

Mill Strand  
Integrated  
School  
& Nursery

# Child Protection Policy

This policy was reviewed in March 2018.  
Agreed by Governors 15/03/18  
Review Date February 2020



# Mill Strand Integrated Primary School

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This policy contains detailed information on

- the four categories of child abuse: neglect, physical, sexual and emotional;
- signs and symptoms of abuse;
- procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) child abuse.

Under these procedures, cases may be referred to social services for investigation in the interests of the child.

Appendices to the policy include;

- procedures for the selection and use of volunteers and sports coaches
- a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- the school's policy on confidentiality
- guidance on the use of reasonable force to restrain or control pupils

**Mr Philip Reid**, Principal, is the designated teacher, who liaises with social services and other agencies on child protection matters. Mrs J Bonnar & Mrs Stephanie Thom are the deputy designated teachers who undertake this responsibility when Mr Reid is not available.

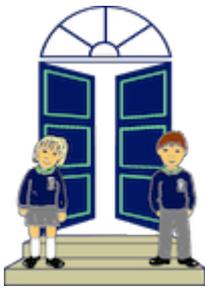
**Parents who have any concern about the safety of their own child (or another child) can, in the first instance, contact Mr Reid, Mrs Thom, Mrs Bonnar or the child's teacher, by telephoning the school office.**

If your concerns continue you can write to **Mr Philip Reid**, the Principal or to **Mrs L Rossington**, Chairperson of the Board of Governors.

You can at any time refer concerns about child protection issues to social services or the local police CARE unit.

### IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

School Office	028 70823090
Social Services	028 70352221 – Coleraine 028 27661808 – Ballymoney
Police CARE unit	028 276 62222
Parents Advice Centre	028 2565 0099 – Ballymena 028 7126 6663 – Londonderry



# Mill Strand Integrated Primary School

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The health, safety and well-being of all our children are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our school. Our children have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe in our school.
- 1.2 In our school we respect our children. The atmosphere within our school is one that encourages all children to do their best. We provide opportunities that enable our children to take and make decisions for themselves.
- 1.3 Our teaching of personal, social and health education and citizenship, as part of the National Curriculum, helps to develop appropriate attitudes in our children and makes them aware of the impact of their decisions on others. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, and how to behave in response to them.
- 1.4 The school recognises the regulatory authority of relevant Department of Education, particularly 2006/06, 06a, 06b, 07, 08, 09, 09b, 25 and 2008/03 and will comply with them.

### 2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 This policy ensures that all staff in our school are clear about the actions necessary with regard to a child protection issue. Its aims are:
  - to raise the awareness of all staff and identify responsibility in reporting possible cases of abuse;
  - to ensure effective communication between all staff when dealing with child protection issues;
  - to lay down the correct procedures for those who encounter an issue of child protection.

### 3 Procedures

- 3.1 The members of staff through whom the child protection procedures are administered are:-

Designated Teacher: Mr P Reid (Principal)

Deputy-Designated Teacher: Mrs S Thom (Head of Nursery)

Deputy Designated Teacher: Mrs J Bonnar (Year 1)

- 3.2 If any teacher suspects that a child in his/her class may be a victim of abuse, they immediately inform the named person about their concerns. Abuse can be of a sexual, emotional or physical nature. It can also be the result of neglect.

