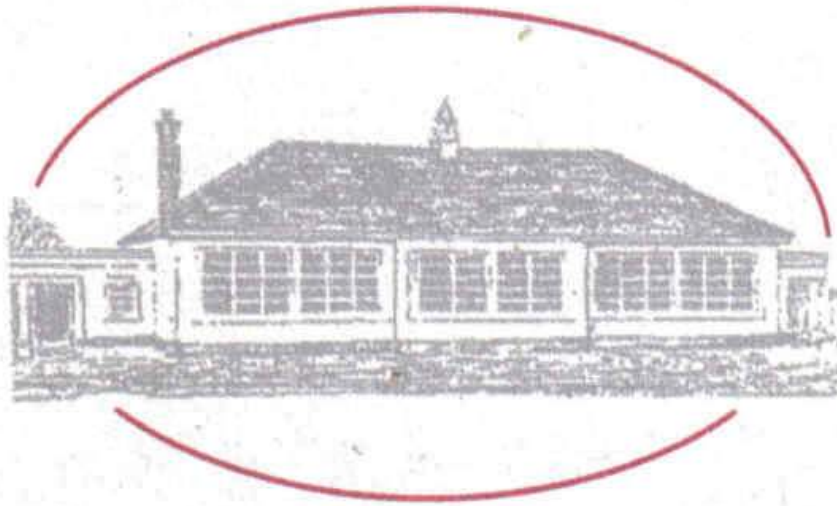


The Diamond Primary School



Child Protection Policy

Updated March 2011

THE DIAMOND PRIMARY SCHOOL



We at The Diamond Primary School have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in our charge and we will carry out this duty through our Child Protection Policy.

We as a staff aim to:-

- (i) provide a caring, supportive and safe school environment.
- (ii) value all children for their unique talents and abilities.
- (iii) Promote positive attitudes towards healthy living.
- (iv) Help each child to develop his own individual potential to the full.

All our staff and volunteers have been subject to police checks. Our staff has adopted a code of practice for our behaviour towards pupils, which is set out in the Appendix to this policy statement.

Our main priority at The Diamond Primary School is to protect our pupils by ensuring that all our staff know the procedures to follow if abuse is suspected. The welfare and safety of each child will be our paramount consideration. The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by any staff member.

WHAT IS ABUSE?

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.

ABUSE can take a number of forms and a child may suffer more than one of them.

PHYSICAL ABUSE - deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful or 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.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE - 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/she is worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued insofar as he/she 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. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose a child to emotional abuse.

SEXUAL ABUSE - 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 looking at, or in the production of, pornographical material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

NEGLECT - 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 treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision. It may also include non-organic failure to thrive (faltering growth).

A child may 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.

- **The Designated teacher for Child Protection is Mr McCullough (Vice-Principal)**
- **In his absence, the Deputy Designated teacher, Mrs Scott, will assume responsibility for Child Protection matters.**
- **Our Child Protection Safeguarding Team is made up of five people. Mrs Duffin, Mr McCullough, Mrs Scott and Chairperson of the Board of Governors, Rev. Kirk and Designated Member for Child Protection on the Board of Governors, Dr. Craig.**
- **If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives cause for concern about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child, the member of staff must act promptly.**

He/she will report immediately to the Designated teacher, Mr McCullough. He will inform the Principal, Mrs Duffin, discuss the matter with her, and make a written record of their discussion.

(NO INVESTIGATION will be carried out - this is a matter for Social Services).

