



St Mary's Nursery School

▪ Principal: Mrs Sinéad Markey MEd ▪

St. Mary's Nursery School Safeguarding Policy

Designated Teacher for Safeguarding: Mrs Sinéad Markey

Deputy Designated Teacher for Safeguarding: Mrs Madeline Friel

Designated Governor for Safeguarding Governance: Mrs Paula Clarke

Ratified by: *Paula Clarke*

Date: 19.6.25

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INTRODUCTION

The governors and staff of St Mary's Nursery School fully recognise the contribution it makes to safeguarding children. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active part in protecting our pupils from harm.

All staff and Governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the social physical and moral development of the individual child.

This policy is informed by the guidance and procedures set out by DE 'Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection (1999) and the Area Safeguarding Committees' (ACPC) Regional Policy and Procedures (2005). The central thrust of The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 is that *the welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration* in all decision concerning the child. This is also reflected in Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - *the best interests of the child shall be of primary consideration*. The 'paramountcy' of the child principle underpins our Safeguarding policy and procedures.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. The purpose of the procedures set out in this policy is to safeguard and protect our pupils by ensuring that every adult who works in our school - teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers - has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The issue of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school, and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence.

There are five main elements to our policy:

1. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop
2. Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
3. Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
4. Raising awareness of safeguarding issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe. This may be done through discussions at circle time, use of puppets, "stranger danger" talks etc.
5. Supporting pupils who have been socially or physically harmed by the effects of child abuse, in accordance with his/her agreed safeguarding plan

THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM AT ST MARY'S NURSERY SCHOOL

Chair of Governors:	Mrs Paula Clarke
Designated Governor for Safeguarding Governance:	Mrs Paula Clarke
Principal:	Mrs Sinéad Markey
Designated Teacher for Safeguarding:	Mrs Sinéad Markey
Deputy Designated Governor for Safeguarding:	Mrs Madeline Friel

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

(A child is a person under the age of 18 years as defined in the Children Order)

Child Abuse occurs when 'a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely by a stranger.' (ACPC, 2005)

Types of Abuse

Physical Abuse - is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of physical abuse include:

- Unexplained bruises (in places difficult to mark)
- Human bite marks, welts or bald spots
- Unexplained lacerations, fractures or abrasions
- Untreated injuries
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Chronic runaway
- Fear of going home

Emotional Abuse - is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that he is worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as he meets the

needs of another person. It may involve causing a child frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose a child to emotional abuse. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of emotional abuse include:

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

Sexual Abuse - involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children to look at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of sexual abuse include:

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

Neglect - is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment, lack of

stimulation or lack of supervision. It may also include non-organic failure to thrive. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of neglect include:

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

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.

Bullying - bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in St Mary's Nursery School.

Our anti-bullying policy is set out in a separate policy (see appendix 1) and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under safeguarding procedures.

Staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring, and will take immediate steps to stop it happening to protect and reassure the victim and to discipline the bully. Parents of both the bully and the victim will be personally contacted when bullying has been identified.

Any complaints by a parent that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be fully investigated by the DT for Safeguarding, and team action will be taken to protect the victim. This will usually include ensuring that St Mary's Nursery School child or a group of small children befriends and supports the child being bullied during the school day. A parent making a complaint about bullying will have a personal response from the DT within one week of making the complaint, indicating the investigation which has been carried out and the action taken.

The sanctions taken against a pupil who bullies will depend on the seriousness of the case, but will include the loss of privileges in the school. His/her behaviour will be carefully monitored until staff are

satisfied that the problem has stopped. If a pupil's bullying behaviour persists, the second stage will be to instigate the safeguarding procedures.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED (OR DISCLOSED) CHILD ABUSE

The designated teacher for safeguarding (DT) is the Principal, Mrs Sinead Markey. In her absence the deputy designated teacher for safeguarding (DDT) Mrs Madeline Friel will assume responsibility for safeguarding. If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, the member of staff must act promptly. She should not investigate - this is a matter for social services - but should report these concerns immediately to the DT, discuss the matter with her, make full notes (signing and dating them), and hand the note to the DT. The DT will plan a course of action, and ensure that a written record of decisions is made.