- 3.3 Any action that the named person takes when dealing with an issue of child protection must be in line with the procedures outlined in the LEA Child Protection guidelines.
- 3.4 The school's named co-ordinator works closely with the Social Services department and the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) when investigating any allegations of abuse. All parties involved handle such investigations in a sensitive manner, but the interest of the child is of paramount importance.
- 3.5 If a child alleges abuse, the school usually makes a referral without communicating with parents first. In some circumstances we inform parents first.
- 3.6 If a child protection referral is made, a case conference is held within eight working days of the decision. The case conference offers the opportunity to share information and formulate a plan of action. Staff are expected to attend and participate in all case conferences and meetings held under the LEA guidelines.
- 3.7 We regard all information relating to individual child protection issues as confidential, and we treat this accordingly. We only pass information on to appropriate persons. We inform the child at all stages of who is involved, and what information we have given them.
- 3.8 Child protection records are maintained on concerns of abuse, complaints against staff, volunteers and governors and on referrals to Social Services. They are held separately from academic and general records and may be accessed only by the Principal, Designated Teacher and Deputy-Designated Teacher.
- 3.9 We require all adults employed in school to have their application vetted through police records in order to ensure that there is no evidence of offences involving children or abuse.
- 3.10 There may be times when adults in our school, in the course of their duty, use physical intervention to restrain children. The head teacher requires the adult involved in any such incident to report this to him/her immediately, and to record it in the interventions book. (See Policy on Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling Policy)
- 3.11 Pupils are permitted to have mobile phones in school but these must be kept switched off during the school day. They must not be used to take photographs/images during the school day or during school activities.
- 3.12 Computers in the school are networked and Internet access is protected by C2K filters. Chat rooms, social websites such as Bebo or Myspace and sites with unacceptable content are blocked. Pupils and staff sign an ICT Acceptable Use Policy. The downloading and/or printing of objectionable material is forbidden
- 3.13 All adults in the school receive regular training to raise their awareness of abuse and their knowledge of agreed local child protection procedures.

#### **4 Monitoring and review**

- 4.1 The governing body regularly reviews any incidents detailed in the interventions book. This is normally undertaken at least once every half-term. A named governor participates in the school's training with regard to the child protection procedures. This policy is reviewed annually by the governing body.

**Signed:**

**Date:**

## **The Four Categories of Abuse**

**Neglect:** the actual or likely persistent or significant neglect of a child, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or persistent failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive;

**Physical Injury:** actual or likely deliberate physical injury to a child or wilful neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child;

**Sexual Abuse:** actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child. The involvement of children and adolescents in sexual activities which they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles;

**Emotional abuse:** actual or likely persistent or significant emotional ill-treatment or rejection resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional, physical and/or behavioural development of a child. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment. This is where it is the main or only form of abuse.

## **Signs & Symptoms of Abuse**

It is always preferable to prevent abuse, or for intervention to take place at the earliest possible stage. Because of their day-to day contact with individual children, school staff – especially teachers, but also non-teaching staff, including lunchtime supervisors and ancillary or auxiliary staff – are particularly well placed to observe outward symptoms of abnormality or change in appearance, behaviour, learning pattern or development. Such symptoms may be due to a variety of other causes, including bereavement, domestic violence or other changes in family circumstances, or drug, alcohol or solvent misuse. Sometimes, however they may be due to child abuse. For example, the following may be noticeable:

- bruises, particularly bruises of a regular shape which may indicate the use of implement such as a strap, or the mark of a hand, lacerations, bite marks or burns, particularly when children change their clothes for physical education, swimming and other sports activities, or when very young children or children with special educational needs are helped with toileting;
- possible indicators of emotional abuse, such as excessive dependence, or attention seeking;
- sexual abuse may exhibit physical signs, or lead to a substantial behavioural change including precocity, withdrawal or inappropriate sexual behaviour;
- any or any combination of the above may be accompanied by or solely manifested in marked deterioration in performance and/or increased absenteeism.

No list of symptoms can be exhaustive. Also, it must always be remembered that alternative medical, psychological or social explanations may exist for the signs and symptoms described above (in particular, bruises to the legs are usually accidental).

Pupils who are the victims of abuse often display emotional or behavioural difficulties. In case of children or young people who are felt to have long term behavioural problems, the school may wish to seek advice from local support services, for example on the availability of counselling or other systematic therapy, or indeed the need for a statutory assessment, the outcome of which may be the maintenance of a statement of special educational needs. In

any event, the school should also monitor and review the child's needs, having due regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.

Signs such as those described above and others can do no more than give rise to concern – they are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred. But teachers and other staff should be aware of the possible implications of, and alert to, all such signs, particularly if they appear in combination or are regularly repeated. 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, however, 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.