Both Mr McCullough and Mrs Duffin will then decide whether, in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. Before this action is taken Mr McCullough and/or Mrs Duffin will inform **Ms. Lorraine O'Neill or Mrs. Linda O'Hara, Designated Officers for Child Protection, NEELB Child Protection Support Service for Schools (CPSSS)**. If there are concerns that the child may be at risk, the school is obliged to make a referral. Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parents will be informed immediately. **No decision will be made without full consideration and on appropriate advice. The safety of our children is our first priority at The Diamond Primary School.**

If there are concerns about possible abuse the Principal will inform:

- Ms. Lorraine O'Neill
- Mrs. Linda O'Hara
Tel. No. 02894482223
- Gateway Services for Children's Social Work (Social Services)
Tel. No. 02879651020 (Toomebridge)
02893340165 (Ballyclare)
02870325462 (Coleraine)

02894468833 (Out of Hours Emergency)
03001234333 (For referral)

If any member of staff is unsure about what action he/she should take if there are concerns about a child, or unsure about being able to recognise the signs or symptoms of possible abuse they will speak to the Designated teacher.

Information given to members of staff about possible child abuse will **not** be held in confidence in the interests of the child, staff may need to discuss with other professionals. However, only those who need to know will be told.

COMPLAINTS AGAINST SCHOOL STAFF

The Principal will be informed immediately and the afore-mentioned procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Designated teacher).

If the matter is referred to Social Services the member of staff will be removed from duty and may be suspended from duty pending investigation by Social Services. The Chairperson of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately. There will be consultation with the NEELB's Designated Officer as a matter of urgency and in confidence.

If a complaint is made against the Principal, the Designated Teacher, must be informed. He in turn will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and the necessary action will be taken.

