



St Brigid's PS
Pastoral Information for
Parents/Carers

2026/27

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St Brigid's PS

Statement of Ethos:

The Catholic Ethos of St Brigid's Primary School is to build a teaching and learning community where we show due regard for the development and understanding of the uniqueness and dignity of each person, based on the Gospel values of love, justice, mutual respect, tolerance, acceptance, and forgiveness.

We will provide a broad, balanced, and flexible curriculum for each child and we will strive to meet the needs of each pupil at each stage in his/her development thus providing the children with opportunity to achieve in a variety of contexts and experiences.

We will endeavour to create a caring and stimulating environment in which effort and personal success are rewarded, special gifts and talents are catered for, and needs are met.

We will aim to achieve good working relationships within the school and beyond and we hope that through open communication the children and adults will feel supported, respected, and valued.

The school aims to complement and actively promote the partnership of the Catholic home, parish and the local community.

We hope this information will firstly help explain how the school operates and secondly show you how we aim to foster positive partnerships in educating our children.

Everyone in school is committed to doing their best, as educational, and pastoral professionals, for each child. To do this we try to ensure that our school is colourful, exciting, and welcoming to all who enter it - a place where children and adults feel secure and confident enough to explore and develop their talents, whilst always striving for high standards in all aspects of school life. We know that each of our children comes to school with different experiences, knowledge, and skills and that each has different learning needs and preferred ways of learning. We therefore aim to match our provision to the needs of each child.

We seek to not only provide an environment which promotes achievement in learning but also one of warmth, security, and care, valuing each member of the school community and working to encourage the realisation of everyone's potential. We celebrate all achievement whether big or small and challenge our children (and ourselves) to improve even more. We encourage a 'can do' culture, a thirst for life-long learning and a pride in each other's skills and attributes.

We take seriously our responsibility to develop children's academic knowledge, skills and understanding, but also their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural attitudes. We provide over an academic year opportunity to explore these four key elements of a rounded education, and encourage an interest in local, national, and global lifestyles and issues.

The children in St. Brigid's make very good progress throughout the year. The teachers use formative assessment throughout the year to help guide the progress of the pupils. Each teacher will continuously identify the child's progress by determining what the child has learned and what therefore should be the next stage in his/her learning. Teachers carry out formative assessment informally during their teaching. This assessment can take the form of discussions, short teacher devised tests, marking and monitoring of the children's work and observations of the children during practical tasks.

As a Catholic School we aim to work in a manner complementary to the Catholic Home.

By creating an atmosphere of a believing community committed to living out in its daily operations the Christian Way of Life. St Brigid's is a school that shows concern for each child as someone who is helped to become more Christ-like. We aim to provide and maintain the highest possible standards of education that are in keeping with the aptitudes and needs of each individual pupil. We aim to provide a carefully structured R.E. programme taught throughout the school and supported by regular visits and advice from the school chaplain.

Children follow the Grow in Love series a programme that has been developed for children from P1-P7 and it is central to our Religious Education Programme. The books are well designed and colourful and are designed to promote a cross-curricular approach to the teaching of R.E. and so the teaching of R.E. knows no subject boundaries. The successful implementation of this scheme involves parents, children, priests, and teachers working together.

Within the structure of the programme there are a series of sections based on preparing the children for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist (Holy Communion) and Confirmation. The school alone cannot prepare the children for the sacraments.

This is a partnership task and during preparation for these sacraments parents will be invited to meet teachers and priests for talks and prayer services.

Classes and individuals contribute to school assemblies and take part in significant religious events in the local community.

Pupils are encouraged to support a wide variety of charities, both in the local community and further afield.

The aims of St Brigid's Discipline policy have been negotiated prior to the development of the policy and are consistent with and complementary to the overall aims of the school as an educational institution. The following are the aims that are central to St Brigid's Discipline Policy:

In St Brigid's Primary School, we hope:

To develop in children a sense of their own self-discipline and an acceptance of responsibility for their own actions. To create a school community that is conducive to learning, there is mutual respect among all members, teaching and ancillary staff, parents, and children. To foster good behaviour in a positive way within an environment where our children feel secure and free from emotional and physical harm. To enable our children to articulate their fears and concerns and be confident that they will receive a sympathetic and supportive response from teachers and other adults within the school community. To create a calm and caring community where teachers can teach, and pupils are able to learn effectively. To recognise and respect the rights of each member of the school community.

In keeping with the mission statement of the school we endeavour to create a caring, stimulating environment in which effort and personal success are rewarded, special gifts and talents are catered for, and the needs of the individual are met. This is done in our pastoral care policy through positive affirmation of the school's ethos which promotes pupils' confidence and self-esteem, encourages children to value one another where they show a strong sense of belonging to the school as a community. Such an ethos fosters effective learning both within class and about the school and is at the heart of the education process.

School Details:

St Brigid's PS
Castle Street
Ballymoney
BT53 6JX

Tel: (028) 27662664
Email: koneill580@c2kni.net

Principal: Mr Kieran P. O'Neill

Chair Of Governors: Mr Gerry Doran

DEALING WITH A CONCERN

The well-being of your child is very important to us, and members of staff are available to listen to any concerns you may have about any aspect of your child's experience at school.

- For any pastoral issue (including homework issues, relationships, emotional welfare, issues with regards to behaviour or bullying), your first point of contact should be your child's **Class Teacher**.
- If there is a concern regarding your child's learning, your first point of contact should be your child's class teacher.
- If the issue concerns special educational needs, your first point of contact should be the class teacher or our school's SENCO – Mrs. McIlroy.

You can expect that:

- your concerns will be listened to
- complaints will be investigated
- every step possible will be taken to resolve difficulties
- the outcome will be reported to you as soon as possible

If you feel that the issue has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you may contact the Principal, Mr. O'Neill (or Mrs. Campbell, VP in his absence) who will advise you of other possible courses of action.

How: Telephone the school: (028) 27662664

We take concerns and complaints seriously, retaining the best interests of our pupils and families at the centre of what we do. In this regard, we encourage anyone with a concern to speak to us as soon as possible. If concerns are dealt with at an early stage, then they are more likely to be resolved and there is no unnecessary dissatisfaction.

There is a formal complaints procedure available from the school office, should the need arise.

Full copies of the pastoral policies contained in this booklet are available from the school on request.