### **Procedures for reporting suspected (or disclosed) child abuse**

In all cases where symptoms displayed by a child give rise to concerns about possible abuse, or about the welfare of the child, the teacher or other members of staff should report these concerns to the designated teacher. A parent or other carer may also give information to a member of staff of the school, or by a person working in the school in a volunteer capacity. The member of staff should advise the person making the complaint that the matter will be brought to the attention of the teacher responsible for the child protection matters in school.

In order to form a view on whether a child or children may indeed be being abused, or at risk of possible abuse, the designated teacher 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 child abuse, or to make extensive enquiries of members of the child's family or other carers*. This is the responsibility of the investigating agencies: the Social Services and/or the Police.

If the principal/designated teachers is unsure about whether a case should be referred, or has a general concern about a child's health or development, he/she may wish to seek advice or information in the first instance from the class teachers who are familiar with the child. The Social Services may be contacted for advice. Consultation with or referral to Social Services will not automatically trigger a child protection investigation in every case: child protection proceedings will only be taken when they are necessary. In certain circumstances, however, a decision that an investigation is necessary may properly result, whether or not the school intended a formal referral.

A child who is neither being abused nor at risk of abuse may nevertheless be in need of help from the Social Services, and such cases need to be made known to Social Services. Social Services welcome indications of concern at an early stage, and often can provide assistance or services to a family and prevent circumstances reaching a stage when child protection proceedings become necessary.

The reporting procedures are:

- the person receiving the complaint (or information), or noticing signs of possible abuse, must notify the designated teacher for child protection in the school;
- the designated teacher must notify the Principal, and together they will decide, taking advice as necessary, if the information is such that the matter should be referred immediately to the Social Services (if agreement cannot be reached, the decision should be made by the Principal; but where there is doubt, a referral should be made).

## Record Keeping

The principal should ensure that proper records, dated and signed, are kept of all complaints or information received, and all concerns about possible abuse noted by staff. As soon as possible he/she should obtain a written record from the member of staff who received the information, or otherwise has concerns about possible abuse, setting out:

- the nature of the information;
- who gave it;
- the time, date and circumstances;
- where the concern relates to signs or symptoms of possible abuse, a description of these.

The Principal or designated teacher should supplement the record with:

- details of any advice sought, from whom and when;
- the decision reached as to whether the case should be referred to Social Services; and, if so,
- how when and by whom this was done;
- otherwise, reasons for not referring to Social Services

The person who made the complaint, or gave the information, should be advised as soon as possible by the Principal or designated teacher about whether or not the complaint has been referred to an investigating agency. How this is done, when and by whom, should also be included in the record.

## Confidentiality

If a child confides information in a member of staff which gives cause for concern about possible abuse, and requests that the information be kept secret, it is important that the member of staff should tell the child, sensitively, that he/she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies for the child's sake. Within that context, the child should, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it. Staff who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information *only* within appropriate professional contexts. **No promise of confidentiality can or should ever be made to a child or anyone else giving information about possible abuse.**

Some victims of abuse find it impossible to talk about their problems to any familiar adult, and signs giving rise to concerns, which might prompt gentle questioning, are not always apparent. It is important, however, that children and young people feel able to share their concerns, whatever they may be, with staff. Their concerns may be about abusive behaviour, but equally they may be, for example, about their schoolwork, or something else that is happening to them or to someone they know which worries them. While staff should try and encourage children to share their concerns with parents where that is appropriate, there may be circumstances where pressure to pass the information on may result in the child keeping the problem to him or herself and so allowing it to become worse; or the child may become reluctant to share concerns in the future.

It is important that parents know that it is the aim of the school always to act in the best interests of the child and to encourage the fullest possible involvement of and consultation with parents; but it is also important that children and young people know that there is someone that they can talk to.

The following information is displayed within the school building.

- If you have something important to talk to staff about
- If you are worried about something that is happening to you, or to someone you know
- If you need help, or if you need to know how to get help  
the staff are here to listen and to help – they will try to do what they can
- If you are worried about telling things in confidence  
tell the staff – they will understand. If they are concerned about your safety, they may need to share this with others, but they will always tell you first.
- If you are still unsure about talking to a member of staff, you can telephone  
Childline on 0800-1111  
NSPCC on 0800-800500

These calls are free, and they will not show up on your phone bill. They will help you to work out what to do next.

