

Brownlee Primary School



Child Protection Policy **2020**

**This policy was adopted by the Board of Governors in 2020
It will be reviewed by the Board of Governors in September 2022 or at such
times as new guidance becomes available or relevant legislation is passed.
This policy has been updated in line with current COVID-19 regulations.**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members of Staff -	All teachers- full and part time, classroom assistant(s), secretarial, ancillary and auxiliary staff
D.T. -	Designated teacher for Child protection
D.D.T. -	Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection
B.O.G. -	Board of Governors

There have been significant changes within our school in response to the COVID-19 outbreak and the re-opening of our school to all children. Despite the changes, our school's Child Protection Policy is fundamentally the same: the children in our school always come first. Staff should respond robustly to safeguarding concerns and contact the Designated teacher in line with our established safeguarding procedures.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Safeguarding is more than child protection. Safeguarding begins with promotion and preventative activities which enable children and young people to grow up safely and securely in circumstances where their development and wellbeing is not adversely affected. It includes support to families and early intervention to meet the needs of children and continues through to child protection. Child Protection refers specifically to the activity that is undertaken to protect individual children or young people who are suffering, or are likely to suffer significant harm.

The School's Responsibility

The teaching staff in Brownlee seeks to reinforce the ethos and general aims of the school. It recognises the importance of values and caring attitudes. It aims to contribute to an atmosphere in which all pupils are confident that they are cared for, valued and respected. It endeavours to ensure they receive the guidance and support necessary to reach their full potential.

All members of staff have a responsibility for the day-to-day care of their pupils. If a pupil asks to speak to a member of staff in confidence, he/she should respond positively, but point out that it may be necessary to seek advice before an answer can be given.

If a member of staff, student on placement or volunteer becomes concerned about the welfare of a particular pupil, he/she should consult the designated teacher (D.T.) or if not available, the deputy designated teacher (D.D.T.). If

neither of these members of staff are available, then the Principal should be informed.

Members of staff should also appreciate that, while every effort will be made to keep them informed about pupils for whom they have direct responsibility, there may be occasions when it will not be possible to provide confidential information.

Role of the Principal

The Principal, Mr. Elliott, has overall responsibility for all Safeguarding matters. He has to be satisfied that each concern is being dealt with appropriately. This will mean working closely with the D.T. and the D.D.T. The Principal should ensure that parents and the appropriate agencies are kept informed and consulted. He will inform the Board of Governors of any action taken on behalf of the school except where the concern is about the Principal and then the D.T. takes the lead role. There will be an update on Child Protection matters presented to the Board of Governors at each meeting.

Role of the Designated Teacher

The D.T., Mrs. Wendy-Anne McFarland, has the responsibility of dealing with child protection concerns and she is assisted by the D.D.T., Mrs. Carol Duffy. Mrs. McFarland will ensure that the staff is aware of the procedures to be followed in such cases. She will consult with the teachers individually with regard to including child protection, personal and social development and pastoral care elements within the curriculum.

Reports of child protection concerns will be kept by the D.T. Information recorded will include dates, events and action taken and only the Principal, D.T. and D.D.T. will have access to this in school, however, this information will be made available to Social Services if appropriate. The Designated Teacher will also be responsible for maintaining the hard-backed book detailing any issues relating to members of staff. This will be signed off annually by the Chairman of the Board of Governors, even if there are no such issues during the school year.

Teachers may themselves be in need of support, having discovered signs of abuse, and the D.T. should be aware of this. In the absence of Mrs McFarland, Mrs Carol Duffy will assume responsibility.

Role of the Class Teacher, Members of Staff, Students and Volunteers

The teacher or another adult in the school is probably the first professional person a child in need may choose to speak to. S/he must act with tact and sympathy, without appearing to pry, and certainly without examining the child in any way. S/he must not make any promises of confidentiality to the child, or appear to "take sides".

The teacher must make notes, even roughly, immediately after the chat, and these should be made available to the D.T. (See *“Procedures to follow when there is suspicion of child abuse.”*)

It may be necessary to inform outside agencies of the abuse allegations, and the teacher must be prepared for a formal interview.

In class, it is important to be sensitive to the child and to reassure him/her, without singling him/her out for special attention.