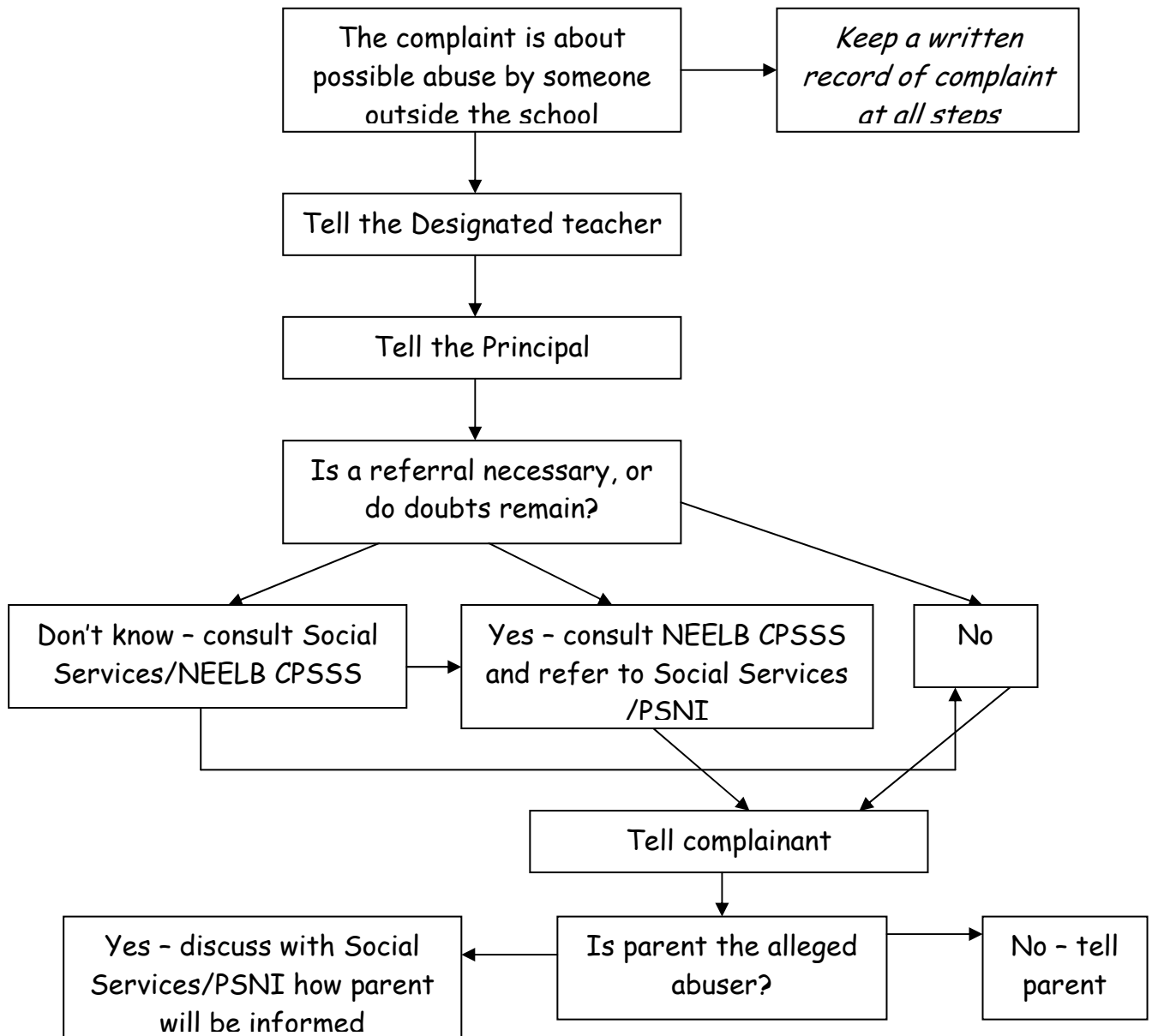
CURRICULUM

The implementation of The Northern Ireland Curriculum ensures that the children in our school are equipped with skills which they will need to help them stay safe. The P.S.N.I. (Community Affairs) speak on an annual basis to our Key Stage 1 pupils on the topic 'Say No to Strangers' and various other topics which enable our pupils to recognise unwelcome approaches and encourage them to develop the confidence to resist the former. Other work with external agencies and Curriculum tasks support pupil safety. Our Religious Education Scheme deals with bullying in a detailed and precise manner.

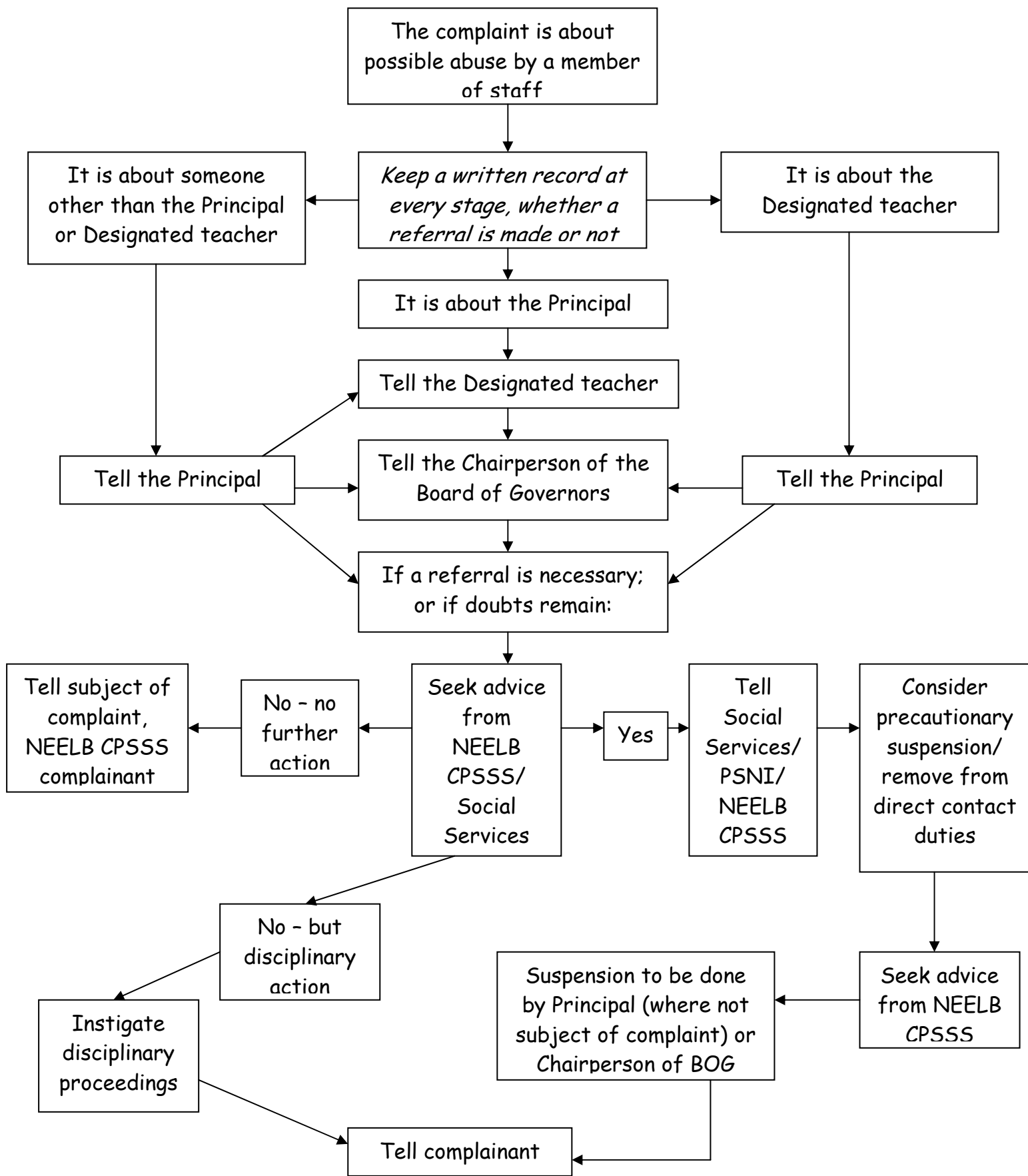
LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