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

The DT may seek clarification or advice and consult with The Safeguarding Support Service for Schools (CPSSS) - Designated Officer for Safeguarding at the EANI, or a senior social worker before a referral is made. No decisions to refer a child to social services will be made without full consideration and on appropriate advice. The safety of the child is our first priority.

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

- Social Services
- EANI's Designated Officer for Safeguarding

A UNOCINI form will be completed and forwarded to Gateway. A copy of the completed Unocini will be forwarded to the Safeguarding Officers, marked CONFIDENTIAL, UNOCINI ENCLOSED. A copy of the

UNOCINI will be made available to parents and a further copy retained in the school's locked Safeguarding box.

In the unlikely event that an allegation should be made against a member of staff of St Mary's Nursery School, the school will:

- 1 Ensure confidentiality of all parties throughout.
- 2 Endeavour to resolve allegations as soon as possible.
- 3 Follow procedures outlined in DENI circular 2015/133 which advises:
 - The Principal/DT or DDT should be informed immediately.
 - A lead individual shall be nominated to handle the allegations- Mrs Markey in the case of staff members other than the Principal, and Mr Paula Clarke, chair, Board of Governors and Governor in charge of Child Protection informed.

In accordance with agreed disciplinary procedures, the Board of Governors, Chair or Principal may impose a precautionary suspension, should it be deemed necessary after full consideration of an individual case. Advice from the Education Authority will be sought in advance of any precautionary suspension. Suspension will only be considered if there is no recognisable alternative. Precautionary suspension will be reviewed monthly.

Parents will be advised when the matter has been fully dealt with but full details will at all times remain confidential to the Principal, Board of Governors, DDT. Records will be kept in the Child Protection/Safeguarding box, St Mary's Nursery School.

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

It should be noted that the information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held 'in confidence'. In the interests of the child, staff may need to share this information with other professionals. However, only those who need to know will be informed.

ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER (DT) AND DEPUTY DESIGNATED TEACHER (DDT)

The DT:

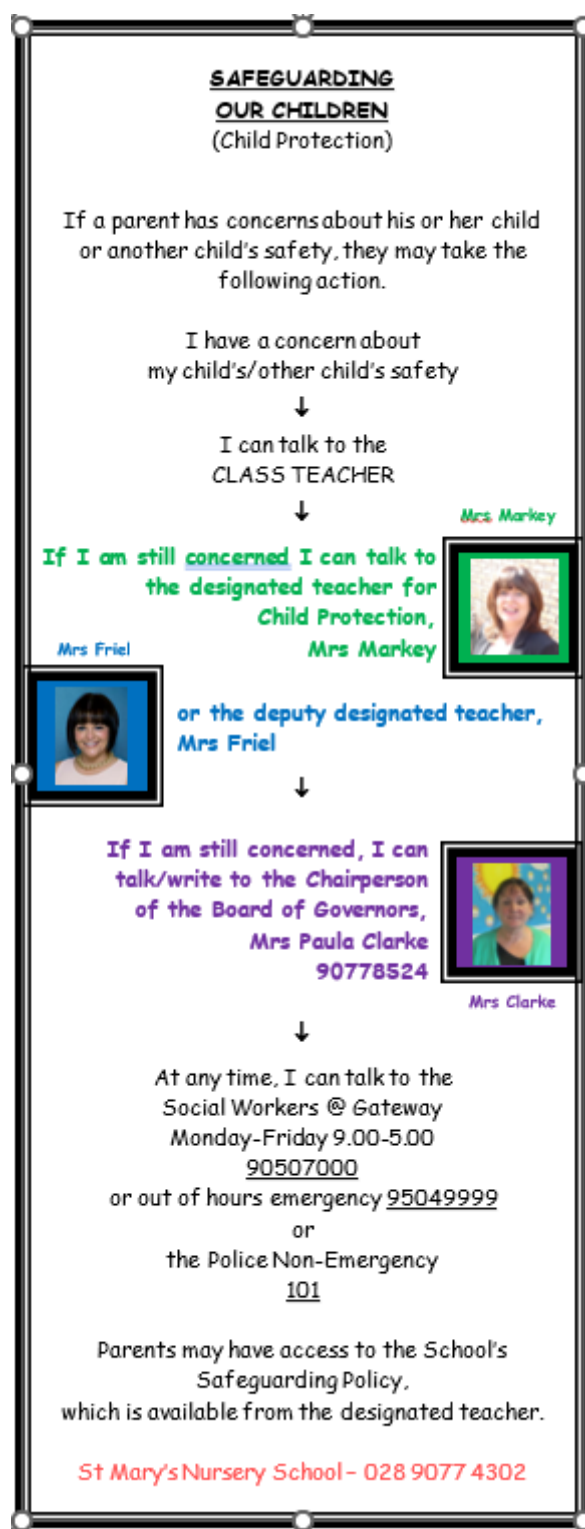
- To provide training to all school staff including support staff
- Being available to discuss the safeguarding concerns of any member of staff
- Responsibility for recordkeeping of all safeguarding concerns
- Making referrals to Social services or PSNI Public Protection Units
- Liaising with EANI Designated Officers for Safeguarding
- The lead responsibility for the development and updating of the school's safeguarding policy
- Ensures parents receive a copy of the safeguarding policy every year which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the school on this
- Promotion of a safeguarding ethos in the school
- Written reports to the Board of Governors regarding safeguarding
- Maintains all records pertaining to safeguarding in a secure location (accessed only by The Safeguarding Team as appropriate)