The Role of the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors is regularly kept up to date with Child Protection issues in the school. The Designated Governor is Mrs. Margaret Artt and she is also trained in Child Protection. The Governors will oversee Child Protection procedures if a disclosure is made about a member of the school staff. The members of the Board of Governors are trained annually by the Designated Teacher or the Principal. The Board of Governors is informed of any ongoing Child Protection issues and the number of children on the Child Protection Register at each meeting.

Identifying Signs of Abuse

Children may be abused by a parent, a sibling or other relative, a carer (*i.e. a person who has actual custody of a child such as a foster parent or staff member in a residential home*), an acquaintance or a stranger, who may be an adult or a young person. The abuse may be the result of a deliberate act or a failure on the part of a parent, carer or other with a duty of care towards the child, to act or to provide proper care, or both.

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.

Child in Need of Protection

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.

Types of Abuse

Harm can be suffered by a child or young person by acts of abuse perpetrated upon them by others. Abuse can happen in any family, but children may be more at risk if their parents have problems with drugs, alcohol and mental health, or if they live in a home where domestic abuse happens. Abuse can also occur outside of the family environment. Evidence shows that babies and children with disabilities can be more vulnerable to suffering abuse.

Although the harm from the abuse might take a long time to be recognisable in the child or young person, professionals may be in a position to observe its indicators earlier, for example, in the way that a parent interacts with their child. Effective and ongoing information sharing is key between professionals.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions which have been in place since March 2020, the pressures on children and their families are significant. There will be heightened awareness of family pressures through being contained in a small area, poverty and financial or health anxiety. This may have an impact on the mental health of both parents and children and the resulting behaviour.

Harm from abuse is not always straightforward to identify and a child or young person may experience more than one type of harm or significant harm. Harm can be caused by:

- Physical abuse;
- Sexual abuse;
- Emotional abuse;
- Neglect; and
- Exploitation.

Physical Abuse is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, biting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

Sexual Abuse occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. Sexual abuse may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape, or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via e-technology). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

Emotional abuse may involve deliberately telling a child that they are worthless, or unloved and inadequate. It may include not giving a child 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 is the failure to provide for a child’s basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter that is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child’s health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse.

Exploitation is the intentional ill-treatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over a child or young person; to take selfish or unfair advantage of a child or young person or situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, servitude, engagement in criminal activity, begging, benefit or other financial fraud or child trafficking. It extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

Domestic Violence and Abuse

“Threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former intimate partner or family member.”

Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland A Seven Year Strategy: March 2016

Sexual Violence and Abuse

“Any behaviour (physical, psychological, verbal, virtual /online) perceived to be of a sexual nature which is controlling, coercive, exploitative, harmful, or unwanted that is inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability).”

Please note that coercive, exploitative and harmful behaviour includes taking advantage of an individual’s incapacity to give informed consent.

Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland A Seven Year Strategy: March 2016

Female Genital Mutilation

FGM involves procedures that include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons.

The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious health consequences, both at the time when the mutilation is carried out and in later life.

*Multi-agency Practice Guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation. DFP 2014
FGM Issues*

- It is illegal in the UK to subject a girl or a woman to FGM or to assist a non-UK person to carry out FGM overseas
- FGM is prevalent in 28 African countries as well as in parts of the Middle East and Asia
- It has been estimated that over 20 000 girls under the age of 15 are at high risk of FGM in the UK each year and that 66 000 women in the UK are living with the consequences of FGM (majority of cases of FGM are thought to take place between the ages of 5 and 8 – therefore girls of this age at higher risk)
- FGM constitutes a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls, and has severe short-term and long-term physical and psychological consequences

DFP NI published Multi-Agency Guidelines July 2014

Indicators that FGM is Imminent

- Being a girl aged 5 - 8 within a community where FGM is practised
- Prolonged return to country of origin for summer break – giving sufficient healing time before return to school
- Female elder visiting from a country of origin
- Child may tell other children about it
- A girl may disclose that she is to have a 'special procedure' or attend a special occasion to 'become a woman'
- Parents state that they or a relative will take the child out of the country for a prolonged period.