## Child Protection Complaints Procedure

All parents, pupils, governors and staff of Mill Strand I.P.S. have access to the complaints procedure as outlined in this document.

Figure 1 shows the procedure that will be followed where the college has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of the school's staff.

Figure 1

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

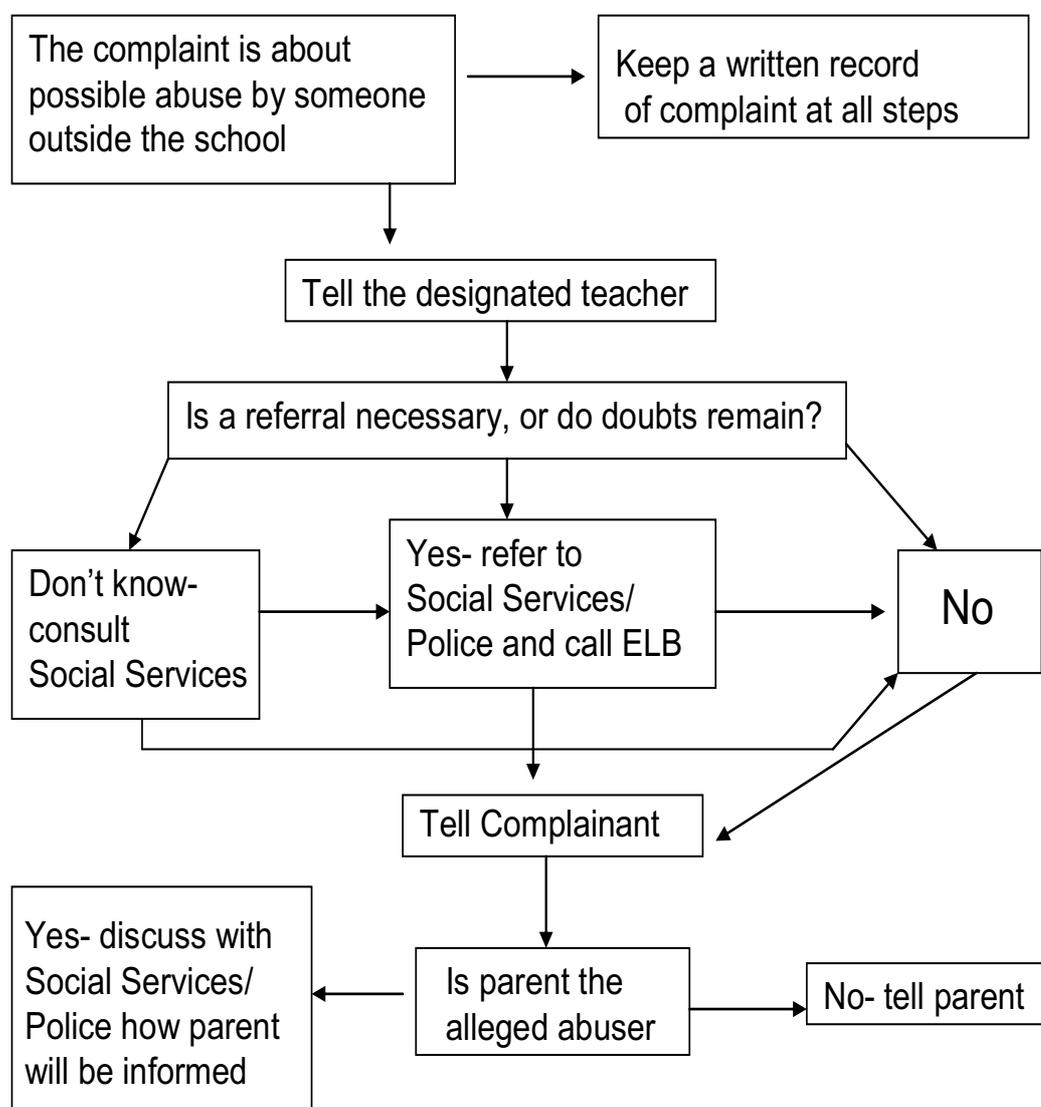


Figure 2 shows the procedure to be followed where there is a complaint about possible abuse by a member of the college staff

