ongoing pain however.

It is very rare for a child aged under one year to sustain a fracture accidentally, but there may be some underlying medical condition, e.g. brittle bone disease, which can cause fractures in babies.

The most common non-accidental fractures are to the long bones in the arms and legs and to the ribs. The following should give cause for concern and further investigation may be necessary:

- any fracture in a child under one year of age
- any skull fracture in children under three years of age
- a history of previous skeletal injuries which may suggest abuse
- skeletal injuries at different stages of healing
- evidence of previous fractures which were left untreated.

e) Scars

Children may have scars from previous injuries. Particular note should be taken if there is a large number of scars of different ages, or of unusual shapes or large scars from burns or lacerations that have not received medical treatment.

f) Bites

Bites are always non-accidental in origin; they can be caused by animals or human beings (adult/child); a dental surgeon with forensic experience may be needed to secure detailed evidence in such cases.

g) Other Types of Physical Injuries

- poisoning, either through acts of omission or commission
- ingestion of other damaging substances, e.g. bleach
- administration of drugs to children where they are not medically indicated or prescribed
- female genital mutilation, which is an offence, regardless of cultural reasons
- unexplained neurological signs and symptoms, e.g. subdural haematoma

h) Fabricated or Induced Illness

Fabricated or induced illness, previously known as Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy, is a condition where a child suffers harm through the deliberate action of the main carer, in most cases the mother, but which is attributed to another medical cause.

It is important not to confuse this deliberate activity with the behaviour and actions of over-anxious parents who constantly seek advice from doctors, health visitors and other health professionals about their child's wellbeing.

There is a need to exercise caution about attributing a child's illness, in the absence of a medical diagnosis, to deliberate activity on the part of a parent or carer to a fabricated or induced illness, as stated in the Court of Appeal judgement in the case of Angela Cannings.

(R v Cannings (2004) EWCA Criml (19 January 2004)).

The following behaviours exhibited by parents can be associated with fabricated or induced illness:

- deliberately inducing symptoms in children by administering medication or other substances, or by means of intentional suffocation.
- interfering with treatments by over-dosing, not administering them or interfering with medical equipment such as infusion lines or not complying with professional advice, resulting in significant harm.
- claiming the child has symptoms which may be unverifiable unless observed directly, such as pain, frequency of passing urine, vomiting or fits.
- exaggerating symptoms, causing professionals to undertake investigations and treatments which may be invasive, unnecessary and, therefore, are harmful and possibly dangerous.
- obtaining specialist treatments or equipment for children who do not require them.
- alleging psychological illness in a child.

There are a number of presentations in which fabricated or induced illness may be a possibility. These are:

- failure to thrive/growth faltering (sometimes through deliberate withholding of food.)
- fabrication of medical symptoms especially where there is no independent witness
- convulsions.
- pyrexia (high temperature).
- cyanotic episode (reported blue tinge to the skin due to lack of oxygen).
- apnoea (stops breathing).
- allergies
- asthmatic attacks
- unexplained bleeding (especially anal or genital or bleeding from the ears)
- frequent unsubstantiated allegations of sexual abuse, especially when accompanied by demands for medical examinations
- frequent ‘accidental’ overdoses (especially in very young children).

Concerns may arise when:

- reported symptoms and signs found on examinations are not (3 explained by any medical condition from which the child may be suffering.
- physical examination and results of medical investigations do not explain reported symptoms and signs.
- there is an inexplicably poor response to prescribed medication and other treatment.
- new symptoms are reported on resolution of previous ones.
- reported symptoms and/or clinical signs do not occur when the carers are absent
- over time the child is repeatedly presented to health professionals with a range of signs and symptoms.
- the child's normal, daily life activities are being curtailed beyond that which might be expected for any medical disorder or disability from which the child is known to suffer.

It is important to note that the child may also have an illness that has been diagnosed and needs regular treatment. This may make the diagnosis of fabricated or induced illness difficult, as the presenting symptoms may be similar to those of the diagnosed illness.

Sexual Abuse

Most child victims are sexually abused by someone they know, either a family member or someone well known to them or their family. In recent years there has been an increasing recognition that both male and female children and older children are sexually abused to a greater extent than had previously been realised.

There are no 'typical' sexually abusing families. Children who have been sexually abused are likely to have been put under considerable pressure not to reveal what has been happening to them. Sexual abuse is damaging to children, both in the short and long term.