Within The Diamond Primary School, we have other Pastoral Care policies which ensure the safety and well-being of all of our children and staff. Pastoral Care, Parental Access to Teachers, Discipline, Anti-bullying, Safe handling and the use of Reasonable Force, PDMU, Prescribed Medication, Relationships and Sexuality Education, Information on Changing Children, Safe Use of the Internet, Drugs, Smoke-free and Healthy breaks policies are available for consultation and outline how we provide a caring environment and encourage safe practice for everyone in the school community. An annual report on Child Protection issues is submitted to the Board of Governors.

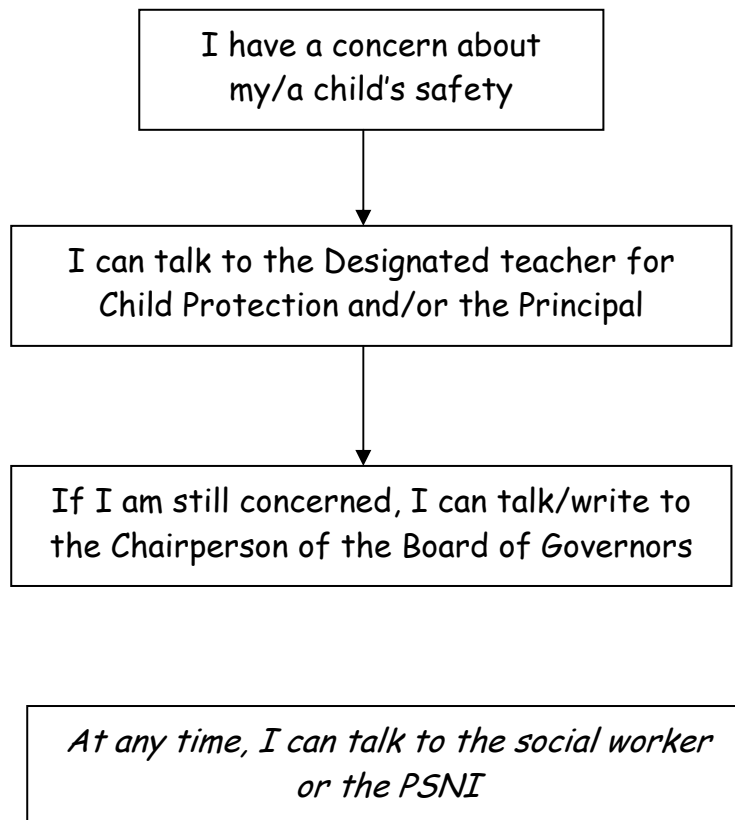
Procedures where the school has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of the school's staff



