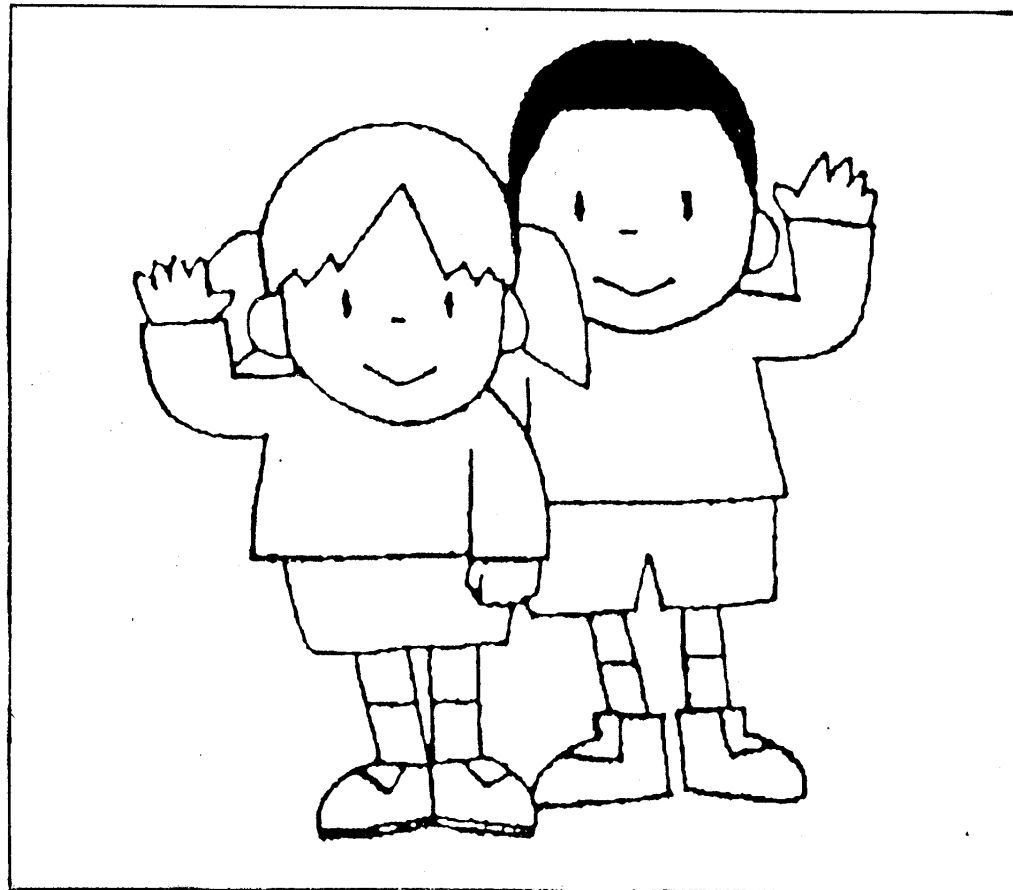


# Holy Cross Nursery School



## Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Designated Teacher (DT) for Child Protection:	<b>Mrs Cushla Mallon</b>
Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT) for Child Protection:	<b>Mrs Arlene Murphy</b>
Designated Child Protection Governor:	<b>Mrs Claire LeMahieu</b>

## **Policy Statement on Safeguarding and Child Protection**

We at Holy Cross Nursery School strictly adhere to the principle that "the welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration"(Children N.I. Order 1995).

All schools have a pastoral responsibility towards their young children and we at Holy Cross Nursery School take all reasonable steps to ensure that the welfare of the children in our care is safeguarded and that their safety is preserved, we do so by providing a caring, supportive and safe environment. Children are individuals whose rights, needs and welfare are paramount. Each child is valued for his or her unique talents and abilities, and in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential. All staff, teaching and non-teaching should be alert to the signs of possible abuse and should know the procedures to be followed. This Policy sets out guidance on the action, which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected and outlines referral procedures within our school.

Safeguarding is more than child protection alone it begins with the **promotion and preventative** 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 the children and continues to encompass the overarching theme of safeguarding. 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.

Effective safeguarding activity will:

- Promote the welfare of the child and young person
- Prevent harm occurring through early identification of risk and appropriate, timely intervention
- Protect children and young people from harm when it is required

Child Protection is a *part* of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or likely to suffer, significant harm.

**A child in need of protection** is a child who is at risk of, or likely to suffer, significant harm which can be attributed to a person or persons or organisation, either by an act of commission or omission; or a child who has suffered or is suffering significant harm as defined in Article 50 of the Children Order.