DDT:

To support and undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher for Safeguarding as required.

HOW A PARENT CAN RAISE A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

If a parent has a safeguarding concern they can follow the guide below:



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL STAFF

The code of conduct is known to all staff – permanent and non-permanent and volunteers. It reflects the safeguarding ethos of the school and is set out in Appendix 2.

ST MARY'S NURSERY SCHOOL'S VETTING PROCEDURES

The school's vetting processes are compliant with practice advised in DE circulars. Copies of these circulars are available on the DE website:

www.deni.gov.uk

St Mary's Nursery School notes that pre-employment vetting remains a key preventative measure in denying unsuitable individuals access to children and vulnerable adults through unsupervised Regulated Activity.

St Mary's Nursery School will ensure that newly appointed paid staff such as teachers and non-teaching staff, including classroom assistants, office, catering, cleaning and caretaking staff are appropriately vetted in line with the practice and procedures operated by EANI (BR) and outlined in DE Circular 2013/01, Disclosure and Barring Arrangements: Vetting Requirements for Paid Staff Working in or Providing a Service for Schools.

GUIDANCE FOR VOLUNTEERS

The guidance for volunteers is set out in Appendix 3

THE PREVENTATIVE CURRICULUM

We recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protections.

The school community will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk , and are listened to

- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- Include in the curriculum opportunities for Personal and Social Development which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to whom they should turn for help if the need arises. Strategies may include:
 - "Stop that, I don't like it " approach
 - Use of puppets
 - Use of stories, posters and appropriate materials

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Our policy acknowledges that staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury.

This is in line with the training all staff have received from the EANI.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Our Health and Safety Policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND IMAGES OF CHILDREN

All parents are asked at the start of the academic year to consent to their child's photographs being taken and displayed within the school or on the school website (in a secure folder, password protected for parents only).

A list of any children who **MAY NOT** have photographs taken or displayed will be clearly sited for all staff to check.

At any public event organised by the school, the use of cameras and video cameras will be prohibited during the course of that event.

It may transpire that the school or an individual staff member may become aware of an image/images of a pupil or family member which gives cause for concern- this may especially be true of photos shared on social media sites. Staff should not copy, share or email any photos but should

immediately inform the Principal of their existence and give brief details of any concern regarding these images.

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS / VISITS

St Mary's Nursery School has a separate policy on educational trips and visits. - Appendix 5

REVIEWING OUR SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually.

Appendix 1

Procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour in the Nursery

Nursery children rarely engage in bullying.

Aggressive behaviour can emerge as normal behaviour in 2/3 year olds, with temper tantrums being part of normal development at this stage. In children with delays in other areas of development- e.g. speech and language, there can be resulting secondary behaviour management difficulties.

Therefore in nursery, while bullying as such is not in evidence, there may be examples of bullying types of behaviour displayed by some children. This is usually of a physical nature and may include hitting, kicking or damage to property.