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



How a parent can make a complaint about a Child Protection Issue



PHYSICAL ABUSE

PHYSICAL INDICATORS

Unexplained bruises (in various stages of healing) - grip marks on arms, slap marks, human bite marks, welts, bald spots.
Unexplained/ untreated burns, especially cigarette burns or immersion burns (glove like)
Unexplained fractures, lacerations or abrasions
Untreated injuries
*bruising on both sides of the ear; any 'symmetrical' bruising is suspicious.
Injuries occurring in a time pattern (eg every Monday morning)

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

Self destructive tendencies
Aggressive towards other children
Behavioural extremes (i.e. withdrawn or aggressive) child appears frightened or cowed in the presence of adults;
improbable excuses given to explain injuries.
Chronic run away (teenagers)
Uncomfortable with physical contact
Arrives at school early or stays late as if afraid to be at home.
Clothing inappropriate to weather - worn to hide part of the body

NEGLECT

PHYSICAL INDICATORS

Looks extra thin, poorly and sad.
Constant hunger; lack of energy; untreated medical problems.
Special needs of child not being met.
Constant tiredness;
inappropriate dress; poor hygiene - repeatedly unwashed, smelly.
Repeated accidents especially burns.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

Tired or listless (falls asleep in class)
Steals food; compulsive stealing; begging from classmates; withdrawn/lacks concentration.
Kept away from school medicals; reports that no carer is at home.
Low self esteem, persistent non attendance at school
Exposure to violence, including violent videos

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

PHYSICAL INDICATORS

Well below average in height and weight.
'Failing to thrive'; poor hair and skin; alopecia; swollen hands and feet.
Recurrent diarrhoea, wetting and soiling; sudden speech disorders.

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

Apathy and dejection; inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations.
Rocking/head banging; inability to play; perverted appetite.
Indifference to separation from family.
Indiscriminate attachment

SEXUAL ABUSE

PHYSICAL INDICATORS

Bruises, scratches, bite marks or other injuries to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs.
Bruises or bleeding in genital or anal areas.
Torn, stained or bloody underclothes.
Signs of sexually transmitted infections.
Chronic ailments such as recurrent abdominal pains or headaches.
Difficulty in walking or sitting.
Frequent urinary infections; avoidance of lessons especially PE, games, showers.
Unexplained pregnancies where the identity of the father is vague; anorexia/gross over-eating

BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS

What the child tells you; withdrawn; chronic depression.
Excessive sexual precociousness; seductiveness; children having knowledge beyond their usual frame of reference e.g. young child who can describe ejaculation, male masturbation, erection and other details of adult sexuality.
Role reversal; overtly concerned for siblings.
Poor self-esteem, self-devaluation, lack of confidence.
Peer problems; lack of involvement; massive weight change; suicide attempts (especially adolescents) hysterical/angry outbursts; lack of emotional control.
Sudden school difficulties e.g. deterioration in schoolwork or behaviour; inappropriate sex play.
Repeated attempts to run away from home.
Unusual or bizarre sexual themes in children's artwork or stories.
Vulnerability to sexual and emotional exploitation, promiscuity.

This policy was adopted on _____

Signed by the Principal _____

**Signed by the Chair of
The Board of Governors _____**