Figure 2

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

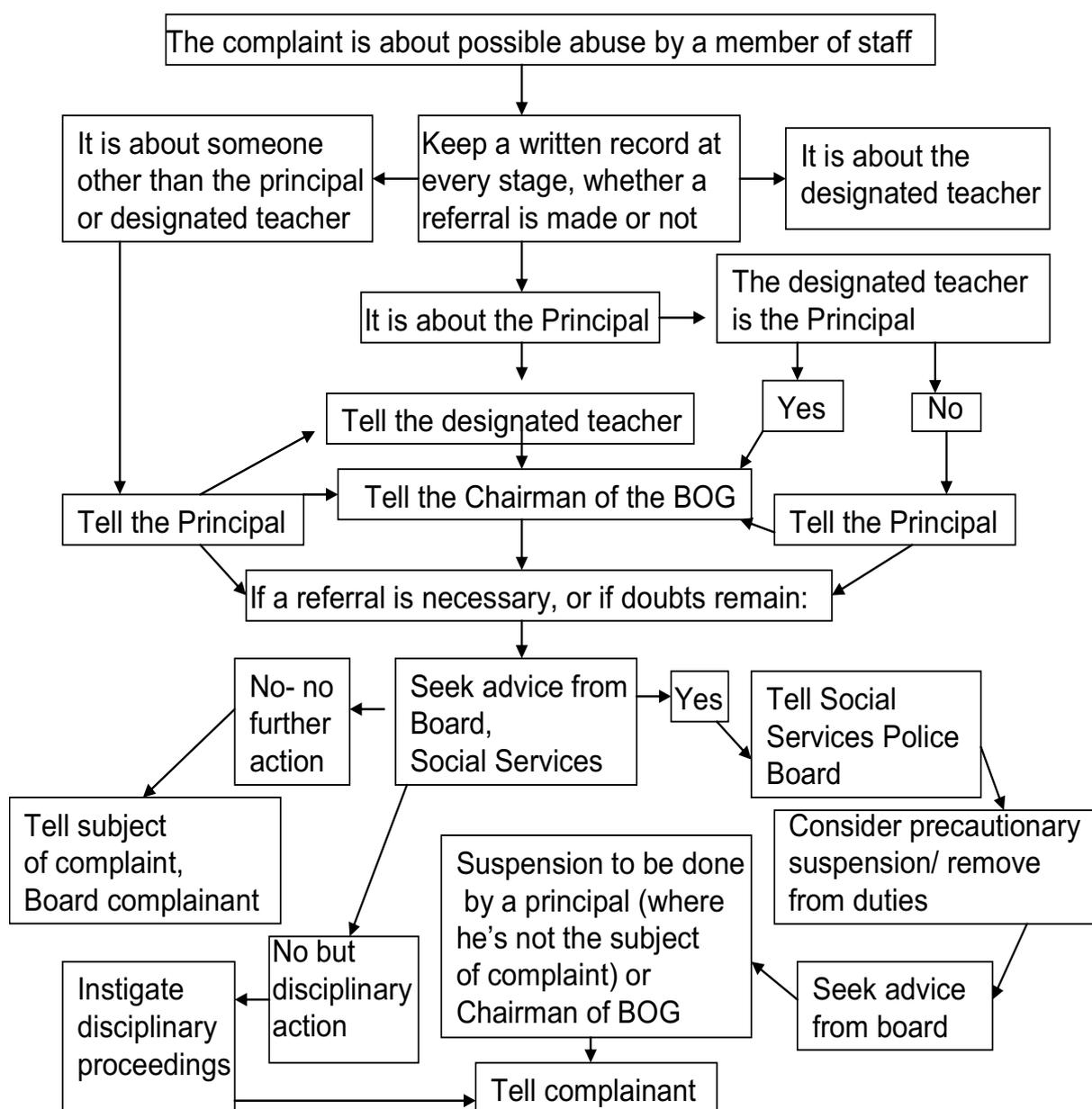
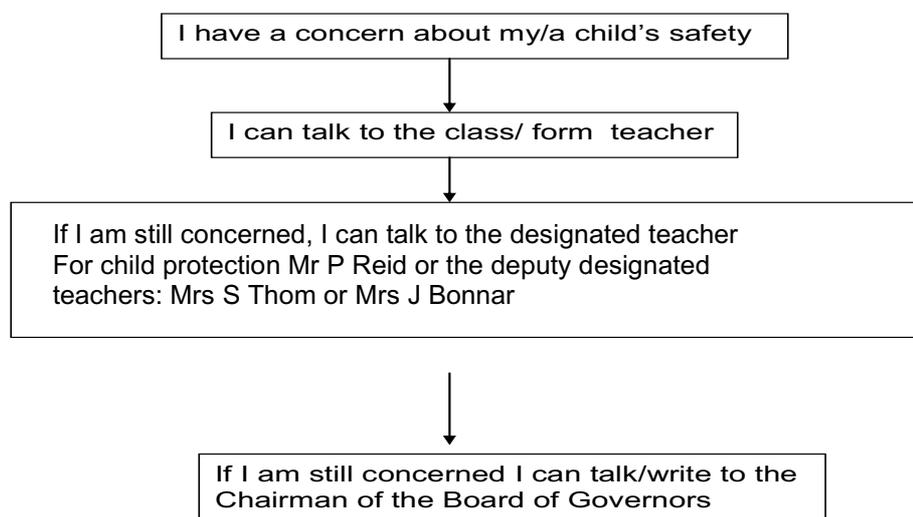


