



# Leadhill Primary School Child Protection Policy

Leadhill is an all ability, co-educational primary school, welcoming children from all backgrounds, cultures and religions. At Leadhill difference is respected and inclusion promoted. We encourage our children to build positive relationships with their peers, and to be courteous, considerate and sensitive to the feelings of others. Our School motto - 'Learning Together Moving Forward' reflects our desire for inclusive, collaborative approaches and continuing progress and growth throughout the curriculum and all areas of school life. We want all children to experience success and celebration, supported and challenged by the members of the Leadhill family, in order to achieve their full potential.

We aim to:

- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum appropriate to the individual needs of each child, enabling him or her to take advantage of every learning opportunity and reach their potential.
- To provide a happy, safe, stimulating and imaginative environment where the highest standards of attainment and behaviour are expected and where each child can achieve success.
- To develop each child spiritually, morally, socially, intellectually, emotionally and physically, so that in realising their potential they can have an appreciation of their self-worth.
- To foster good relations within the school community and relevant outside agencies.

For the purposes of this policy the term *Staff* refers to any person employed by the school e.g. teacher, classroom assistant, building supervisor, lunchtime supervisor, and clerical officer. The term *Visitor* refers to any person in contact with children who is not employed by the school e.g. external coaches, work experience students, peripatetic teachers, volunteers, members of The Board of Governors and parents (including PTA).

At Leadhill Primary School, we have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the children in our charge. We carry out this duty with reference to our Child Protection Policy, which aims to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment for everyone within our school.

This policy responds to 'Safeguarding and Child Protection - A Guide for Schools' DE Circular 2017/04, which replaced the 'Pastoral Care in Primary Schools' DE Circular 1999/10. In addition, The Children's (N.I.) Order (1995) places duties on a number of agencies, including Education & Library Boards now known as the Education Authority. The central thrust of the Order is that the welfare of the child must be of paramount importance. Schools have a pastoral responsibility towards the children in their charge and should take all reasonable steps to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and their safety preserved. The Order also makes it a criminal offence to fail to notify the correct authorities of alleged child abuse.

All our staff and visitors who work unsupervised are deemed in “Regulated Activity” and have been subject to appropriate background checks by the Education Authority (see appendix A for definition of Regulated Activity). All other visitors are supervised. It is intended that all staff and visitors in Leadhill Primary School will follow either the “Staff Child Protection Code of Conduct”, or the “Visitor Child Protection Code of Conduct”.

All visitors to school are provided with information about Child Protection, on their first visit to Leadhill. This information identifies the Designated and Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection and procedures for reporting concerns.

The purpose of the following policy on Child Protection is to protect the children of Leadhill by ensuring that everyone who works in our school has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The overriding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child. The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school and we acknowledge that child abuse is also a criminal offence.

## What is child abuse?

### Definitions

Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings- such as: in a family; in a residential, hospital or institutional setting; or in a community setting. The abuse may be carried out by those known to the child, or more rarely, by a stranger. There are different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of these. The procedures outlined in this guide are intended to safeguard children who are at risk of significant harm because of abuse or neglect by a parent, carer or other with a duty of care towards the child.

**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 foods, 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 (see Appendix B for indicators).

**Physical** – The 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 (see Appendix C for indicators).

**Sexual** – 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 in looking at, or the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways (see Appendix D for indicators).

**Emotional** – 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 children that they

are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of the other person. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Emotional abuse may involve bullying - including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones - by a child's peers.

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 children to emotional abuse (see Appendix E for indicators).

**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. (see Appendix F for Indicators)

#### **Procedure for members of staff reporting suspected child abuse**

The designated teacher for child protection is Mr A McPherson. The Deputy Designated Teacher is Mrs A Millis. The Chairman of the Board of Governors is Mr A McCann. The Governor with particular responsibility for Child Protection is Mrs C Stewart.

- If a member of staff is worried about a child, they will immediately speak to the Designated or Deputy Designated teacher.
- The member of staff should then, if required, complete the 'Record of Concern' form and give this to the Designated Teacher (see Appendix G).
- The Designated Teacher/Deputy Designated Teacher will decide whether, in the interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to Social Services. Advice will be sought from the Duty Social Worker and/or the Education Authority (EA ) Designated Officers. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration.
- If it is decided to make a child protection referral to Social Services, this will be done by telephone and followed up by the completion of a UNOCINI (Understanding the Needs of Children in NI) form.