Both boys and girls of all ages are abused and the abuse may continue for many years before it is disclosed. Abusers may be both male and female.

It is important to note that children and young people may also abuse other children sexually.

Children disclosing sexual abuse have the right to be listened to and to have their allegations taken seriously. Research shows it is rare for children to invent allegations of sexual abuse and that in fact they are more likely to claim they are not being abused when they are.

It is important that the indicators listed below are assessed in terms of significance and in the context of the child's life, before concluding that the child is, or has been, sexually abused.

Some indicators take on a greater, or lesser, importance depending upon the child's age.

Recognition of Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse often presents in an obscure way. Whilst some child victims have obvious genital injuries, a sexually transmitted infection or are pregnant, relatively few children are so easily diagnosed. The majority of children subjected to sexual abuse, even when penetration has occurred, have on medical examination no evidence of the abuse having occurred.

The following indicators of sexual abuse may be observed in a child. There may be occasions when no symptoms are present but it is still thought that a child may be, or has been, sexually abused. Suspicions increase where several features are present together.

The following list is not exhaustive and should not be used as a check list.

Appendix 3

Relationships with Students Outside of Work Declaration

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby staff and volunteers of the school are known to students outside of work. Examples include membership of sports clubs, family connections, or private tutoring.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of school that they may have with students.

Employee Name	Student Name	Relationship

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of school with students in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a student outside of school, I am aware that the following must be adhered to:

- I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my daily timetable
- I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the school.
- No monies come through the school at any point, informally (eg via the child) or formally.
- No private tutoring is to take place on the school premises.

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

Signed _____ Date _____

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Principal.

Appendix 4

Child Protection Concern Sheet

Record

- Make objective, detailed, handwritten notes of the discussion
- Record facts (when? Where? Who? What?)
- Use the child's exact words as much as possible

Name of child	Form Class
Name and role of person making this record:	
Date, time of incident / disclosure:	

Circumstances of incident / disclosure:
Nature and Description of Concern: (Attach additional sheet(s) if necessary)
Parties involved, including any witnesses to an event and what was said or done and by whom:

Action taken at the time:
Details of any advice sought, from whom and when:
Any further action taken:
Reviewed by Designated Teacher: (Dates and Action taken)
Additional notes

Signature of Staff Member: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Designated Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 5

Service Level Agreement for use with External Agencies Working in Schools

External Agency:	

I / We have read Lagan College's Safeguarding policy and agree to formally adhere to the College's ethos and practice:

- In working with young people and;
- In the delivery of the programme/service outlined below:

Programme/Service

I am / We are willing to provide full details of any disclosures made and share appropriate information to ensure that the welfare of the student is paramount at all times.

I accept that the agency will work in partnership with the school to support the education and welfare of the students.

I/ We formally accept the above terms of reference and in so doing I/ We will acknowledge the agreement made.

Name _____

Signed _____ (External Agency)

Dated _____

Countersigned _____ (Vice Principal)

Dated _____

Appendix 6

Risk Assessment for a Volunteer Working in the College

The proposed supervisor (paid member of staff) should complete and sign this form and it to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection. A volunteer may only begin work if supervision is approved by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

Volunteer Details			
Name of Volunteer		Name of supervisor	
Date of Birth		Ages of Students	
Address		The nature of the volunteer's work/ activity	
Home Number Mobile Number		Number of Students involved	

Supervision	
How vulnerable are the children?	
How many volunteers would be supervised by each supervisor?	

Risk Assessment (Please tick Yes or No)	**Yes**	**No**
Has an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate been undertaken for the volunteer?		
If yes,		
The supervisor will be in close proximity to the volunteer for all of the time		
The supervisor will usually be able to see the volunteer		
If no, the volunteer **must** be supervised at all times		
The volunteer will be supervised at all times by a member of staff in a regulated activity		
The volunteer will be met at the foyer of the school and supervised throughout their visit to the school.		
The supervision will be reasonable in all circumstance to ensure the protection of the students		

Supervisor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Designated Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____

Supervision Approved: Yes / No (deleted as appropriate) Date : _____

Appendix 7

Code of Conduct for Coaches: Sport Northern Ireland

Coaches/Volunteers are expected to:

- Ensure the safety of all children by careful supervision, proper pre-planning of coaching sessions, using safe methods at all times.
- Actively encourage all children and not to discriminate on the grounds of religious beliefs, race, gender, social classes or lack of ability.
- Not allow any rough or dangerous play, bullying, or the use of bad language or inappropriate behaviour.
- Always be positive and to promote the objectives of the club at all times.
- Not let any allegations of abuse of any kind to go unchallenged or unrecorded if appropriate. Incidents and accidents to be recorded in the club incident/accident book. Parents will be informed.
- Report accidents or incidents of alleged abuse to the designated person.
- Administer minor first aid in the presence of others and where required refer more serious incidents to the club "first aider".
- Have access to telephone for immediate contact to emergency services if required.
- Foster team work to ensure the safety of youth members in their care.
- Ensure the rights and responsibilities of youth members are enforced.
- Report suspected abuse to the appropriate designated officer.
- Not abuse members physically, emotionally or sexually.
- Maintain confidentiality about sensitive information.
- Be a role model (disciplined/committed/time keeping), remember children learn by example.
- Refrain from smoking and consumption of alcohol during club activities or coaching sessions.
- Protect themselves from false accusation by:
    - Not spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others;
    - Avoid taking children alone in a car on journeys, however short;
    - Never taking children to their home;
    - Not administering First Aid involving the removing of children's clothing unless in the presence of others.

Coaches/Volunteers have a right to:

- Access on-going training and information on all aspects of leading/managing activities for youths, particularly on child protection.
- Support in the reporting of suspected abuse.
- Access to professional support services.
- Fair and equitable treatment by the Governing Body.
- Be protected from abuse by children/youths, other adult members and parents.
- Not to be left vulnerable when working with children.
-

Any misdemeanours and general misbehaviour will be dealt with immediately and reported verbally to the designated person. Persistent breach of the code will result in dismissal from the club.
Dismissals can be appealed by the coach/volunteer with final decisions taken by the club committee.

Appendix 8

Guidelines for the Use of Volunteers to Support School Activities

The following fundamental principles are to be observed when using volunteers in the College:

- The purpose of the volunteer is to assist paid staff. They should not be used as substitutes either to cover activities normally undertaken by paid staff who are absent, or to release such staff to undertake other duties;
- Volunteers should only work under the supervision and guidance of paid staff in Regulated Activity and these arrangements should be such as to minimise the opportunities for direct, unsupervised, access to students;
- Volunteers should not be placed in a position of sole responsibility for the security of students, premises or equipment;
- Volunteers should understand the tasks which they are to undertake and receive appropriate training to enable them to perform these;
- Volunteers should only be allocated duties after consultation and agreement with the supervisor with whom the volunteer will be most closely involved;
- Volunteers should not be afforded access to records or other information relating to staff or students. An exception might be made where a student has a medical or other condition of which all those working with him/her should be made aware.
- Volunteers are owed a duty of care under the requirements of Health and Safety legislation. The College will therefore ensure that volunteers are treated no less favourably than paid employees in terms of the school's obligations under the legislation.

The volunteer will receive information on:

- The College's Positive Behaviour Policy and the extent of the volunteer's authority within it;
- The College's Safeguarding Policy.
-

The volunteer should report any issue of concern relating to the welfare of students to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.

Appendix 9
Contacts

Child Protection Support Service (CPSS)

Education Authority (South Eastern Region)
- Tel: 028 9056 6900, Head of CPSS
- Tel: 028 9056 6434 - Designated Teacher for CP – James Draper
- Helpline 028 9598 5590 – Monday to Friday 9:00am – 4:30pm

PSNI - Central Referral Unit (CRU)

Email: cru@psni.police.uk

Monday - Friday 8:00 – 18:00. Weekends and Public Holidays 9:00 – 17:00

This is the single point of contact for all agencies and partners making referrals for suspected child abuse cases with a potential criminal aspect.

In the email – make it clear who you are, your role and school, a request for urgent contact to discuss a child/young person/situation, and a contact number for a call back to you.

When giving the school landline – please ensure that the phone has a staff member ready to respond (as lack of a person at the office has caused undue delays in some instances).