Dealing with a concern

Step 1

**For any pastoral issues or concerns regarding your child's learning.
Please contact your child's class teacher by phoning the school office on 028 27662664.**



Step 2

**For any issues or concerns regarding your child and any special educational needs.
Please contact your child's class teacher or the school SENCO, Mrs McIlroy, by contacting the school office on 028 27662664**



Step 3

For any issues or concerns not resolved to your satisfaction or for further advice on any matter, please contact the school Principal on 028 27662664

PROMOTING AND SUSTAINING GOOD BEHAVIOUR

If pupils are to gain maximum benefit from their time at St Brigid's PS, it is essential that they are **ready** to work to the best of their ability and behave in a **safe** manner, showing **respect** for themselves, other pupils, staff, and property.

Our policy of promoting and sustaining good behaviour is based on the Catholic ethos of our school. We believe that children will learn best in an ordered environment where there are good relationships based on mutual respect for all in the school community.

Rationale

Positive behaviour creates the conditions for effective learning and helps to develop in pupils, responsible attitudes, respect for others and values for life. This policy provides a framework for the provision of a friendly, caring, supportive and safe educational environment in which children can learn the skills and knowledge to help them develop as active, confident, caring, and responsible members of society and to enable all pupils to achieve their full potential.

Principles

This Positive Behaviour approaches work alongside the Teaching and Learning, Anti-Bullying approaches, Safeguarding and Pastoral procedures as, together, these establish the general ethos of the school. St. Brigid's Primary School is committed to the inclusion of all pupils including those with Social, Emotional, Behavioural and Well-Being Difficulties (SEBWD). We adopt a 'whole school' approach which focuses on developing a culture of support and empathy and consistency of approach.

Aims:

St. Brigid's Primary School's Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy aims to:

- develop moral values in accordance with Catholic teaching and our school ethos
- provide a broad, balanced, and relevant curriculum which will give all pupils full and equal opportunities
- create an inclusive school environment where every child can fulfil their potential
- promote effective inclusive practice for pupils with Social, Emotional, Behavioural and Well-Being Difficulties (SEBWD)
- plan and implement reasonable adjustments /accommodations to include pupils in the life of the school and to ensure curriculum access
- improve learning and teaching for all
- ensure that the rights of children and young people should be upheld in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- help pupils to develop a responsible and co-operative attitude towards work and towards their roles in society
- encourage pupils to take pride and a responsible interest in caring for their environment
- foster tolerance and promote understanding with consideration for the rights and views of others
- help children appreciate their worth, dignity and uniqueness
- develop a respect for difference, gender and race within the school and community

- assist all stakeholders in the development of attitudes, knowledge, understanding and skills in supporting pupils with SEBWD
- reduce the risk of SEBWD
- support early identification and intervention for learners with SEBWD
- support and safeguard all pupils and staff

It is expected that parents will fully support the school in seeking to ensure that their child's work and behaviour are of a high standard and that s/he does not behave in a manner which may be detrimental to the education or well-being of others.

We seek to promote and sustain good behaviour in the following ways:

- by actively seeking the co-operation of all pupils in their learning.
- by encouraging self-discipline and a sense of responsibility.
- by having clear expectations of behaviour for our pupils in all situations.
- by insisting on high standards in relation to behaviour, attendance, and punctuality.
- by respecting the rights of all pupils to learn and all teachers to teach.
- by ensuring that consequences are fair and appropriate and are applied consistently and persistently.
- by respecting the dignity and self-worth of all members of the school community.
- by actively seeking out, promoting, and rewarding good behaviour in our pupils.
- by providing a curriculum which is appropriate to the needs of pupils.
- by providing a range of extra-curricular activities which pupils can enjoy.
- by providing a pastoral care system where class teachers and all staff can advise and assist pupils who are experiencing difficulties of any kind.
- by promoting strong links with parents/carers so that the school and parents can cooperate fully in ensuring pupils' progress and happiness.
- by enlisting the help of outside agencies e.g., school psychologist, the Education Welfare Officer etc., to help pupils who are experiencing difficulties.

Encouraging Positive Behaviour:

We support positive behaviour and a positive environment through:

- A consistent approach by the whole school community
- Monitoring pupil attendance and acting when required
- Whole school planning for PDMU
- Developing the voice of our children through our Student Council and ECO Council
- Encouraging everyone to take pride in the school environment
- Having a positive and consistent approach to playtimes and lunchtimes
- Creating a stimulating classroom environment
- Offering a broad and balanced curriculum that is well planned, prepared and stimulating
- Rewarding children both in the classroom and around the school
- Having a transparent reward system for the children that is seen and applied fairly and consistently

Examples of current 'Good Practice' to support this policy (Including the Anti-Bullying Policy)

Some are age specific/only used by some year groups and are open to variations

- There is consultation with staff, pupils, parents, and Governors to review practices and ensure coherence and consistency in practice across the school.
- PDMU (incorporating personal safety, developing self-esteem, values education, positive strategies for cooperation, community awareness etc.) is an integral Area of Study within the curriculum and is planned and systematically delivered to all pupils P1-P7
- Special assemblies/visits by speakers, charities and community groups promoting well-being, safety, and resilience.
- Anti- Bullying Week activities across all Key Stages (November)
- Health Promotion Initiatives
- Circle Time (developing the language of Feelings / Emotional Intelligence, Talking and Listening and Cooperation)
- Golden Time- (P1-P7 on Friday afternoon earned by adhering to School Code/ Class Rules)
- Pupil of the Week – Principal Award
- Pupil of the Month Award – presented by Principal
- Reward Charts
- Lucky Dip/table prizes
- Reward Certificates/ Stickers / tokens
- Lunchtime Awards
- Playground Buddies
- High level of supervisory staff present before school/at break/ lunch in playgrounds
- School Council
- Eco Council
- Close working relationships with SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator) and regular review of IEPs (Individual Education Plan), SEBWD (Social, Emotional, Behavioural and Well-Being Difficulties) issues addressed via this route and in direct liaison with Principal
- Involvement with external support agencies, if necessary, through the appropriate channels. (SENCO /Principal)

Classroom Behaviour

Most pupils work hard and behave appropriately, but where work or behaviour fall below acceptable standards, sanctions can be attached to those actions.

In the classroom

To establish a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning, teachers in St Brigid's PS employ a consistent, calm, and positive approach to promoting and sustaining good behaviour. Pupils are taught and encouraged to choose responsible behaviour, thereby raising their self-esteem, and increasing their academic success. We provide positive reinforcement in a clear, concise, understandable manner for pupils.

To help pupils to make choices which demonstrate they are ready to learn, be respectful and safe, each teacher devises their own classroom routines that will incorporate a set of classroom rules, with positive recognition for pupils who adhere to the rules, and consequences should pupils choose not to observe the rules.