It is important to note that a disclosure may come from a child about another child, a parent, another relative, a member of the public etc; as well as the child about themselves.

## Dealing with Disclosures

### Don't panic - Listen - Believe - Do not interrogate or question

- **Receive** the disclosure but do not investigate it.
- **Reassure** the child but let them know you may have to speak to someone else
- **Respond** only to ensure the child is safe and secure
- **Record** what the child has said, including dates, times, places and names
- **Refer** the disclosure to the designated teacher as soon as you have any concern for a child.

In Leadhill we refer to this procedure as 'The 5 Rs'. This procedure is displayed throughout the school to support staff throughout the disclosure process.

All concerns in relation to child abuse or suspected abuse will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly.

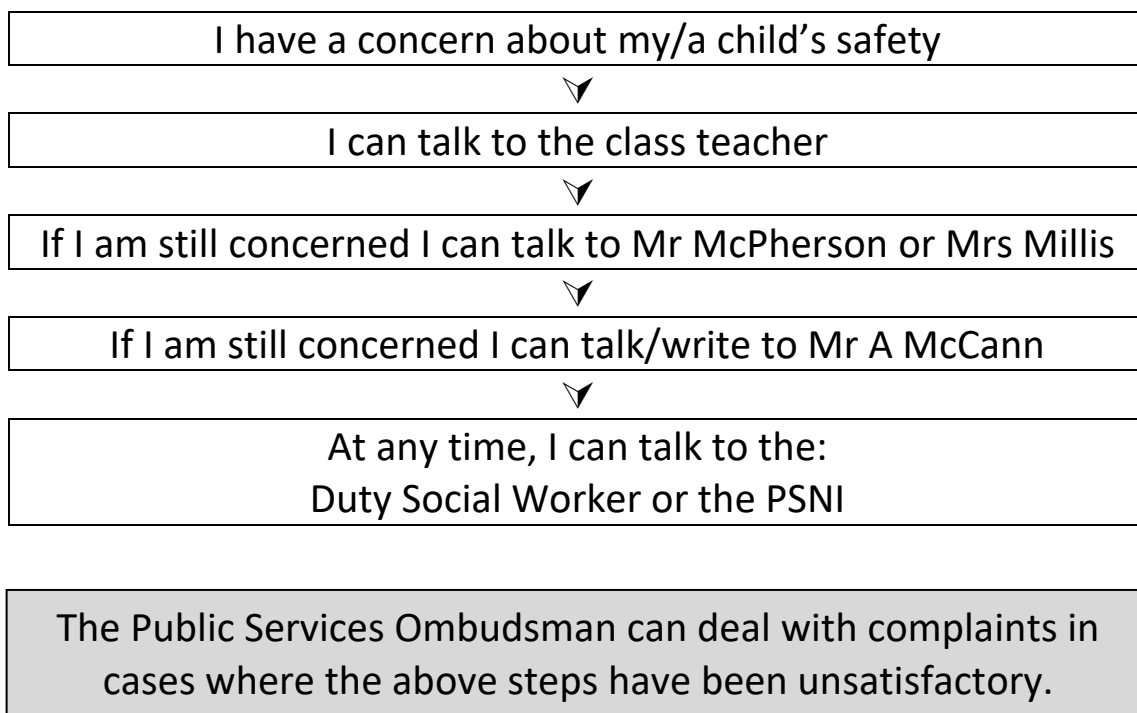
**A disclosure of Domestic Violence, even if the child is not the physical victim, but has witnessed an incident, requires an immediate referral to social services. The Domestic Violence incident can be between any family members.**

**Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parent will be informed that contact has been made with Social Services. This will also be the case in Domestic Violence incidents, unless the child has been physically harmed.**

## Supporting Children with Transgender Concerns

The staff and Child Protection team at Leadhill are sensitive to children's concerns about their personal identity, gender and sexual orientation. As part of the training for the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, these issues were explored and support services and resources identified. In the situation that an issue arose regarding Transgender, sexual orientation and personal identity the school would seek additional support from the Education Authority, non-Statutory agencies and other schools. In all situations, the staff in Leadhill always seek to support every child, demonstrating acceptance and respect in all of their interactions.