Figure 1

Figure 3 shows how a parent may make a complaint if they have a concern about their child's safety regarding the behaviour of staff/Principal/Governor/Volunteers. These arrangements will be made known to parents at least once every two years. At any time, parents can talk to a social worker (tel 02870352221)

Figure 3

How a parent can make a complaint



## **A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES WITHIN MILL STRAND I.P.S**

### **Introduction**

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the young person as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust, and that their behaviour towards the children and young people in their charge must be above reproach. This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences children and young people gain from positive interaction with school staff. It is intended to assist staff in respect of the complex issue of child abuse, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on prudent conduct.

### **Code of Conduct**

#### **1. Private Meetings with Pupils**

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

#### **2. Physical Contact with Pupils (See also Policy on Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling )**

- a) As a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with their pupils.
- b) It is unrealistic and unnecessary, however, to suggest that staff should touch pupils only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed child, especially a younger child, may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. Staff should not feel inhibited from providing this.
- c) Staff should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that he/she is, or would be, uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm. Further guidance is given in the school policy on the use of reasonable force to restrain or control pupils and in DENI Circular 1999/9.
- d) Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint.
- e) Staff who have to administer first-aid to a pupil should ensure wherever possible that this is done in the presence of other children or another adult. *However, no member of staff should hesitate to provide first-aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present.*
- f) Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the pupil, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.

- g) Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the principal or the designated teacher for Child Protection.
- h) Staff should be particularly careful when supervising pupils in a residential setting, or in approved out of school activities, where more informal relationships tend to be usual and where staff may be in proximity to pupils in circumstances very different from the normal school/work environment.

### **3. Choice and Use of Teaching Materials**

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

### **4. Relationships and Attitudes**

Within the Pastoral Care Policies of the school, staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age, maturity and sex of the pupils, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly when staff are dealing with adolescent boys and girls.

### **Conclusion**

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

In all circumstances, employees' professional judgement will be exercised and for the vast majority of employees this Code of Conduct will serve only to confirm what has always been their practice. If employees have any doubts about points in the Code of Conduct, or how they should act in particular circumstances, they should consult the principal, the designated teacher for Child Protection or a representative of their professional association.

From time to time, however, it is prudent for all staff to reappraise their teaching styles, relationships with children/young people and their manner and approach to individual children/young people, to ensure that they give no grounds for doubt about their intentions, in the minds of colleagues, of children/young people or of their parents/guardians.

## **Mill Strand Primary School**

### Procedures for the Selection and use of Volunteers and Sports Coaches to Support School Activities.

#### **Introduction**

Mill Strand School recognises the important and beneficial role played by volunteers to enhance and support the wide range of activities offered.