Benefits of classroom routines, rules, positive reinforcement, and consequences system:

- protects pupils' right to learn
- protects teachers' right to teach
- ensures that everyone feels safe and secure in the classroom

During positive behaviour management, teachers will attempt to refocus and redirect children not engaged in learning, by reminding them of their priorities. If a pupil continues to choose irresponsible behaviour, s/he knows that consequences are inevitable. Consequences are not punishment – they are actions that pupils know will occur should they choose to break the rules of the classroom.

Consequences are organised into a hierarchy as part of the classroom behavior routines and include:

1. Verbal warning
2. Recorded warning
3. Formal record of incident and contact with home
4. Exclusion from class

In the event of a serious misdemeanour in class, the teacher may employ an exclusion from class, which involves the removal of the pupil from the classroom, to continue their work in a supervised area. This internal exclusion may include staying in at break time and part of lunchtime. Parents are informed about this exclusion from class and, when necessary, parents/carers will be invited to come into school. If inappropriate behaviour persists, this may result in a parent having to take a child home.

Examples of a serious misdemeanour may include:

- the use of bad language to a member of staff or to another pupil
- abusive/hurtful remarks to another pupil or member of staff
- outright refusal to accept direction/authority of the class teacher or member of staff
- ongoing disruptive behaviour that stops teaching and learning
- striking another pupil

Role of the Principal and Vice Principal

The Principal and Vice Principal will have a keen interest in the welfare and well-being of all pupils within the school. They play a vital role in planning and implementing the pastoral care policy of the school, and in maintaining the caring atmosphere of St Brigid's PS. The Principal and Vice Principal have responsibility in the areas of attendance and punctuality, promoting good behaviour and monitoring academic progress.

The Principal and Vice Principal:

- build a sense of belonging and loyalty among pupils to the school and to each other
- maintain accurate records relating to child welfare and safety in keeping with the school's Safeguarding Children Policy
- monitor the attendance and punctuality of all pupils in the school
- assist in the promotion of good behaviour and a sense of order
- monitor the academic progress of all the pupils in the school
- monitor and evaluate all aspects of their pastoral responsibilities

Formal Written Warning

In certain situations, before a suspension is enacted, a pupil may be issued with a formal written warning, kept on record for a specified period, outlining the consequences of further inappropriate behaviour.

Suspension

A decision to suspend is never taken lightly. This decision will be made following consultation with the Principal, Vice Principal, class teacher and relevant staff. Parents are informed of a serious issue which is under investigation and may result in suspension. Parents are then informed of the school's decision.

On occasion, parents may be required to collect a pupil from school to facilitate a 'cooling off' period, where remaining in school could seriously harm the pupil's own education or welfare or that of another pupil.

Should suspension be enacted, this will be for a period of up to five days and, with the approval of the Board of Governors, it may be extended to a maximum of forty-five days in any one school year. When a pupil is suspended, parents/carers, the Chairman of the Board of Governors, CCMS and the Education Authority are notified in writing.

Suspended pupils and their parents/carers may be required to attend a meeting with the Principal and/or the Chairperson of the Board of Governors.

The outcome of the meeting may be:

- (i) to re-admit the pupil subject to terms specified in writing
- or**
- (ii) to transfer the pupil to another school, Educational Guidance Centre or other establishment.

The Principal may suspend/expel pupils who have exhibited very serious breaches of discipline, such as the following:

- Physical assault on another pupil or teacher
- Fighting
 - Physical violence can never be seen as acceptable
 - Each incident will be judged on its own merits/circumstances
 - Instigating a fight/provocation is deemed to be more serious
- Bullying
- Verbal abuse of school staff inside or outside of school
- Inappropriate use of mobile device/social media
- Severe disruption of lessons
- Persistent misbehaviour/disruption of class
- Persistent abuse of school rules on issues such as smoking, entering out of bounds areas etc.
- Theft/damage of property (belonging to the school, pupils or staff)

Expulsion – procedures governing all expulsions

An expulsion may occur for one of two reasons:

- a “**single major incident**” involving gross misconduct
- as a “**last resort**”, that is:
“where the school has taken all reasonable steps to avoid expelling a pupil”
Or
- “where allowing the pupil to remain in school would be seriously detrimental to the education and welfare of the pupil, or that of others in the school.”
- Where an incident occurs which is clearly, or may possibly be, of a criminal nature, the police, parent/carer together with Pastoral Team, Designated Officer of the local Education Authority and Social Services must be consulted by the principal and a suspension invoked immediately, pending arrangements being made for the consideration of an expulsion.

For Breakages, damage, or loss of property

Parents will be required to pay the full cost of the following:

- (a) School or library books - lost, defaced, or otherwise damaged
- (b) School equipment lost or damaged
- (c) Interference with fire equipment - fire bells, extinguishers, and signs
- (d) Repair of any damage (including graffiti) to the school building and its furniture and fittings where this is the result of a pupil's behaviour
- (e) Replacement or repair of another pupil's or member of staff's property which is lost or damaged because of a pupil's behaviour.

St Brigid's Primary School Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

As a Rights Respecting School, our policy is grounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

- Article 3: Children have the right to have their welfare considered paramount in all decisions taken about them.
- Article 12: Children have the right to be heard.
- Article 19: All children have a right to be protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect, and mistreatment by anyone who looks after them.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS-

Throughout our policy the term 'child' should be taken to mean any young person under the age of 18.

The term 'staff' should be taken to mean any responsible adult i.e. professional, auxiliary or ancillary workers in our schools as well as any voluntary workers

SAFEGUARDING

'Safeguarding is more than child protection. Safeguarding begins with promotion and prevention activity which enables children and young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and well-being 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.'

(Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in NI, March 2016)

SAFEGUARDING TEAM

The Safeguarding team at St Brigid's

Mr Kieran O'Neill (Principal)

Mr Kieran O'Neill (Designated Teacher for Child Protection)

Mrs Leona Campbell (Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection)

Mr Gerry Doran (Chair of the Board of Governors & Child Protection Governor)

Mrs Aileen McIlroy (SENCO)

Mrs A McCormick (ICT Co-ordinator)

Mrs Mairead McKay, Mrs Jayne Thompson, and Mr Justin Hanna (First Aiders)

Full copy of St. Brigid's Safeguarding Policy and Privacy Notice are available on the school website, www.stbrigidspsballymoney.com

Or in hard copy format directly from the school office.

AIMS

In St Brigid's Primary School, Ballymoney, we are committed to the development of the whole child. We have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare, and safety of all pupils in our charge and we will carry out this duty, ensuring, always to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment valuing all individuals for their unique talents and abilities. A child cannot learn effectively or develop unless they feel secure.