## **The Roles and Responsibilities within the Nursery School**

### *Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher*

Every school is required to have a designated and deputy designated teacher with responsibility for child protection. These are highly skilled roles developed and supported through a structured training programme. It is important that the DDT works in partnership with the DT so that they develop sufficient knowledge and experience to undertake the duties of the DT when requires.

The roles involve:

- The induction and training of all school staff including support staff
- Responsibility for record keeping of all child protection concerns
- Compiling written reports to the Board of Governors regarding child protection
- Making referrals to Social Services or PSNI when appropriate
- Being available to discuss safeguarding and child protection concerns with any member of staff or parent
- Promotion of a safeguarding and child protection ethos in school
- Maintaining a current awareness of early intervention support and other local services
- Avail of training by DE
- Liaise with the EA designated officers and child protection as appropriate
- Assist in the drafting and issuing of the summary of our child protection arrangements for parents

### The Nursery Principal:

- Will assist the Board of Governors to fulfil its safeguarding and child protection duties, keeping them informed of any changes to guidance, procedure or legislation.
- Child protection activities feature on the agenda of the Board of Governors meetings and termly updates & annual report are provided
- Confidentiality is paramount. Information should only be passed to the entire Board of Governors on a need to know basis.
- Takes the lead in managing child protection concerns relating to staff
- Delegates responsibility for establishing and managing the safeguarding and child protection systems within the
- All staff receive 'in house' child protection training
- All necessary referrals are taken forward in the appropriate manner
- The school's child protection policy is reviewed annually and that parents and pupils receive a copy/summary of this policy every year

### Other Members of Nursery Staff

Staff in school observe children over long periods and can notice physical, behavioural and emotional indicators and hear allegations of abuse. They should remember the 5 R's: **Receive, Reassure, Respond, Record and Refer**

#### *The member of staff must:*

- refer concerns to the Designated/Deputy Teacher for Child Protection/Principal
- listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and support the child
- act promptly
- make a concise written record of a child's disclosure using the actual words of the child
- Avail of whole school training and relevant other training regarding safeguarding children
- **Not** give children a guarantee of total confidentiality regarding their disclosures
- **Not** investigate nor ask leading questions.

### Parents:

Parents should play their part in safeguarding by:

- telephoning the school on the morning of their child's absence, or sending in a note on the child's return to school, so as the school is reassured as to the child's situation;
- informing the school whenever anyone, other than themselves, intends to pick up the child after school
- letting the school know in advance if their child is going home to an address other than their own home;
- familiarising themselves with the School's Pastoral Care, Anti Bullying, Positive Behaviour, Internet and Child Protection Policies;
- reporting to the office when they visit the school
- Raising concerns they have in relation to their child with the school.
- Keeping school informed of any changes in the child's circumstances including the issuing of relevant court orders.

## **What Is Child 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. There are different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them. The procedures outlined in this document are intended to safeguard children who are at risk of significant harm because of abuse or neglect by a parent, carer or other person with a duty of care towards a child.

### Physical Abuse

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

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child; it is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not

giving a child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Emotional abuse may involve bullying - including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones - by a child's peers.

### Neglect

The failure to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it is 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.

### Sexual Abuse

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

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.

## Signs and symptoms of abuse

### Possible Indicators: Physical Abuse

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<p>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 (glove like); unexplained fractures; lacerations; or abrasions; untreated injuries; bruising on both sides of the ear - symmetrical bruising should be treated with suspicion; injuries occurring in a time pattern e.g. every Monday</p>	<p>Self-destructive tendencies; aggressive to other children; behavioural extremes (withdrawn or aggressive); appears frightened or cowed in presence of adults; improbable excuses to explain injuries; chronic runaway; uncomfortable with physical contact; clothing inappropriate to weather - to hide part of body; violent themes in art work or stories</p>

### Possible Indicators: Emotional Abuse

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<p>Well below average in height and weight; "failing to thrive"; poor hair and skin; alopecia; swollen extremities i.e. icy cold and swollen hands and feet; recurrent diarrhoea, wetting and soiling; sudden speech disorders; signs of self-mutilation; signs of solvent abuse (e.g. mouth sores, smell of glue, drowsiness); extremes of physical, mental and emotional development (e.g. anorexia, vomiting, stooping).</p>	<p>Apathy and dejection; inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations; rocking/head banging; inability to play; indifference to separation from family indiscriminate attachment; reluctance for parental liaison; fear of new situation; chronic runaway; attention seeking/needing behaviour; poor peer relationships</p>