Self-Harm and Suicide

"It is most helpful to consider self-harm as a continuum, ranging from behaviour which has a strong suicidal intent (for example, some kinds of overdose) to behaviour which is non-life threatening (such as cutting, banging, scratching and deliberately damaging parts of the body)"

Paraphrase from John Coleman 2004

Why Do Young People Self Harm

- To release tension caused by anxiety, grief or anger.
- As a means of communication, to tell themselves and others that they need help.
- To feel as though they have control over something in their lives.
- To make 'real' emotional pain they are unable to express.

PROCEDURES STAFF WILL FOLLOW WHEN THERE IS A SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE

School staff are probably the first professionals to notice a change in a child's physical or mental demeanour. These changes may be part of a child's normal development or they may be signs of child abuse. The child may actually disclose facts of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, which may have happened in the home or elsewhere. The abuse may have taken place at school involving a colleague.

When a member of staff has child protection concerns, he/she has a legal and professional obligation to report the fears or suspicions to the D.T., D.D.T. or the principal. The D.T., D.D.T. or principal will then liaise with Social Services and seek advice as to how to proceed. If necessary, the police will be informed. These procedures are standard where there are child protection concerns and are instigated to protect the child.

In order to give all staff confidence in handling the difficult situations, here are some guidelines to follow.

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse to a member of staff, he/she.....

- will not agree to keep it a secret,
- will tell the child that they want to help them and may need to tell someone else,
- will not ask leading questions,
- will not suggest a reason for what might have happened,
- will reassure the child that they have done the right thing in talking about it,
- will speak to the D.T., D.D.T or principal
- (See flowchart - appendix 1)

Immediately after disclosure or suspicion of abuse:

1. Write down your concerns or make a note of the words spoken, and also note the behaviour of the child including when and where disclosure took place.
2. Report immediately to the D.T., D.D.T. and /or Principal, making a note of when and where this took place. (Should it happen that the D.T., D.D.T. and Principal are all unavailable, the member of staff dealing with the issue should seek advice immediately from a Designated Officer for Child Protection, Education Authority on 028 90566900).
3. Provide the original report of the words spoken by the child and this will be filed in the child's child protection file.
4. The D.T., D.D.T or the Principal will make the decision to complete a UNOCINI referral form if appropriate. There should be no delay in making a referral and advice should be sought from the Education Authority and / or Social Services.

ADDITIONAL CHILD PROTECTION RELATED PROCEDURES

Police Checks

Adults working with pupils in school or in the after-school club will be checked using the appropriate ACCESS NI vetting form. These will be updated on an annual basis as appropriate and guidance from the Education Authority will be followed.

Photographs and Videos

All parents will be asked to give permission at the beginning of the school year for photographs to be taken of their children and displayed. These will include press articles, photographs for the school display boards and the school website. Teachers will receive a list of pupils in their class who are not allowed to have their photographs used and the relevant context. A copy of the complete list will be displayed in the school's reception office for reference purposes. The school is also aware that with smartphone technology, it is now impossible to monitor the photographing and videoing of children at school events. Staff however will be vigilant for any activity that they may feel is inappropriate. The school will also have a current Mobile Phone Policy for staff and visitors.

School Visits

On all school visits, whether they be to the swimming pool or on an educational residential trip, the correct adult / pupil ratio will be observed. A risk assessment will be carried out for all school visits in line with current COVID-19 regulations. A

copy of the relevant risk assessments will be sent to parents, signed by the Chairman of the Board of Governors and filed for future reference.

Transportation

If pupils are being transported by coach, the company must be recommended by the Education Authority or a reputable travel agent if outside Northern Ireland. All coaches must have fitted seatbelts installed and these will be worn at all times by the children while travelling.

If children are travelling in a teacher's car or the vehicle of another member of staff or parent e.g. to a football match or inter-school quiz, then an individual booster seat must be provided by parents if their child is below the necessary height restriction. Staff should also have appropriate insurance to cover the transportation of children however this is unlikely to take place during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Intimate Care

Very occasionally a child has an "accident" of an intimate nature while at school. If it is a minor accident, the child is given fresh underwear and changes in a toilet cubicle. When a more serious incident happens we try to contact home so that a parent can come and change their child themselves or take him / her home if the child is upset or unwell. If that is not possible the child will be changed by two teachers or classroom assistants as part of our duty to care. Parents will be informed of any such action at the earliest convenience. In such circumstances, appropriate PPE should be worn by staff. (*See Intimate Care Policy*)

Sanitary protection is available from Mrs. Duffy should it be required by any of the senior girls. A disposal bin and designated cubicle is located in the Girls' toilets.