Our school vision is:

'Building Better Futures' for all children

This involves:

- making sure that the child or young person's welfare is paramount
- making sure the voice of the child or young person is heard
- making sure parents are supported
- making sure there is a strong partnership in place to exercise a shared responsibility in ensuring all children's needs are met
- making sure systems are in place to prevent problems occurring or worsening
- making sure all responses to need are proportionate to the circumstances
- making sure that children are protected from harm
- making sure all decisions are evidence based and informed

In St. Brigid's Primary School, we recognise that all members of staff, teaching, and non-teaching, have an important role in identifying potential cases of child abuse. The school will provide a neutral place where the child feels safe to talk. Staff will listen carefully to what the child is saying, treat it seriously and value what is said. Sensitivity to disclosure is vital.

By following child protection procedures, we

- Care for Children
- Care for our school
- Care for the community we serve
- Respond to the guidelines and procedures of other agencies

OBJECTIVES

This policy ensures that everyone who works in our school – teaching or non-teaching staff and anyone who has regular contact with our children, is aware of the procedures to follow in the event of suspected child abuse or neglect or a child.

Child Protection awareness by the school involves all pupils and adults.

The school can contribute by:

1. Ensuring all pupils have sufficient knowledge about themselves to be able to understand what constitutes as appropriate and inappropriate contact.
2. Enabling children to become aware of strategies they may use to protect themselves from possible abusive situations.
3. Developing an ongoing programme of Personal and Social Development e.g., Circle Time, PDMU programmes, Pastoral Assemblies, Peer Mediation, Playground Buddies, Worry Box etc. Children know what they can do if they are worried, etc. posters of 'If I'm unhappy, I can talk to...'. This includes which staff to talk to, telephone numbers to ring e.g., Childline.
4. Ensuring that all new staff are made aware of Child Protection Procedures on appointment.
5. Making sure that all staff and regular voluntary helpers have undergone Access NI checks.
6. Ensuring that the designated teachers avail themselves to update their knowledge of Child Protection Procedures.
7. Assisting with regular in-service training to maintain a working awareness among staff of Child Protection issues and Child Protection procedures.
8. All records are stored in line with EA Guidelines

ST. BRIGID'S WHO'S WHO 2023-2024

TEACHING STAFF	LEARNING ASSISTANTS	ADDITIONAL SUPPORT STAFF
Principal – Kieran O'Neill P.1 – Mairead McKay P.2 – Clare McShannock P.3 – Roisin Hickey P.4 – Dympna Kelly P.5 – Siobhan McMullan P.6 – Anne McCormick P.7 – Leona Campbell (VP) LSC 1 – Aileen McIlroy (SENCo) LSC 2 – Michelle O'Mullan	Angela McBride Caroline Coyle Patricia Connolly Valerie Black Cheryl Cahoon Jayne Thompson Orlagh Murdoch Bridget Halliday Veronica Gilmour Rhiannon O'Boyle Janet Coyle Jolene Dempster Taylor Neill Mya Patton Niamh Rodgers Gillian Boyd Jenny Doherty Claire Neill Megan Boreland Rhonda Burns Denise Herron	Clerical Susan McAlister Building Supervisor Justin Hanna Cleaners Donna McGonigle Rachel Martin SUPERVISORY ASSISTANTS Donna McGonigle

BOARD OF GOVERNORS
The Board of Governors of St Brigid's Primary School comprises of one parent governor, one teacher representative, four trustees, two representatives from the Education Authority (NE) and one representative from the Department of Education. The School Principal, while not a Board member, is in attendance and acts as secretary.
THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS IN ST BRIGID'S ARE AS FOLLOWS:
CATEGORY POSITION
TRUSTEE REPRESENTATIVES
Fr Damian McCaughan PP Siobhan Guiney Eugene Wallace Claire Harmer
DENI REPRESENTATIVE
Gerry Doran Chairperson
EA REPRESENTATIVES
Eoin McGarry Deirdre Finnerty
PARENTS' REPRESENTATIVE
Karen Hanna
TEACHER REPRESENTATIVE
Roisin Hickey
PRINCIPAL
Kieran O'Neill Secretary

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

Each school has appointed a Designated teacher and a Deputy-Designated teacher to manage procedures in the event of a child or adult confiding information to a member of staff, or if a member of staff sees signs or observes behaviour which gives them concern. The staff's responsibility is to immediately make their concerns known to the designated teacher if they have reasonable grounds to suspect abuse.

Designated Teacher Mr Kieran O'Neill
Deputy Designated Teacher Mrs Leona Campbell

It is NOT the responsibility of school staff to undertake investigations or to make enquiries of parent or guardians and in some cases, it might be counterproductive for them to do so. It is for the Social Services departments to investigate suspected abuse and determine what action to take, including notifying the PSNI.

Safeguarding Team at St Brigid's PS
Principal Kieran O'Neill
Designated Teacher Mr Kieran O'Neill
Deputy Designated Teacher Mrs Leona Campbell
SENCO Mrs Aileen McIlroy
ICT/eSafety Co-ordinator Anne McCormick
Chairperson of BoG and Child Protection Governor Gerry Doran

The team meets to ensure that appropriate child protection and safeguarding procedures are in place and to offer support to the Designated Teacher in fulfilling his responsibilities.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

DESIGNATED TEACHER

The role of the designated teacher

- To raise awareness in child Protection with all school staff including new staff and volunteers
- Responsible for discussing Child Protection concerns by any member of the school staff and keeping of all records
- Responsible for making the referrals to social services or PSNI (Child Abuse Investigation Unit)
- Responsible for keeping the school principal informed
- Taking the lead in the development of the school's Child Protection policy and ensure that parents receive a copy
- Ensure that the safeguarding team has identified key safeguarding lessons from the PDMU curriculum to be delivered
- Responsible for promoting a child protection/safeguarding ethos within the school
- Responsible for written report to the Governors regarding child protection issues.

The Designated teacher is supported by the Deputy Designated Teachers.

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection

The role of the Deputy Designated Teacher is to work co-operatively with the Designated Teacher in fulfilling his/her responsibilities.

Responsible for notifying the Chair of the Board of Governors of the school if there is a complaint against the principal.

It is important that the Deputy Designated Teacher works in partnership with the Designated Teacher so that he/she develops sufficient knowledge and experience to undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher when required. Deputy Designated Teachers are also provided with the same specialist training by CPSS to help them in their role.

PRINCIPAL

The role of the school Principal

- To manage the operational systems for safeguarding and child protection
- To appoint a designated teacher/deputy designated teacher who are enabled to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities
- To understand current assessment and referral processes through UNOCINI
- To manage allegations/complaints against school staff
- To ensure BoG is kept fully informed of all developments relating to safeguarding
- To ensure safe and effective recruitment and selection
- To maintain the school's Record of Child Abuse Complaints

Chair of Board of Governors

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

In the event of a safeguarding and 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 the Record of Child Abuse Complaints annually, even if there have been no entries.