If this occurs nursery staff will put in place some, or all, of the following procedures, as appropriate.

- Staff will intervene to stop unacceptable behaviour
- The child will be removed from the situation
- The child will be told why he / she is being removed.
- The child will be given an alternative, calming activity with a member of staff constantly monitoring his / her behaviour. If he / she remains aggressive or starts crying during this time, he / she will be told that he / she can go back to play when he / she calms down or stops crying.
- When completed, the child will be encouraged to play elsewhere and any appropriate behaviour that occurs will be praised and reinforced. Other staff will be encouraged to do likewise.
- After the event, the child will be talked to about his /her behaviour and why it was unacceptable. More appropriate alternatives will be discussed.
- If this occurs regularly, parents will be informed and a written record, detailing incidents will be kept.

Appendix 2

A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL STAFF (Pastoral Care in Schools SAFEGUARDING 1999)

All staff and volunteers are aware of and have received a copy of our code of conduct. The Code is informed by guidance from DE.

This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences pupils at St Mary's Nursery School gain from positive interaction with 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.

Private Meetings with Pupils

Staff should be aware of the dangers which may arise from being alone with individual pupils. It is recognised that there are occasions when this take place. As far as possible, staff should always be in a room with visual access, or with the door open.

Those children who have access to a 1:1 assistant will sit outside of these rules as they may occasionally be in a 1:1 situation with their SEN Assistant whilst receiving tailored therapies.

Physical Contact with Pupils

As a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with pupils.

It is unrealistic and unnecessary, however, to suggest that staff should touch pupils only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed child may need reassurance involving physical comforting. Staff should not feel inhibited from providing this in an age appropriate way.

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. Staff would follow guidelines given by EANI.

Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint.

Teachers and nursery assistants come into physical contact with young children while helping them with toileting and often in washing them and changing their clothing.

The special procedures regarding changing a child who is wet, dirty, or sick (or is in nappies and has a statement of Special Educational Needs) should be adhered to by all staff.

The following procedures must be observed at all times:

- a) Only children whose parents have given permission for them to be changed may be changed. The Parent / Carer of those for whom parental consent has not been received should be telephoned instead. A list of any children who **MAY NOT** be changed will be clearly sited for all staff to check.
 - b) Due to problems of supervision of the rest of the class, both members of staff will not be present when a child is being changed. However, the member of staff changing the child **MUST** alert the other member of staff prior to starting to change the child.
 - c) To provide visual access, the bathroom door should remain open at all times.
 - d) While every attempt should be made to give the child privacy and preserve their dignity, other children will not be barred from the bathroom during changing.
 - e) Staff must wear disposable gloves when changing a child.
 - f) The child should be encouraged to remove the clothes to be changed by him/herself, where possible.
 - g) Where necessary, the child can be given a baby wipe to freshen themselves.
 - h) The child should be encouraged to dress themselves with help being given when necessary.
 - i) A note of the change must be entered on the chart and signed by the staff member.
- Wet / soiled clothes are to be placed in a bag on the child's peg and the carer informed by notes available in each toilet area.
- j) A child who is asking for help in the toilet should be encouraged and directed how to clean him/herself where possible.

Staff who administer first-aid to a pupil should ensure whenever possible that this is done in the presence of other children or another adult.

However, no member of staff should hesitate to provide first-aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present.

Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the pupil, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.

Following any incident where a member of staff feels that her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the Principal.

Choice and Use of Teaching Materials

Teachers should avoid teaching materials, the choice of which might be misinterpreted and reflect upon the motives for the choice.

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.

If in doubt about the appropriateness of a particular teaching material, the teacher should consult with the Principal before using it.

Relationships and Attitudes

Staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age and maturity 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. Staff should be aware of a child's emotional well-being and should not use sarcasm, verbal bullying or persistent negative comments or actions.

Staff are aware that they are in a position of trust in relation to the children at the school.

It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all circumstances in which staff interrelate with children, 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.

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

THE PREVENTATIVE CURRICULUM

The staff of St Mary's Nursery School recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging or they may be withdrawn.

St Mary's Nursery School will endeavour to support the pupils who are exposed to risk of harm through supporting such pupils in accordance with his/her agreed protection plan.