Changing for PE

During the current COVID-19 pandemic, all pupils from primary one through to primary seven will wear suitable PE clothing to school on the days that PE is due to take place in each class. This is to eliminate the need for a class to change clothing in toilets.

Individual Meetings with Children

There may be times during the school day when a teacher or member of staff has to meet with a child on a one to one basis. This may occur during the delivery of some additional support, individual counselling or when discussing a confidential matter. On these occasions it is important that the meeting takes place in clear view of the outside corridor to ensure that other adults passing by can see the member of staff with the child. There are glass panels in the doors of all offices and classrooms, with many of the rooms also having internal glass windows. It is best practice for a member of staff to inform another adult that a meeting with a child is going to take place, especially if this consultation is not

part of a normal timetabled session. Many areas within the school also have CCTV cameras and the footage is recorded and stored for several weeks at a time. Staff should try, where possible, to maintain social distancing from children outside their class bubble.

Injury or Illness

If a child takes ill or is injured at school, they will be dealt with by a member of staff on duty or the class teacher. Parents will be contacted if the child has received a cut or bump to the head. They will be asked to collect the child if it is felt that they need outpatient treatment or would be better at home. Staff will wear suitable PPE during the administration of any first aid treatment.

Accident Report Forms

Should an accident occur to a child an 'accident report slip' will be completed and sent home. This slip will record details of the incident and how it was treated. For more serious falls or injuries that occur in school, there is a formal accident report form that will be completed by staff and signed by the Principal.

Supervision

It is important that children are supervised in the playground and throughout the school at all times. Children who are being asked to work independently or delivering a message for a teacher must behave in a manner expected in the school's Positive Behaviour Policy.

At the end of After School Activities, the teacher in charge of the activity will ensure that all children have been collected and leave the school in an appropriate manner. If children are not collected and an agreed time period has elapsed then responsibility falls on the Principal or in his absence, the vice-principal or a senior teacher who is deputising. Parents will be contacted and informed that their child has not been collected and the child will be placed into the care of the after school club. No one member of staff, including the Principal, can be left alone with a child after school.

Signing in / out

Staff and any visitors to the school sign in and out of the school building using the electronic system. This provides a physical record of who is in the building at a particular date and time. Visitors to the school will be given a lanyard at reception for identification. This electronic record will form part of the school's track and trace records.

Arriving at School

Each morning parents should drop their children off as quickly as possible to avoid traffic congestion. Children should be dropped off at the entrance assigned to their class at the appropriate time.

The inside of the school is a sterile area and only adults with appointments or a prior arrangement can be admitted.

Leaving School

At collection times parents should wait outside the appropriate exit door of the school until the teachers escort the children out. If a child has an appointment and has to be collected early, parents must contact reception to arrange this. A member of staff will then collect the child from the classroom.

On Line Safety

It is important to highlight the challenges to child protection which have been brought about by the mass use of the internet. Children will be educated in the safe usage of online resources and websites and an Acceptable Use of the Internet policy is in place throughout the school. Staff and parents will also be informed of risks involving the internet and social media through staff training, parent talks and presentations on the school website.

Mobile Phones

The school operates an agreed Mobile Phone policy. Mobile phones should not be used by pupils on school premises and must be kept switched off until the school day ends. Should your child need to make an emergency phone call, using his/her mobile, he/she must obtain permission from a senior member of staff. If you need to contact your child, please phone the school office.