Designated Governor for Child Protection

The Board of Governors will delegate a specific member of the governing body to take the lead in safeguarding/child protection issues to be able 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.**

KEY PRINCIPLES OF SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

The following principles should underpin all strategies, policies, procedures, practice, and services relating to safeguarding children and young people in St Brigid's PS.

- The child or young person's welfare is paramount - The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration for the courts and in childcare practice. An appropriate balance should be struck between the child's rights and parent's rights. All efforts should be made to work co-operatively with parents, unless doing so is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety.
- The voice of the child or young person should be heard - Children and young people have a right to be heard, to be listened to and to be taken seriously, taking account of their age, and understanding. They should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions which may affect their lives and be provided with appropriate support to do so where that is required. Where feasible and appropriate, activity should be undertaken with the consent of the 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 - Parents have responsibility for their children rather than rights over them. In some circumstances, parents will share parental responsibility with others such as other carers or the statutory authorities. Actions taken by organisations should, where it is in the best interests of the child, provide appropriate support to help families stay together as this is often the best way to improve the life chances of children and young people and provide them with the best outcomes for their future.
- 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. Sound decision-making depends on the fullest possible understanding of the child or young person's circumstances and their needs. This involves effective information sharing, strong organisational governance and leadership, collaboration and understanding between families, agencies, individuals, and professionals.
- Prevention - The importance of preventing problems occurring or worsening through the introduction of timely supportive measures.
- Responses should be proportionate to the circumstances - Where a child's needs can be met through the provision of support services, these should be provided. Both organisations and individual practitioners must respond proportionately to the needs of a child in accordance with their duties and the powers available to them.
- 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 - Decisions and actions taken must be considered, well informed, and based on outcomes that are sensitive to, and take account of, the child or young person's specific circumstances, risks to which they are exposed, and their assessed needs.

TYPES OF ABUSE AND PHYSICAL/BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

(Co- operating To Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2015)

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.

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child opportunity to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying – including online bullying through social networks, online games, or mobile phones – by a child's peers.

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.

Exploitation is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms 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 children and young people can be categorised within the existing CPR categories as children who have been exploited will have suffered from physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, or a combination of these forms of abuse

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

MANAGING SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION IN SCHOOLS

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 through the education system and schools must ensure that all persons on school property are vetted, inducted, and supervised as appropriate.

Volunteers

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 Enhanced Disclosure Certificate (EDC). A volunteer who works under supervision is not required to obtain an EDC, however, schools/ organisations must determine whether the level of supervision meets the statutory standard - see DE Circular 2012/19.

Schools must ensure that volunteers, e.g., coaches, music tutors, school photographers etc, who are employed by others, have the necessary clearances in place.

Visitors to Schools

- Visitors to schools, 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 should 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 a member of the school staff.
- If appropriate, be given restricted access to only specific areas of the school.
- Where possible, escorted by a member of staff/representative.
- 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.

Pupils on Work Experience

- Health and Social Care Programmes will require an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate for pupils on long term placement and may be required for pupils on work experience/ placements.
- Pupils coming into the school on work experience do not require Access NI clearance if they are fully supervised by school staff. The normal child protection induction processes should apply.

Parents

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

All policies, including child protection, pastoral care, anti-bullying, positive behaviour, online safety, and complaints, should be issued to parents/carers at intake*. The child protection policy should be reviewed and reissued, at a minimum, every two years*.

**Issue of a summary of the full policy is sufficient provided it contains clear details of how to access the full policy, including a hard copy if required.*

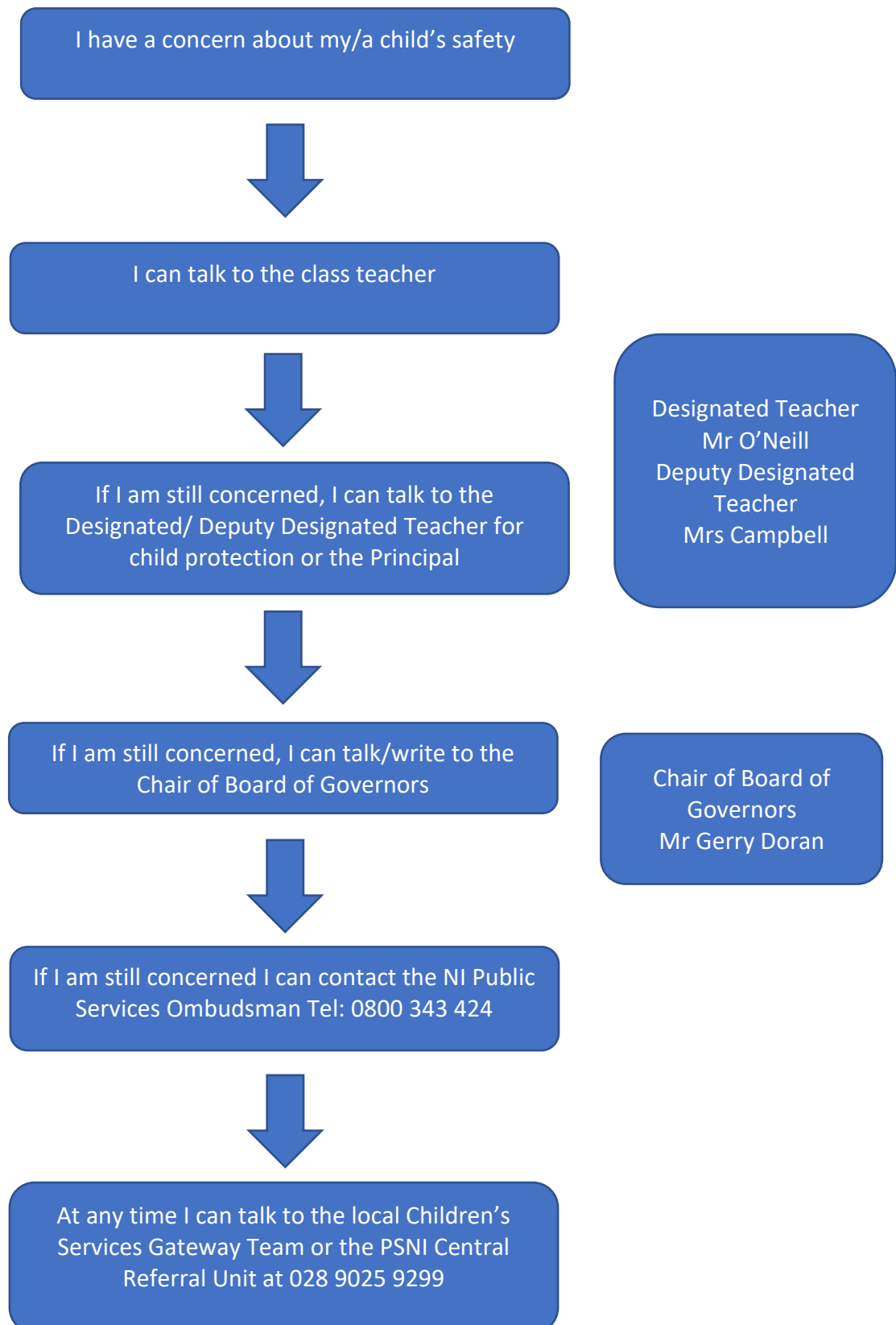
It should be clear that the school will always protect the best interests of the child and, in cases of suspected abuse, may refer cases directly to the investigative agencies. It is important that parents take time to read these policies and know they are required to inform the school:

- **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 of primary school children should tell the teacher if there are any changes to arrangements about who brings their child to and from school.**
- **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.**

Parents

The arrangements for parents to make known to staff any concerns they may have about the safety of their (or another) child should be clear, including how to contact the school, the class teacher, the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, or the principal if they are worried about a safeguarding or child protection concern. The process for a parent who has a potential safeguarding or child protection concern is set out below.

If a parent has a potential child protection concern:



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 Note of Concern 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 Mr O'Neill or Deputy Designated Teacher Mrs Campbell in his absence and provides note of concern.



Designated Teacher Mr O'Neill or DDT Mrs Campbell should consult with 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 Mr O'Neill/Mrs Campbell seeks consent of 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 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 Mr O'Neill or DDT Mrs Campbell 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 Mr O'Neill/DDT Mrs Campbell will maintain a written record of all decisions and actions taken and ensure that this record is appropriately and securely stored.



St Brigid's is an Operation Encompass school. Operation Encompass is an early intervention partnership between Police and Schools. It is aimed at supporting children who are victims of domestic violence.

Operation Encompass is already established across all of England and Wales and is now in Northern Ireland. It is a very simple idea, but one that will help us to support and protect vulnerable children. When the Police attend an incident of domestic violence where one of our pupils is present, they will inform the school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection at the start of the next school day. This information is shared in strict confidence and school staff are only told on a need-to-know basis.

Following any notification from the PSNI, our staff will provide immediate support to any child who has been the victim of domestic abuse. We know that when children do witness domestic abuse at home, this is a highly traumatic experience for them. By taking part in Operation Encompass, we can provide tailored and compassionate support to our pupils, in line with our school ethos. This builds on our existing commitment to child safeguarding.

Should you wish to find out more information, please contact the school's Designated Teacher for Child Protection Mr Kieran O'Neill or alternatively you can read more about Operation Encompass at www.operationencompass.org.

ANTI-BULLYING

We, in St Brigid's PS, are committed to providing a caring, supporting, and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our school. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect.

If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *telling* school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is encouraged and expected to tell the staff.

One of the main strengths and underpinning values of the success of the school is our spirit of community and the atmosphere of respect and support that should permeate all relationships in the school.

- We are committed to and believe in a society where children can live free and safe from bullying.
- We are committed to a preventative, responsive and restorative anti-bullying ethos across the whole school.
- We value the views and contributions of young children and young people; we will actively seek these views and we will respect and take them into account.
- We understand that everyone in our school community has a role to play in taking a stand against bullying and creating a safe and welcoming environment for all.

Definition:

Bullying is behaviour that is usually repeated, which is carried out intentionally to cause hurt, harm or to adversely affect the rights and needs of another or others.

The Addressing Bullying in Schools Act (NI) 2016 provides a legal definition of bullying:

Addressing Bullying in Schools Definition of "bullying":

1.—(1) In this Act "bullying" includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of—

- (a) any verbal, written or electronic communication,
- (b) any other act, or
- (c) any combination of those, by a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), "act" includes omission.

Whilst bullying is usually *repeated* behaviour, there are instances of one-off incidents that the school may consider as bullying.

When assessing a one-off incident, to decide on whether to classify it as bullying, the school shall consider the following criteria:

- severity and significance of the incident
- evidence of pre-meditation
- impact of the incident on individuals (physical/emotional)
- impact of the incidents on wider school community
- previous relationships between those involved
- any previous incidents involving the individuals

Any incidents which are not considered bullying behaviour will be addressed under the Positive Behaviour Policy.

The focus of the main body of our work in relation to this area is prevention. We seek to educate and inform young people about the consequences of their actions and the impact that behaviours can have on others, both positive and negative.

Some of the mechanisms we have for creating and sustaining a positive, safe, and supportive environment include:

- Raising awareness and understanding of the positive behaviour expectations, as set out in the Positive Behaviour Policy.
- Promotion of anti-bullying messages through the curriculum e.g., inclusion of age-appropriate material specific to individual subject areas related to bullying, positive behaviour and inclusion.
- Addressing issues such as the various forms of bullying, including the how and why it can happen, during pastoral and other lesson time.
- Through the preventative curriculum actively promoting positive emotional health and wellbeing (e.g., mindfulness and wellbeing initiatives, buddy system etc.)
- Participation in the annual Anti-Bullying Week activities
- Engagement in key national and regional campaigns, e.g., Safer Internet Day.
- Development of peer-led systems (e.g., School Council and other pupil voice opportunities) to support the delivery and promotion of key anti-bullying messaging within the school.
- Development of strategies and staff awareness when supervising pupils outside lesson times.
- Focused assemblies to raise awareness and promote understanding of key issues related to bullying.
- Provision and promotion of activities, aimed at supporting the development of effective peer support relationships and networks. For example, sporting activity, creative arts, leisure, and games, etc.
- Peer group disapproval is one of the most effective ways of combating anti-social behaviour. Through frank and open discussion, all pupils in the class should understand that they have a responsibility to each other. Pupils are encouraged to think of 'telling' as a positive behaviour.

Anti-bullying legislation gives schools the authority to take steps to prevent bullying using electronic communication amongst pupils at any time during term, where that behaviour is likely to have a detrimental effect on the pupil's education at school. Parents and carers are encouraged to support their children in safe use of mobile phones/the Internet by monitoring usage and regularly discussing positive online behaviours. Cyberbullying, which can take a range of forms, can cause hurt and harm to many young people and some of the ways we support creation of safe relationships include:

- Addressing key themes of online behaviour and risk through class lessons, including understanding how to respond to harm and the consequences of inappropriate use of the Internet and ICT.
- Participation in Anti-Bullying Week activities.
- Engagement with key statutory and voluntary sector agencies (e.g., C2k, PSNI, Public Health Agency, Safeguarding Board for NI e-Safety Forum) to support the promotion of key messages.
- Participation in annual Safer Internet Day and promotion of key messages throughout the year.
- Development and implementation of robust and appropriate policies in related areas (e.g., Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy)

Addressing Cyberbullying

St Brigid's PS is committed to promoting the health and welfare of all pupils and therefore we will endeavour to support and help the victims of cyberbullying irrespective of whether the bullying takes place inside or outside of school

All pupils have a duty to report whenever they receive any unkind or intimidating message, email, or image

Any incident of cyberbullying should be reported to the school, and we will endeavour to conduct a thorough investigation.