### Possible Indicators: Neglect

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
<p>Looks very 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.</p>	<p>Tired or listless (falls asleep in school); compulsive eating; begging from class friends; withdrawn; lacks concentration; reports that no carer is at home; low self-esteem; persistent non-attendance at school; exposure to violence including unsuitable videos.</p>

Possible Indicators: Sexual Abuse

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioural Indicators</b>
Bruises, scratches, bite marks or other injuries to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs; bruises or bleeding in genital or anal areas; chronic ailments such as recurrent abdominal pains or headaches; difficulty in walking or sitting; frequent urinary infections;	What the child tells you; withdrawn; chronic depression; sexual precociousness; seductiveness; knowledge beyond their age e.g. young child who can describe details of adult sexuality; parent/child role reversal; over concerned for siblings; poor self-esteem; self-devaluation; lack of confidence; peer problems; lack of involvement; massive weight change; hysterical/angry outbursts; lack of emotional control; sudden school difficulties e.g. deterioration in school work or behaviour; inappropriate sex play; unusual or bizarre sexual themes in children's art work or stories; vulnerability to sexual emotional exploitation.

Guidelines for use by staff should a child disclose concerns of a child protection nature.

<b>Do:</b>	<b>Do not:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Listen to what the child says</li> <li>❖ Assure the child they are not at fault</li> <li>❖ Explain to the child that you cannot keep it a secret</li> <li>❖ Document exactly what the child says using his/her exact words</li> <li>❖ Remember not to promise the child confidentiality</li> <li>❖ Stay calm</li> <li>❖ Listen</li> <li>❖ Accept</li> <li>❖ Reassure</li> <li>❖ Explain what you are going to do</li> <li>❖ Keep the child informed as appropriate</li> <li>❖ Record accurately</li> <li>❖ Seek support for yourself</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Ask leading questions.</li> <li>❖ Put words into the child's mouth.</li> <li>❖ Ignore the child's behaviour.</li> <li>❖ Remove any clothing.</li> <li>❖ Photograph alleged injuries</li> <li>❖ Panic</li> <li>❖ Promise to keep secrets</li> <li>❖ Ask leading questions</li> <li>❖ Make the child repeat the story unnecessarily</li> <li>❖ Delay</li> <li>❖ Start to investigate</li> <li>❖ Do Nothing</li> </ul>

**Procedures for making complaints in relation to child abuse**

How a Parent can make a Complaint

We aim to work closely with parents/guardians in supporting all aspects of their child's development and well-being. Any concerns a parent may have will be taken



seriously and dealt with in a professional manner. If a parent has a concern they can talk to the class teacher or any member of the school's safeguarding team: the Principal Mrs Mallon (Designated Teacher) or Mrs Murphy (Deputy Designated Teacher) for child protection. If they are still concerned they may talk to the Chair of the Board of Governors, Fr Eugene McCarthy. At any time a parent may talk to a social worker in the local Gateway team or the PSNI Central Referral Unit.

Where the school has concerns or has been given information about possible abuse by someone other than a member of the school staff including volunteers

Were staffs become aware of concerns or are approached by a child they should not investigate as this is the responsibility of Social Services and/or PSNI. Staff should report these concerns immediately to the Designated/Deputy Teacher and a note of concern should be completed. These notes of concern should be factual, objective and include what was seen, said, heard or reported. They should include details of the place and time and who was present and should be given to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher. The person who reports the incident must treat the matter in confidence.

The Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher will meet immediately to decide whether in the best interest of the child the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. 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 parent will be informed immediately.

The Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher may consult with members of the school's safeguarding team, the Education Authority's Designated Officer for Child Protection or Social Services Gateway Team before a referral is made. During consultation with the Education Authority's Designated Officer, the child's details will be shared. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice. The safety of the child is our priority.

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|---|------------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| - | The EA Designated Officers   | Christine Graham | 90 564107    |
|   |                              | Sean Monaghan    | 90 564107    |
|   |                              | Lorraine O'Neill | 90 564107    |
|   |                              | Therese Moran    | 90 564107    |
| - | Social Services Gateway Team |                  | 028 90507000 |
| - | Gateway (out of hours)       |                  | 028 90565444 |

## Child Protection Reporting Form

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

### Details of Disclosure

Name of person who made Disclosure: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person to whom Disclosure is made: \_\_\_\_\_

(Date, time, place, observation, verbal details)

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Principal's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