## Procedure for parents or others reporting suspected child abuse



It should be noted that 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 told.

**The safety of the child is our first priority.**

## Procedure for reporting suspected abuse by a member of staff

It is intended that all adults at Leadhill Primary School will adhere to either the "Staff Child Protection Code of Conduct" or the "Visitor Child Protection Code of Conduct". Allegations of abuse will be dealt with in line with this and the procedures laid down by the Education Authority.

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, Mr McPherson or Mrs Millis must be informed immediately. Mr McPherson will contact the Chairman of the Board of Governors, Mr Andy McCann and the EA. If the complaint is about Mrs Millis, Mr McPherson should be informed, or if the complaint is about Mr McPherson, this information must be taken to Mrs Millis. The Chairman of the Board of Governors will be contacted immediately in either case.

## Information available to children

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

In each classroom, and around the school building, there are posters telling children who they can speak to if they are worried about something. Posters are also displayed with the Childline phone number.

On a three-yearly cycle, the NSPCC are invited to visit school to hold assemblies aimed at raising children's awareness of their right to safety and action to take if they feel unsafe.

A Child Protection notice board in the school entrance hall gives information about who to contact if support or information is required.

Teachers and staff, regularly draw children's attention to these posters and information, so that children are familiar with the people in school who help to keep them safe.

## Training

All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, receive refresher training every school year and are involved in reviews of policies. Throughout the school year, staff are updated regarding any changes to procedures or areas of particular concern.

## Summary

The whole area of child abuse is a sensitive and difficult issue. The relationships which teachers have with children and parents are based on trust and confidentiality. Such relationships are acknowledged as underpinning the secure, caring environment for growth and learning which schools seek to provide for all children. However, staff must recognise that in order to protect children from abuse, neglect and exploitation, a proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families.

Staff should be aware that more detailed information can be found in the Safeguarding and Child Protection - a guide for schools: DE Circular 2017/04 which can be accessed online at: <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-201704-safeguarding-and-child-protection-schools-guide-schools>

A paper copy is also available in the school office.

## **Remember:**

- ❖ We have a duty to act
- ❖ We are bound by law to act
- ❖ We do not have an investigative role
- ❖ Our responsibility is to report
- ❖ Always speak to Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher.
- ❖ Never leave something until the next day
- ❖ Remember confidentiality is very important
- ❖ The child is always paramount.

## **Monitoring**

This policy will be monitored and reviewed regularly by the Safeguarding and Child Protection team and any changes notified to staff and the Board of Governors. Any significant changes will also be shared with parents as appropriate.

## **Other Policies and Documents linked to this Policy**

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Drug Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- First Aid and the Administration of Medicines Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- On-line Safety Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Relationships and Sexuality Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Supervision of Volunteers and Visitors Policy
- Visitor Code of Conduct
- UICT Policy

## Appendix A

# Definition of Regulated Activity

### DISCLOSURE AND BARRING ARRANGEMENTS

### CHANGES TO PRE-EMPLOYMENT VETTING CHECKS FOR VISITORS WORKING IN SCHOOLS FROM 10 SEPTEMBER 2012 (DENI)

Regulated Activity is defined as unsupervised activity in a limited range of establishments (Specified Places), with the opportunity for contact with children, such as schools and childcare premises including pre-school establishments.

In addition, in order to be regarded as Regulated Activity such unsupervised activity performed at such a specified place must be done regularly. Regularly means carried out by the same person frequently (once a week or more often), or on four or more days in a 30-day period (or in some cases, overnight)

Regulated Activity still excludes family arrangements and personal non-commercial arrangements.