Cyberbullying, in all its forms, is a serious breach of our school's disciplinary policy.

Parents/Carers Reporting a Concern

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to raise concerns about alleged bullying behaviour with the school at the earliest opportunity. Parents/carers are reminded of the need to encourage their child to react appropriately to bullying behaviour and to not do anything to retaliate or to 'hit back'.

An example of how an alleged case of bullying could be raised is:

- **In the first instance, bullying concerns should be reported to the class teacher**
- **Where the parent is not satisfied that appropriate action has been taken to prevent further incidents, or where further incidents have taken place, the concern could be reported to the Principal/Vice Principal**

We will seek to respond to concerns raised and ensure that situations are resolved in the interests of all parties.



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SCHOOL ATTENDANCE MATTERS **A Parent's Guide**





WHY ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL IS SO IMPORTANT –

If a child of compulsory school age is registered at a school it is essential that they attend their school regularly and maintain a pattern of good attendance throughout their school career.

Excellent attendance at school is important to allow a child or young person to fulfil their potential.

Below are just some of the key reasons why it is so important children attend school:

- ☑ To learn.
- ☑ To have fun.
- ☑ To make new friends.
- ☑ To experience new things in life.
- ☑ To develop awareness of other cultures, religion, ethnicity and gender differences.
- ☑ To achieve.
- ☑ To gain qualifications.
- ☑ To develop new skills.
- ☑ To build confidence and self-esteem.
- ☑ To have the best possible start in life.



**Miss School -
Miss Out!!**



Key Point

Young people who regularly miss school without good reason are more likely to become isolated from their friends, to underachieve in examinations and/or become involved in anti-social behaviour.



WHAT THE LAW SAYS –

Under Article 45 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 (“the 1986 Order”), it is the duty of parents who have a child of compulsory school age¹ to ensure their child receives efficient, full time education suitable to their age, aptitude, ability and to any special educational needs they may have. Such education may be provided by regular attendance at school or otherwise, for example home education.

Paragraph 3 (1) of Schedule 13 to the 1986 Order states that it is the duty of a parent of a registered pupil of a school to secure their regular attendance at school. This applies to all children of compulsory school age who are on the roll of a school. As a parent you are legally responsible for making this happen.

Under Part III of Schedule 13 to the 1986 Order, if a child or young person who is registered at a school does not attend regularly, a parent can receive a fine not exceeding £1,000 in court (for each child). An Education Supervision Order (ESO) could also be made by a court under Article 55 of the Children (NI) Order 1995.

Key Point

Education is not an option – it’s compulsory.

FAMILY HOLIDAYS –



You can demonstrate your commitment to your child’s education by not taking holidays during term time. Any child or young person who is absent from school due to a holiday will miss out on important learning and will fall behind with their school work.

In each Academic Year there are only a maximum of 190 statutory school days – this allows plenty of time for holidays to be arranged outside term time.

Holidays taken during term time will be categorised as an unauthorised absence.

Key Point

Avoid taking family holidays during the school term.

¹ www.deni.gov.uk/index/schools-and-infrastructure-2/admission-and-transport/pupils-and-classes/compulsory-school-age.htm



HOW PARENTS CAN HELP –

- ☑ Establish a good routine in the mornings and evenings so your child is prepared for the school day ahead.
- ☑ Make sure your child goes to school regularly and follows the school rules.
- ☑ Ensure your child arrives at school on time – not late.
- ☑ Arrange dental and medical appointments outside school hours when possible.
- ☑ Always inform the school if your child is absent due to illness – this should be followed up with a written note when your child returns to school.
- ☑ Take truancy seriously – if your child is not attending school as you expect they may be putting themselves at risk – Who are they with? What are they doing?
- ☑ Take family holidays outside term time.
- ☑ Talk to your child about school and take an interest in their school work (including homeworks).
- ☑ Attend parent evenings and school events.
- ☑ Praise and reward your child's achievements at school.
- ☑ Always support school staff in their efforts to control difficult or challenging behaviour.
- ☑ Discuss any problems or difficulties with the school – staff are there to help and will be supportive.

A graphic with the words 'Key Point' in white, bold, sans-serif font. The text is set against a dark blue, irregular, brush-stroke-like background.

Key Point

Do not be afraid to ask for help if a problem arises.



EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS –

Every single day a child is absent from school equates to a day of lost learning.

Attendance percentages can be misleading.

100% Attendance	0 Days Missed	Excellent
95% Attendance	9 Days of Absence 1 Week and 4 Days of Learning Missed	Satisfactory
90% Attendance	19 Days of Absence 3 Weeks and 4 Days of Learning Missed	Poor
85% Attendance	28 Days of Absence 5 Weeks and 3 Days of Learning Missed	Very Poor
80% Attendance	38 Days of Absence 7 Weeks and 3 Days of Learning Missed	Unacceptable
75% Attendance	46 Days of Absence 9 Weeks and 1 Day of Learning Missed	Unacceptable

For some parents, 90% may seem like an acceptable level of attendance, but the reality is that 90% attendance means that your child will miss half a school day each week or 19 days of school during the school year – that's nearly 4 school weeks.



Give your child the best start in life – every school day counts.

POLICY FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

- 1 The Board of Governors and staff of St Brigid's PS wish to ensure that pupils with medical needs receive appropriate support and care at school. The Principal will accept responsibility in principle for members of the school staff dispensing or supervising pupils taking prescribed medication during the school day, where those members of staff have volunteered to do so.

Please note that parents should keep their children at home if acutely unwell or infectious.

- 2 Parents/Carers are responsible for providing the Principal with comprehensive information regarding the pupil's medication and condition.
- 3 Prescribed medications, will **not** be accepted in school without complete written and signed instructions from the parents/carers.
- 4 Staff will not give a non-prescribed medicine to a child unless there is prior specific permission from the parents/carers.
- 5 Each item of medication must be delivered to the Principal or the school office in normal circumstances by the parent, **in a secure, labelled container, as originally dispensed**. Each item of medication must be clearly labelled with the following instructions:
 - Pupil's name and date of birth
 - Name of medication and the prescribed dose
 - Frequency of administration/route of administration
 - Storage requirements and expiry date

The school will not accept items of medication in unlabelled containers.