PSNI - Central Exchange: Tel: 028 9065 0222

-

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

- https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service

- Tel: 03000 200 190

Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland

– https://www.safeguardingni.org/

Social Services - Gateway Services - Belfast HSC Trust			
Telephone (for referral)	**028 90507000**		
Areas	Greater Belfast area		
Further Contact Details (for ongoing professional liaison)	**Greater Belfast Gateway Team** 110 Saintfield Road Belfast BT8 6HD		
Website	http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/		
Out of Hours Emergency Service (after 5pm each evening at weekends, and public/bank holidays)	028 9504 9999		
Social Services - Gateway Services - South Eastern HSC Trust			
Telephone (for referral)	**0300 1000 300**		
Areas	Lisburn, Dunmurry, Moira, Hillsborough, Bangor, Newtownards, Ards Peninsula, Comber, Downpatrick, Newcastle and Ballynahinch		
Further Contact Details (for ongoing professional liaison)	**Greater Lisburn Gateway Team** Stewartstown Road Health Centre 212 Stewartstown Road Dunmurry Belfast, BT17 0FG Tel: 028 90602705	**North Down Gateway Team** Family Resource Centre James Street Newtownards, BT23 4EP Tel: 028 91818518	**Down Gateway Team** Children's Services 81 Market Street Downpatrick, BT30 6LZ Tel: 028 44613511
Website	http://www.setrust.hscni.net/		
Out of Hours Emergency Service (after 5pm each evening at weekends, and public/bank holidays)	028 9504 9999		
Social Services - Gateway Services - Northern HSC Trust			
Telephone (for referral)	**0300 1234 333**		
Areas	Antrim, Carrickfergus, Newtownabbey, Larne, Ballymena, Cookstown, Magherafelt, Ballycastle, Ballymoney, Portrush and Coleraine		
Further Contact Details (for ongoing professional liaison)	**Central Gateway Team** Unit 5A, Toome Business Park Hillhead Road Toomebridge, BT41 3SF Tel: 028 79651020	**South Eastern Gateway Team** The Beeches 76 Avondale Drive Ballyclare, BT39 9DB Tel: 028 94424377	**Northern Gateway Team** Coleraine Child Care Team 7A Castlerock Road Coleraine, BT51 3HP Tel: 028 7032 5462
Website	http://www.northerntrust.hscni.net/		
Out of Hours Emergency Service (after 5pm each evening at weekends, and public/bank holidays)	028 944 68833		

Social Services - Gateway Services	
Western Trust	028 7131 4090
Southern Trust	028 3756 7100

Regional Emergency Social Work Service	
5:00pm to 9:00am Monday to Thursday.	5:00pm Friday to 9:00am Monday
24hrs cover public holidays and 365 days per year.	

Adult Protection Gateway Services		
Belfast	028 9504 1744	adultsguarddutydesk@belfasttrust.hscni.net
Northern	028 9441 3659	randal.mchugh@northerntrust.hscni.net
South Eastern	028 9250 1227	adultprotectiongatewayteam@setrust.hscni.net
Southern	028 3756 4423	adultsafeguard.team@southerntrust.hscni.net
Western	028 7161 1366	Adultsafegaurding.referral@westerntrust.hscni.net

Child & Family Support Services

Family Support NI - Services and registered childcare provision in Northern Ireland.
https://www.familysupportni.gov.uk/

Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland – Provides information to make sure that everyone understands how important it is to keep children and young people safe.
https://www.safeguardingni.org/

Child Care (NI): 028 9065 2713
Kidscape: 020 7730 3300
NSPCC: 028 9035 1135
CP Helpline:0808 800 5000
www.nspcc.org.uk

Anti-Bullying Helpline: 028 3831 4462
Childline 0800 1111 - www.childline.org.uk
Children's Law Centre: 028 9024 5704
Barnardos Childcare Office: 02890672366
Save the Children: 028 9043 1123
Youthnet: 028 9033 1880

Online Support Services

www.thinkuknow.co.uk
www.ceop.police.uk

www.safenetwork.org.uk

Anxiety, Depression and Stress

Aware Defeat Depression: 028 90321734
Aware Helpline: 0845 120 2961

Family & Childcare

Parents Advice Centre: 028 9031 0891
Gingerbread NI: 028 90231 417

Bereavement

CRUSE Bereavement Care: 028 9043 4600
CRUSE Helpline: 0870 167 1677
Young People's Helpline: 0808 800 1677