## RECOGNITION OF CHILD ABUSE POSSIBLE INDICATORS

Personal hygiene issues

Constant  
tiredness

**Neglect**

Care concerns  
about hunger,  
clothing,  
supervision

Failure/delay in seeking  
medical attention

## RECOGNITION OF CHILD ABUSE POSSIBLE INDICATORS

Implausible or no explanations for injuries - significant bruising and marking

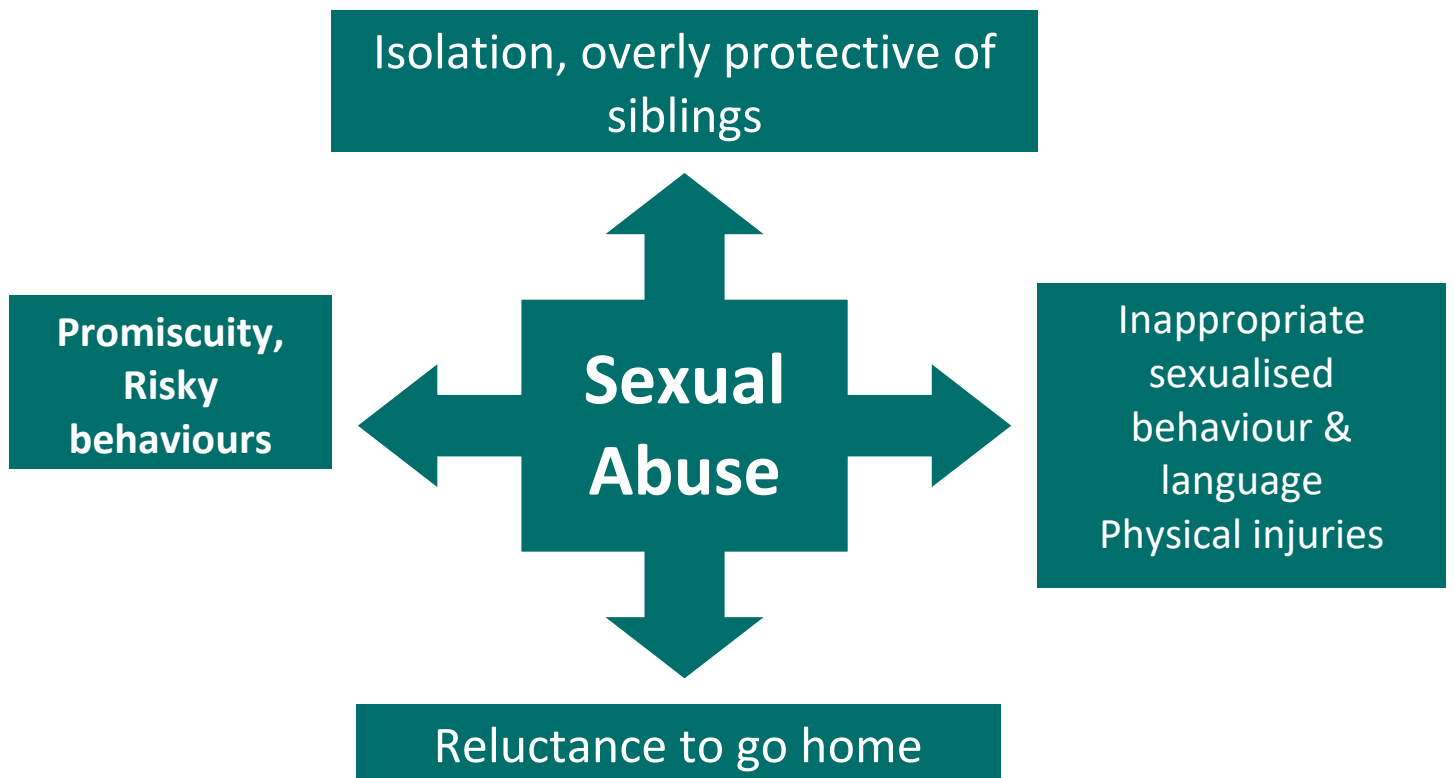
Reluctance to go home

**Physical Abuse**

Fear of physical contact, shrinking back

Self-destructive tendencies  
Risky behaviours

**RECOGNITION OF CHILD ABUSE  
POSSIBLE INDICATORS**



**RECOGNITION OF CHILD ABUSE  
POSSIBLE INDICATORS**



## RECOGNITION OF CHILD ABUSE POSSIBLE INDICATORS



**LEADHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL**



<b>Date:</b>	<b>Name of Child/Children:</b>
<b>Recorded by:</b>	
<b>Summary</b>	
<b>Reported to:</b>	
<b>Reporter's Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Action to be taken:</b>	
<b>DT/DDT Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>