Support for all pupils in the school in developing skills in self protection and developing confidence will be afforded as follows:

- The content of the curriculum, particularly Personal Development.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that pupils understand the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviours towards themselves and others
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Social Services, Education Welfare Service, Educational Psychology, and the PSNI

Appendix 3

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers have an important and beneficial role in supporting the work of teachers and other support staff in St Mary's Nursery School and in contributing, by their efforts and initiative, to the life of the school.

It is essential however, 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 the school. The Department of Education has produced guidance which St Mary's Nursery School complies with in order to help decide whether the supervision they plan to provide will take any supervised activity out of Regulated Activity.

St Mary's Nursery School can obtain an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate from AccessNI, but not check barred list status, for supervised work that is no longer Regulated Activity.

Who is a Volunteer?

A volunteer is an individual who, subject to the satisfactory procedures below, assumes unpaid duties in a school on a regular basis

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 fund raisers, people using school premises for meetings etc.

Use of Volunteers

Recruiting and Selecting Volunteers

The school may canvass for volunteers or people may come forward to offer assistance at their own initiative. In many cases potential volunteers may already be known to the school. Others may come forward from the local community. Engagement of volunteers is only undertaken with agreement of the Board of Governors.

Initial Appraisal

As a minimum requirement all potential volunteers are asked to provide the following information to the Principal:

- personal details
- qualifications and previous work with children
- a declaration that they have never been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound-over Order
- a declaration as to whether they have been investigated by Social Services for safeguarding
- agree to an enhanced disclosure check being carried out
- provide the name of two referees who are not family members or members of staff in the school
- attend an interview with the school Principal with proof of identity
- Undergo an annual enhanced disclosure check through Access NI (via EANI)

No individual will be admitted to the school as a volunteer until these basic steps have been completed and the results assessed.

Accepting Volunteers

Where the previous procedures have been followed as appropriate and the school is satisfied that:

- the volunteer is a suitable person to have contact with the children and has the character, skills and experience to support the work of the school in a voluntary capacity;
- well defined and worthwhile activities have been identified for the volunteer to undertake and he/she is competent to undertake them;

the school will notify the individual that he/she has been accepted for voluntary duties in the school.

The Use of Volunteers

These are the fundamental principles observed when using volunteers:

- the purpose of the volunteer is to assist staff, whether teaching or non-teaching. They are not used as substitutes either to cover activities normally undertaken by paid staff who are absent, or to release such staff to undertake other duties.

- Parent volunteers who provide occasional voluntary work in St Mary's Nursery School will always be supervised by a permanent staff member and will not require vetting procedures to be carried out.
- Parent volunteers providing more than occasional voluntary work and any other volunteer to St Mary's Nursery School will be required to undergo an enhanced disclosure check before commencing any volunteer work.
- The Principal will conduct an interview process with prospective volunteers in order to determine the extent of their time commitment to the school and hence the need for an EDC to be sought.
- **NO volunteer, in any capacity, will have access to the children or work unsupervised at any time in St Mary's Nursery School.**
- volunteers should understand the tasks they are to undertake and receive appropriate training to enable them to perform these;
- volunteers are only allocated duties after consultation and agreement with the teacher or other member of staff with whom the volunteer will be closely involved. Teachers are not to be placed under any pressure to accept a volunteer in their classroom;
- volunteers are not afforded access to records or other information relating to staff or pupils. An exception might be made where a child has a medical or other condition of which all those working with the pupil should be made aware, and where agreement of the parent has been sought.

Health and Safety Insurance

Volunteers are owed a duty of care under the requirements of Health and Safety Legislation. St Mary's Nursery School therefore ensures that volunteers are treated no less favourably than paid employees in terms of St Mary's Nursery Schools' obligations under the legislation.

Duration

St Mary's Nursery School places a time limit on the period of the volunteer's service. This is done where the work earmarked for the

volunteer is likely to be completed within a specific period. Where a volunteer's involvement is likely to be long term, the school advises the volunteer that he/she will be subject to a trial period, during which the Principal monitors the volunteer's effectiveness in contributing to the life and work of the school.