- 6 Medication will be kept in a secure place, out of reach of pupils unless otherwise indicated (e.g., Auto Injectors/EpiPens)
- 7 The school will keep records which they will have available for parents/carers.
- 8 If a child refuses to take medication, staff will not force them to do so, and will inform the parents of the refusal as a matter of urgency, on that same day. If, because of the refusal, there is a medical emergency, the school's emergency procedures will be followed.
- 9 It is the responsibility of parents to notify the school in writing if the pupil's need for medication ceases.
- 10 It is the parents' responsibility to renew the medication when supplies are low and to ensure that the medication is within the expiry date.
- 11 It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that when pupils make trips or visits off site, that they always have extra supplies of medication available.
- 12 The school will not make changes to dosages on parental instructions. **G.P. only.**

- 13 **Medicines which are in use and in date should be collected by the parent at the end of use or the end of the school year.** Date expired medicines or those no longer required for treatment will be returned immediately to the parent for safe disposal. **The school will not dispose of medicines.**
- 14 For each pupil with a long term or complex medication need, the Principal will ensure that a Medication Plan and Protocol is drawn up, in conjunction with the appropriate health professionals. Parents must ensure that any changes to a child's medical needs are communicated to the school without delay.
- 15 Pupils will be encouraged to administer their own medication, where it is appropriate to do so, if necessary, under staff supervision. Parents will be asked to confirm in writing if they wish their child to carry medication with them in school.
- 16 Members of staff who volunteer to assist in the administration of medication will receive appropriate training through arrangements made with the School Health Service.
- 17 The school will make every effort to continue the administration of medication to a pupil while on trips away from school premises, even if additional arrangements may be required. However, there may be occasions when it may be impossible to include a pupil on a school trip if appropriate supervision cannot be guaranteed.
- 18 All staff will be made aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.

INTIMATE CARE POLICY

This policy is written in line with Guidance from Southern Area Child Protection Committee on Disabled Children and its Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children, The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, DENI Child Protection (2017/04), the school's Pastoral Care Policy and Child Protection Policy and the Human Rights Act.

PRINCIPLES OF INTIMATE CARE

(Taken from the Southern Area Child Protection Committee's Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines Regarding Children)

- **Every child has the right to be safe**
- **Every child has the right to personal privacy**
- **Every child has the right to be valued as an individual**
- **Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect**
- **Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in their own intimate care to the best of their abilities**
- **Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views considered**
- **Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible**

INTIMATE CARE WITHIN OUR SCHOOL

Intimate Care is defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual child, in partnership with parents/carers and the child. In most cases this will involve a member of staff supervising and/or assisting a child to change clothing or to carry out an intimate care procedure if a child cannot undertake this unaided. In all cases, the staff carry out a step-by-step approach to intimate care tasks.

It is vital that parents, staff, and children agree and adhere to these steps through formal written consent and practice. The consent form is signed by parents at the start of P1 and covers the child going forward.

TOILETING ACCIDENTS

The school keeps a supply of clothing available for children, if their clothes need changed. If used, this change of clothes should be washed and returned to school as soon as possible. When a child needs a change of clothes, he/she will change in one of the cubicles of the children's toilet.

A staff member will be outside the cubicle or the main door of the toilets encouraging the child to change him/herself.

As far as possible, each child will be encouraged to attend to their own needs.

If any member of the permanent staff is absent owing to illness or staff training etc. a familiar adult will be responsible for this duty of care.

SOILING

A staff member will assist a child to change if help is needed.

If appropriate, the child will be invited to change themselves if they are able to do so.

A staff member will inform another member of staff that they are attending to a child in supporting them with cleaning and changing themselves.

A staff member will assist by encouraging the child in placing any soiled clothing in a plastic bag to be sent home with the child.

With any soiling incident, it is school policy to contact the parent / guardian to report the incident and to allow the parent to make an informed decision as to what is to happen next in relation to their child.

If at any time the child feels uncomfortable about getting changed, the staff member will inform the parent/guardian to request that they or a named person to come to the school and change the child as agreed on this policy consent.

PERMISSION TO CHANGE CHILDREN'S CLOTHING

If you give permission, you or someone named below, will be contacted after your child has been made comfortable. (We need to advise you that there may be occasions when substitute staff would have to change your child. They will be fully briefed in the school's procedures and employed with full vetting in place)

If you do not give consent for your child to be changed by a member of staff, you will be contacted immediately and asked to come to school to collect your child.

In the event of you not being available, we will contact, in order of priority that you have already given, the named contacts for your child.

A text with a link to the Intimate Care Agreement will be sent to parents. Please follow the link to the Intimate Care Agreement where you can submit your response and provide alternative contact information.

INVASIVE INTIMATE CARE PROCEDURES

In specific situations, where more personal intimate care procedures are required, an appropriate CARE PLAN will need to be drawn up in advance, in consultation with medical staff, parents/guardians and school staff.

This CARE PLAN must be agreed and signed by all parties before any of the invasive intimate care procedures are carried out by any staff member.

The protocol within a CARE PLAN will be followed for each procedure and the relevant records kept.

If at any time the child feels uncomfortable or does not want the procedure being carried out by staff members, the parent/guardian will be called to the school to assist the child. The parent/guardian must come to the school or send a named person on the protocol as agreed on the written consent of this policy by the parent/guardian.

Our school's Intimate Care Policy and Procedures is sent home to all our newly enrolled Primary 1 parents during the first month in school and bi-annually to all parents.

In specific situations, the policy will be discussed with parents, class teachers and other relevant members of the school staff at an individual child focused meeting.

(Where a child requires invasive intimate care procedures, it is at this part of the policy, we insert an individual care plan for the child and only the necessary personnel receive a copy of this policy with the added insertion which is applicable to them)

CONCERNS EMERGING FROM INTIMATE CARE

If staff notice any unusual markings, discolouration or swelling, these must be noted and reported to the Designated Person for Child Protection (Mr. O'Neill). In the absence of Mr O'Neill, Mrs Campbell (Deputy Designated Teacher) should be notified.

If during the intimate care of a child, he/she is accidentally hurt or becomes distressed, the member of staff involved will reassure the child and report what happened to the appropriate staff as above.

It is important that any unusual emotional or behavioural response is noted. These concerns will be kept either in the child's personal file, or in a confidential Child Protection File, depending on the nature of the concern. Parents will be notified according to and in line with agreed school Safeguarding & Child Protection Reporting policy.

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

This will be returned via the Intimate Care Agreement Form