DENI Circular 1999/10 "Pastoral Care in Schools - Child Protection", *requires, "...that appropriate steps are taken, through screening and selection arrangements, to ensure that children are not placed at risk through allowing the unsupervised and unmanaged access of unsuitable adults to school."*

Mill Strand will follow the recommendations and procedures outlined in the circular, a copy of which has been distributed to all members of the teaching staff.

#### **Definition of Volunteer.**

*"For the purpose of this guidance, a volunteer is an individual who, subject to the satisfactory completion of the procedures set out (in DENI Circular 1999/10) either*

- (i) assumes unpaid duties in school on a regular basis on more than two occasions or,*
- (ii) is engaged by the school to accompany or assist in school visits or trips; Summer activity schemes or residential activities; or to undertake coaching in sports activities.*

*Within this definition, volunteering can take many forms, not all of which involve direct, unsupervised or substantial access to children on which the need for vetting, including criminal records checks, must be assessed. Formal arrangements as to selection and vetting should not be required for volunteers who are involved outside school hours and who do not have unsupervised contact with pupils. These would include parents involved in fund-raising events and using the school premises for meetings; parents and others carrying out self-help projects for the school; parents supervising at school functions where school staff are present."*

*"The engagement of volunteers should only be undertaken with the agreement of the Principal."*

#### **Procedures**

1. Teachers wishing to use the services of a volunteer should discuss the matter with the Principal.
2. The Teacher will outline the case for the use of a volunteer by completing a request form, available from the Principal. The completed form must be returned to the Principal.
3. The Principal, in consultation with the appropriate members of staff, will decide if it is appropriate to use a volunteer for the activities described.
4. The Principal or a senior member of staff will explain to any potential volunteer the procedures which must be undergone before he/she can work in the school.

5. On the Principal's approval, an application form will be forwarded to the individual concerned. This application form will include a request for two referees and permission to carry out a criminal record check. (Appendix B).
6. The volunteer will be invited for interview with relevant members of the school as selected by the Principal. At interview the applicant will be asked to provide proof of identity. (Appendix C - pro-forma for record of interview.)
7. References will be requested from the named referees. (Appendix D)
8. If the individual has been selected as a result of the initial appraisal, and the individual will have substantial access to the children in the course of their duties, further vetting will be carried out by the Principal, who will request a criminal records check. (Appendix E)
9. On successful completion of all checks and vetting procedures, the principal, on behalf of the Board of Governors will be asked to approve the appointment of the individual concerned on a voluntary basis.
10. The volunteer will be advised that, if appropriate, he/she will be subject to a trial period, during which the Principal, in conjunction with a member of staff supervising the volunteer, should monitor the volunteer's effectiveness in contributing to the life and work of the school.
11. The volunteer will attend an induction training session which will include Child Protection and Health and Safety issues.

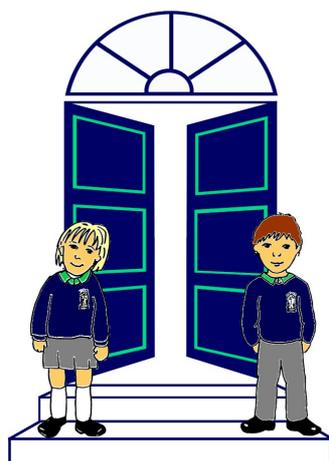
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Principal: Mr. P. Reid    Bed D.A.S.E. Masc. PQH(NI)

Dear Parents

I am sure you can appreciate that when an emergency arises, we must be in a position to respond to individual child need. You will have completed a child personal data sheet at the beginning of the year detailing contact names and telephone numbers for our use. The information you provide on this data sheet is held in confidence but will guide us in relation to those:

- invited to attend parental interviews
- who have parental rights to have access to your child
- we need to contact regarding any concerns about your child

Due to current Human Rights legislation, the Children (NI) Order 1995 as well as child protection requirements, it is essential that the school keep up to date information on file. I am placing the obligation upon you to provide us with whatever information is necessary to meet these expectations. I would therefore ask that you advise the Principal/Teacher if any of the below mentioned Court Orders pertain to your child currently. I must emphasise that it is essential that you make us aware of any changes in contact telephone numbers, circumstances, parental access or court orders as they occur during the school year. All such information will be treated with the utmost confidence and will only be disclosed to those staff who need to know to ensure your child's safety and well-being at all times.