Information and Training

The school ensures that the volunteer receives such information, guidance, preparation and where necessary, training to enable him/her to perform tasks effectively. As a minimum, volunteers are briefed on:

- the policy of the school and the management authority in relation to pastoral care and safeguarding, including its behaviour/discipline policy, including rewards and sanctions, and the extent of the volunteer's authority within it;
- the school's safeguarding procedures;
- St Mary's Nursery School's Health and Safety Policy, Fire and Evacuation Procedures and the Code of Conduct.

Arrangements are made for the volunteer to have a formal line of communication to the Principal for reporting issues of concern or the welfare of the children in the school.

School Security

St Mary's Nursery School has drawn on the advice from the guidance Document "Security and Personal Safety in Schools" 1997 to establish arrangements for the admission and supervision of volunteers on school premises. Particular attention is drawn to:

- The volunteer reporting to the Principal at the beginning of each visit.

Appendix 4

REASONABLE FORCE / SAFE HANDLING POLICY

(Based on DENI's Regional Policy Framework on the use of Reasonable Force / Safe Handling)

Introduction

Schools have a 'duty of care' to their pupils - to provide a safe and secure environment for the entire school community (pupils and staff) and to promote and sustain appropriate behaviour. This may involve all staff having to handle pupils to prevent them harming themselves, others or damaging property.

St Mary's Nursery School has prepared this policy for the support of all teaching and support staff who come into contact with pupils and for volunteers working within the school. The policy is intended to explain the school's arrangements for physical intervention. The policy has taken account of (and will be updated as appropriate):

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child (Article 12); International 1989 (UK 1991)
- The Education (NI) Order 1998 (Article 3) which requires Boards of Governors to ensure that policies are designed to promote good behaviour and discipline on the part of the pupils;
- The Education (NI) 1998 (Article 4) which clarifies the powers of members of staff of a grant-aided school regarding the use of reasonable force;
- The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003 (Article 17 +19) which imposes a duty on Boards of Governors to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils; and
- The Human Rights Act 1998, which provides for the right to education.

This policy and our procedures have been developed in line (and will be updated as appropriate) with the guidance from:

- The Department of Education NI circular 1999/9;
- DE document "towards a Model Policy in Schools on the Use of Reasonable Force" August 2002;
- Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour (2001);
- Pastoral Care in Schools - Safeguarding; Code of Conduct for Staff (1999/10) paragraphs 69 to 72; and
- DE Circular 2003/13 Welfare and Protection of Pupils.

Values and Principles underpinning this Policy

St Mary's Nursery School believes that:

- 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.
- Parents and Carers are informed and reassured that their children are being educated in a safe, caring and respectful atmosphere.
- All staff have the right to work in a safe and secure environment.

These principles underpin our school ethos and culture.

Purpose of the Policy

The following purposes underpin St Mary's Nursery School's policy and practices to :

- Create a learning environment in which children and adults feel safe;
- Protect every person in the school community from harm;
- Protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention, which is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive or harmful; and
- Develop and implement guidelines for 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.

We, the staff of St Mary's Nursery School, believe that nursery education is a stage in its own right and should be a valuable and important experience for all children who have the opportunity to avail of it. We see it as an extension to, and complement of, the love and care experienced by children at home. It is important that parents and staff work in partnership to help each child reach his or her own potential. We provide a varied curriculum set in a stimulating learning environment to help us cater for the individual needs of our children. We hope to encourage each child to become increasingly independent, self confident and happy. St Mary's Nursery School is an integral part of the local community and the staff, together with the Board of governors, are committed to nurturing the aims of local education.

This policy has been formulated (and will be updated as appropriate) with due consideration to the following legislation.

- Children (NI) Order 1995 - duty to protect and safeguarding responsibilities / fulfilling responsibility;
- UN Convention On The Right Of The Child 1989 - (Article 12, 16 and 19); UK 1991;
- Education (NI) Order 1998 (Part 11 Article 4 (1));
- Human Rights Act 1998 - Articles 3 and 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights;
- Health and Safety at Work Act (NI) Order 1978;
- Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003 - Articles 17, 18, 19.

Links With Other Policies

- This policy is one of the overall pastoral policies and dovetails into the school's existing behaviour policy, anti-bullying policy, safeguarding policy, special needs policy, health and safety policy and complaints policy.
- It also takes account of the staff development and welfare policy.
- Teaching, learning and assessment policy and curricular policies.