Suicide/Self Harm

Samaritans: 028 9066 4422
Samaritans Helpline: 0845 7909 090

Eating Disorders

Eating Disorders Association: 028 9023 5959

Mental Health

NI Association of Mental Health: 028 90328474

Relationships, Sexuality & Sexual Health Support

Relate: 0870 242 6091
Cara Friend – Gay Helpline: 028 9032 2023
Cara Friend – Lesbian Helpline: 028 9023 8668
The Rainbow Project: 028 9031 9030
Common Youth: 028 9032 8866
https://commonyouth.com/

Substance Misuse Services

AA Central: 028 9043 4848
Al-Anon and Alateen: 028 9068 2368
National Drugs Helpline: 0800 776600
ASCERT: 028 9260 4422

Appendix 10

Safeguarding and Child Protection: DE Circulars

DE Circular 2001/15 (24/08/01) - Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE)

DE Circular 2003/13 (18/06/03) - Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 2003

DE Circular 2006/06 (03/03/06) - Child Protection: Recruitment of People to Work with Children and Young People in Educational Settings

DE Circular 2006/07 (03/03/06) - Child Protection: Employment of Substitute Teachers

DE Circular 2006/08 (03/03/06) - Child Protection: Training Requirement for School Governors on Staff Recruitment and Selection Panels

DE Circular 2006/09 (03/03/06) - Child Protection: Criminal Background Checking of Staff in Schools – Programme to Extend Coverage

DE Circular 2006/25 (06/12/06) - Child Protection: Vetting of School Governors

DE Circular 2007/01 (18/06/07) - Acceptable Use of the Internet and Digital Technologies in Schools

DE Circular 2008/03 (13/03/08) Child Protection: Pre-employment Checking of Persons to Work in Schools - New Arrangements

DE Circular 2008/10 (14/05/08) Employment of Substitute Teachers – Northern Ireland Substitute Teachers Register (NISTR)

DE Letter (02/02/09) - Child Protection: Legislation Changes to Age of Consent

DE Circular 2010/01 (13/01/10) - Guidance on Relationships & Sexuality Education (RSE)

DE Circular 2011/22 (27/09/11) - Internet Safety

DE Letter (03/05/12) - Provision of Free School Meals on Humanitarian Grounds

DE Circular 2012/19 (10/09/12) - Disclosure and Barring Arrangements: Changes for Pre-employment Vetting Checks for Volunteers Working in Schools from 10 September 2012. (Currently under review)

DE Circular 2013/01 (January 2013) - Disclosure and Barring Arrangements: Vetting Requirements for Paid Staff Working In or Providing a Service for Schools. (Currently under review)

DE Circular 2014/27 (October 14) - Managing Information on Persons Who Pose a Risk to Pupils

DE Circular 2015/02 (February 2015) - Attendance Guidance & Absence Recording by Schools

DE Circular 2015/13 (April 15) - Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against a Member of Staff

DE Circular 2016/06 (20 April 2016) - Children Who Display Harmful Sexualised Behaviour

DE Circular 2016/20 (October 2016) – Child Protection – Record Keeping in Schools

DE Circular 2016/27 (December 2016) - Guidance on Online Safety

DE Circular 2017/13 (September 2017) – Recording information about Looked after Children on C2K

DE Circular 2018/07 (April 2018) – Self Assessment Tools for Schools

DE Circular 2018/08 (April 2018) - The General Data Protection Regulations for Schools

DE Circular 2018/13 (September 2018) - Guidance on the Recording of Refugee Status and their Nationality

DE Circular 2018/19 (November 2018) - Recording Children with SEN

DE Circular 2019/03 (January 2019) - SEN and Medical Categories

DE Circular 2021/13 - Interim Guidance on the Use of Restraint and Seclusion in Educational Settings

DE Circular 2023/02 - Parental Responsibility: Updated Guidance for Schools

DE Circular 2015/19 - Notification of Pupil Suspension to the Education Authority – revised form

DE Circular 2024/01 (January 2024) – Guidance on Amendments to the Relationship and Sexuality Education

DE Circular 2024/14 – Guidance for Schools on Pupil's Use of Mobile Phones and other Similar Devices During the School Day

DE Circular 2025/06 – Pre-Employment/AccessNI check requirements and safer recruitment practices for staff and volunteers working in or providing a service for schools/education settings.

DE Circular 2017/04 (September 25) – Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools
https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Safeguarding%20%26%20Child%20Protection%20in%20Schools%20%28September%202024%29.pdf

DE Circular 2025/09 (August 2023) - Attendance Guidance and Absence Recording in Schools