ORDER	REGARDING WHOM	YES / NO
Parental Responsibility Order	Parents, grandparents, significant others	
Residence Order	Ditto	
Contact Order	Ditto	
Prohibited Steps Order	Ditto	
Specific Issue Order	Ditto	
Non-Molestation Order**		
Care Order	Social Services	
Interim Order	Ditto	

\*\* As the Non-Molestation Order gives legal directions regarding exclusion of a certain individual from named venues/sites, it is useful for the School to have a copy of this order to keep on your child's file. This enables us to act quickly should such a situation arise.



# Mill Strand Integrated Primary School

## Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling

### 1 Principles

Mill Strand Integrated primary School believes that:

- (i) Each child has the right to be educated in a safe and secure environment where each child's moral, intellectual, personal, social and emotional development is promoted.
- (ii) Parents and carers are informed and reassured that their children are being educated in a safe, caring and respectful atmosphere.
- (iii) All staff have the right to work in a safe and secure environment.
- (iv) These principles underpin our school ethos and culture.

### 2 Purposes

**2.1** The following purposes underpin Mill Strand's policy and practices to:

- (i) Create a learning environment in which young people and adults feel safe;
- (ii) Protect every person in the school community from harm
- (iii) Protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention, which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful
- (iv) Develop and implement guidance for all staff (teaching and non-teaching) so that they are clear about the circumstances in which they might use reasonable force to restrain pupils and how such force might be applied.

### 3 Mission Statement

**The Board of Governors and Staff of Mill Strand Integrated School aim to create a happy, secure and caring environment where each child is encouraged to fulfil his or her intellectual, spiritual, moral, physical, social, aesthetic and emotional potential. We aim to establish this within an integrated ethos, which promotes the worth, and self esteem of all individuals within the school.**

### 4 Links with other policies

This policy is one of the overall pastoral policies and dovetails into the school's existing policies - Promoting Positive Behaviour, Anti-Bullying Policy, Child Protection Policy and Complaints Policy.

It also takes into account the Staff Development and Welfare Policy, Teaching, Learning and Assessment and curricular policies.

## 5 Definition of Reasonable Force

The Education (NI) Order 1998 (part II Article 4 (1)) states:

“A member of the staff of a grant-aided school may use, in relation to any pupil at the school, such force as is reasonable in the circumstances for the purposes of preventing the pupil from doing (or continuing to do) any of the following, namely:

- committing any offence;
- causing 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.”

## Use of reasonable force to restrain or control pupils.

1. *The need to use force to restrain or control a pupil should be rare.*
2. *Corporal punishment remains unlawful. This policy does not authorise teachers or others to use any degree of physical contact which is deliberately intended to cause pain or injury or humiliation.*
3. *The application of reasonable force to restrain or control a pupils is to be used as a last resort, only when other behaviour management strategies have failed, and when the pupil, other pupils, members of staff, or property are at risk, or the pupil is seriously compromising good order and discipline.*
4. This document does not however prevent any person from exercising his/her right under common law to defend themselves against attack provided he/she does not use a disproportionate degree of force to do so.
5. Article 4 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 which came into operation on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1998, authorises teachers to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances
6. This article enables a member of staff of a grant-aided school to use, in relation to any pupil at the school, such force as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from:
  - a. committing a offence;
  - b. causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the pupil himself) ; or
  - c. engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any of its pupils whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

7. Guidance on the use of reasonable force is outlined in DENI circular 1999/9. A copy of this circular is on the staff notice board and/or may be obtained from the Deputy Head (Pastoral).
8. DENI circular 1999/9 Provides guidance on the use of reasonable force, by teachers and other authorised staff, to restrain or control pupils in certain circumstances. It gives guidance about who can use reasonable force, when it is appropriate to use it, and the procedures for recording incidents where reasonable force was used.