Definition of Reasonable Force

The Education (NI) Order 1998 (part 11 article 4 (1) states:

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

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

Based on this legal framework, the working definition reasonable force is the minimum force necessary to prevent a pupil from physically harming him/herself or others or seriously damaging property, but used in a manner that attempts to preserve the dignity of all concerned.

Practices

Preventative Strategies

St Mary's Nursery School actively promotes positive behaviour management strategies, thus reducing the need for the use of any form of physical intervention, except in emergency situations.

Preventative strategies for defusing and de-escalating conflict/confrontation or aggression are detailed in our school's behaviour management policy.

Procedures

Support Structures

The following procedures have been agreed by the staff and adopted by the board of governors. Parents and pupils will be informed of the school's procedures and support structures within the overall Pastoral Care Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Reasonable force/safe handling can be used by any member of staff who is authorised by the principal to have lawful control or charge of pupils e.g. teachers, nursery assistants, supervisory assistants. The principal will confirm with all the staff those who are authorised to be in charge of pupils at any given time.

Procedure

There may be circumstances when a member of staff may have to decide between making an intervention/using reasonable force by placing herself in a dangerous situation or standing back and thereby allowing colleagues or pupils to face potential danger. There will be an element of personal judgement in these decisions and there is the possibility of someone being injured. However, it is reasonable to expect a member of staff to engage in some risk where there is evidence of danger to others and intervention has a good chance of being effective.

Staff should not, however, put themselves in personal danger merely to safeguard property.

Reasonable force/safe handling can be used by a teacher or other authorised persons on the school premises or when authorised elsewhere e.g. on school trips. Reasonable force/safe handling should be limited to

emergency situations and used only as a last resort when all other behaviour management strategies have been exhausted and where:

- action is necessary in self defence or because there is imminent risk of injury to another pupil or person;
- there is a developing risk to another pupil or person, or significant damage to property;

Examples that fall into the above categories are:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil;
- pupils are fighting;
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of materials or objects;
- a pupil is running in the playroom or hallway where he/she might cause an accident likely to injure himself/herself or others;
- a pupil tries to leave the school;
- a pupil persistently refuses to respond appropriately to safety instructions

Forms of 'Reasonable Force'

When other behaviour management strategies have failed - the minimum intervention or force will be reasonably employed depending on the age, gender, understanding and any special needs of the pupil and used in a way that preserves the dignity and respect of all concerned. The use of reasonable force/safe handling will involve a calm and measured approach at all times appropriate to the particular pupil and be in accordance with the nursery's agreed strategies and the following procedures:

- tell the pupil to stop the inappropriate behaviour;
- ask the pupil to behave appropriately, clearly stating the desired behaviour;
- tell the pupil the nature of physical intervention that will take place if the inappropriate behaviour continues;
- during the incident repeatedly reassure the pupil and tell him/her that physical contact will stop as soon as he/she is ready to behave appropriately;
- if the teacher/assistant, feels at risk another member of staff will be alerted for assistance. The design of the school and the deployment of staff will ensure another member is close by at all times.

Forms of Physical Intervention

The forms of physical intervention used in the nursery will depend on the individual circumstances and may include

- guiding or leading a pupil by the hand with little or no force;
- lifting a pupil e.g. off outdoor equipment (a bike or a slide), when blocking a doorway or in extreme circumstances when a pupil is in danger of hurting others;
- shepherding a pupil away by placing hands on backs of elbows or middle of back.

Restrictive Physical Intervention

This will involve the use of physical intervention/reasonable force where there is a risk to pupils, staff or risk of significant damage to property. All incidents will be recorded in the school's Serious Incident Book and on the Record of Restraint/Physical Intervention Form.

Forms of Safe Handling

The forms of safe handling used in the nursery will depend on the individual circumstances and are

- Teaching a pupil to hold an adult's hand appropriately whilst
 - on visits outside school,
 - learning to move safely around the inside of the school,
 - exiting and entering the school building as part of a group,
- Holding /restraining a child with clothing after toileting (in accordance with Safeguarding Policy guidelines)
- In exceptional circumstances, providing comfort to a pupil who is very upset or ill by sitting her/him on the knees of a staff member. (In such circumstances a second adult will be present.)

Health and Safety

When using reasonable force/physical intervention/restraint/safe handling, the pupil's health and safety will always be considered and monitored. Physical interventions will involve the minimum amount of force necessary to resolve the situation and calm the pupil.

Limits on the Use of Force

The use of Reasonable Force will only be employed in exceptional circumstances or an emergency where a pupil appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and whose behaviour is presenting a threat to himself/herself or others. All staff in St Mary's Nursery School are aware of acceptable and unacceptable measures of physical

intervention as outlined in the 'regional policy framework' and understand that the use of force as a punishment or to intentionally cause pain, injury or humiliation contravenes our Safeguarding Policy and is strictly prohibited, by law.

Record Keeping

All incidents involving the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention will be recorded in the nursery's Serious Incident book. The principal will maintain this record and, with the Chairperson of the Board of Governors, will review annually the entries in the incident book.

In addition members of staff involved in an incident will provide specific details to be recorded on a 'Record of Physical Intervention' form.

The monitoring of incidents will help ensure that staff are following correct procedures and will alert the principal and Board of Governors to the needs of any pupil whose behaviour can only be contained by the use of physical intervention.

Post - Incident Management

The use of restrictive physical intervention can be upsetting to all concerned, therefore, we will ensure that staff and pupils are given the required physical and emotional support.

Parents will be contacted as soon as possible and the incident explained to them. Any complaint from a parent will be dealt with within the nursery's complaints policy and procedures.

Training and Development

St Mary's Nursery School is committed to providing regular professional development on:

- Behaviour strategies/management;
- Safeguarding policy and procedures

for all staff, in order to maintain the ethos of the school, its values and the boundaries of acceptable behaviour.

Appendix 5

ST MARY'S NURSERY SCHOOL

POLICY ON SCHOOL TRIPS

PARENTAL CONSENT

Parents will be informed by newsletter about the nature of the trip, the format of the day, the expected departure and arrival times and the eating arrangements in advance and asked to sign a consent form.

PRE-VISIT BY STAFF

Staff will acquaint themselves with the place to be visited beforehand and plan the order of the day etc.

EXTRA ADULTS

Volunteers will be invited to join all trips - the exact number will depend on the nature of the trip and there will be at least 1 adult for every 6 children, in accordance with the guidance issued by the Department of Education.

All volunteers, including parent volunteers should be supervised at all times by a permanent member of staff. Volunteers are not permitted to accompany children other than their own to the toilet, unless a permanent staff member is also present.

All volunteers will be briefed about the nature of their responsibilities before the trip and will have signed a Code of Conduct.

BEHAVIOUR ON TRIPS

The children will have been informed as to what constitutes reasonable behaviour when out of the school, and be expected to follow Nursery expectations of appropriate conduct.

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

A list of names, addresses and emergency telephone numbers will be taken on all trips. A member of staff will carry a mobile phone.

EMERGENCY MEDICATION

All emergency medication should be brought on any school trip/outing. Children potentially requiring medication will be closely monitored.

Appendix 6

MANAGING INFORMATION ON PERSONS WHO POSE A RISK TO PUPILS

Public Protection Arrangements are in place in Northern Ireland, managed by a multi agency framework- PPANI. Their remit is to protect the public from persons convicted of sexual and violent offences.

Should the PPANI judge it necessary, information about a person who poses a risk to pupils may be shared with Mrs Markey (The Principal) who will then take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the pupils.

To ensure confidentiality, Mrs Markey will discuss with the designated risk manager and PPANI

1. The nature of the risk posed.
- 2 How information should be made public and with whom.

A record of this discussion will be taken, kept in the Safeguarding box and will include the contact details of the designated risk manager and the advice given on how to manage the situation. Information will not be shared with any other school. Mrs Markey may liaise with/seek advice from safeguarding officials and EANI if needed.

Information regarding individuals who pose a risk arising from other sources, will immediately be referred to Mrs Markey to the Public Protection Unit and seek advice - a record of any advice given will be kept in safeguarding box.

St Mary's Nursery School will not discuss any individual cases with the media.

Full details of Managing Information on a person who pose a risk to pupils, are contained in DENI Circular no. 2014/27.