Sources of Advice

Designated Officer for Child Protection 028 90566200
Education Authority South Eastern Region
Grahamsbridge Road
Dundonald
Belfast
BT16 2HS

Mrs Joan Brolly Principal Social Worker 028 92665181
Lisburn Health Centre
Linenhall Street
Lisburn
BT28 1LU

Mr David McCauley Senior Education Welfare Officer 02892 683111

Dunmurry High School
Lisburn

Mrs Roz Richardson Educational Psychologist 028 90566911

Ms Jill Megarry School Nurse 028 92665181
Health Centre
Linenhall Street
Lisburn
BT28 1LU

Mr Tommy Stewart (Army Welfare) 028 92604055

Mrs Sylvia Lynn (Army Welfare) 028 92266878

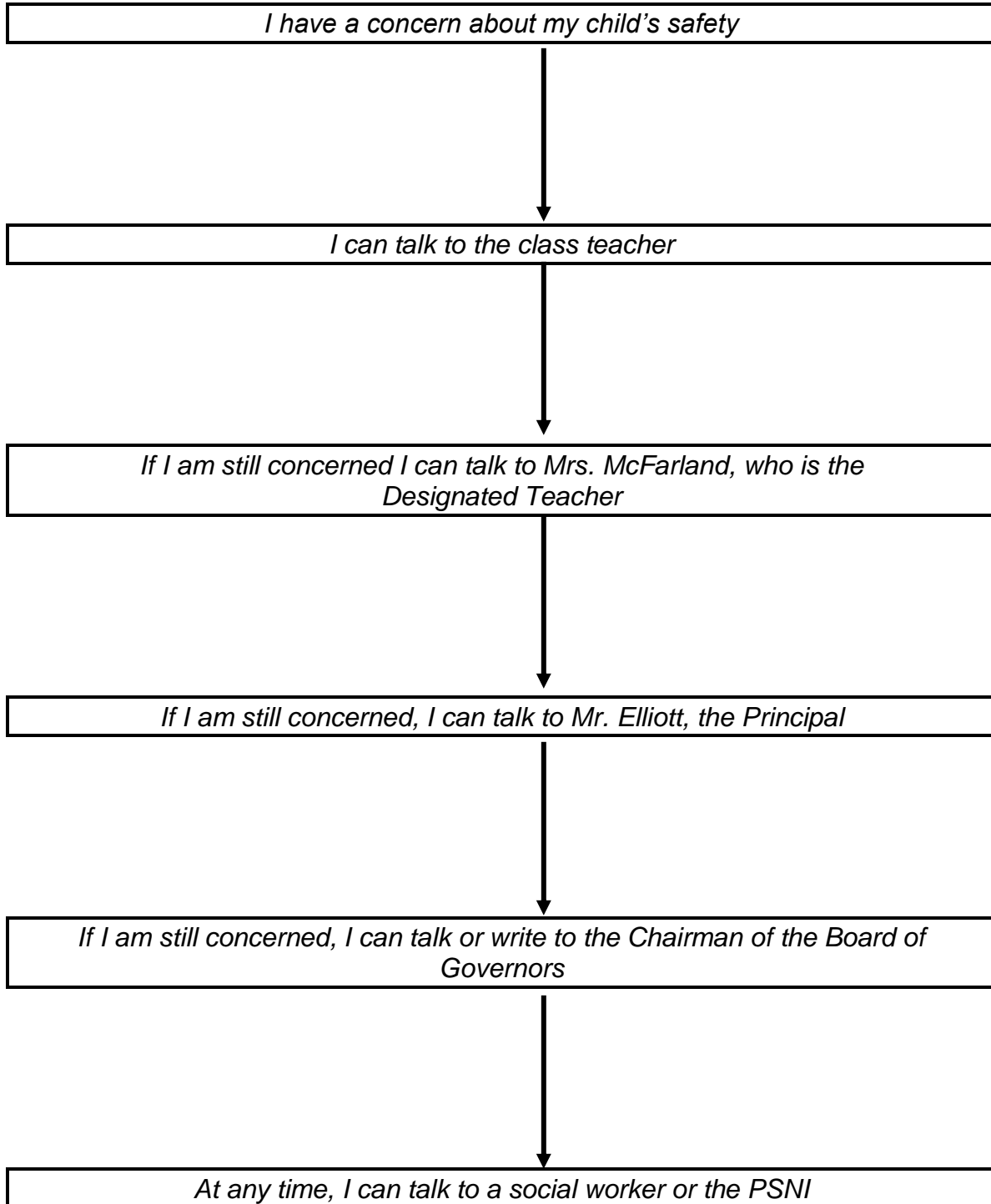
PSNI 101

Teachers' Union ATL, NASUWT, UTU, NAHT

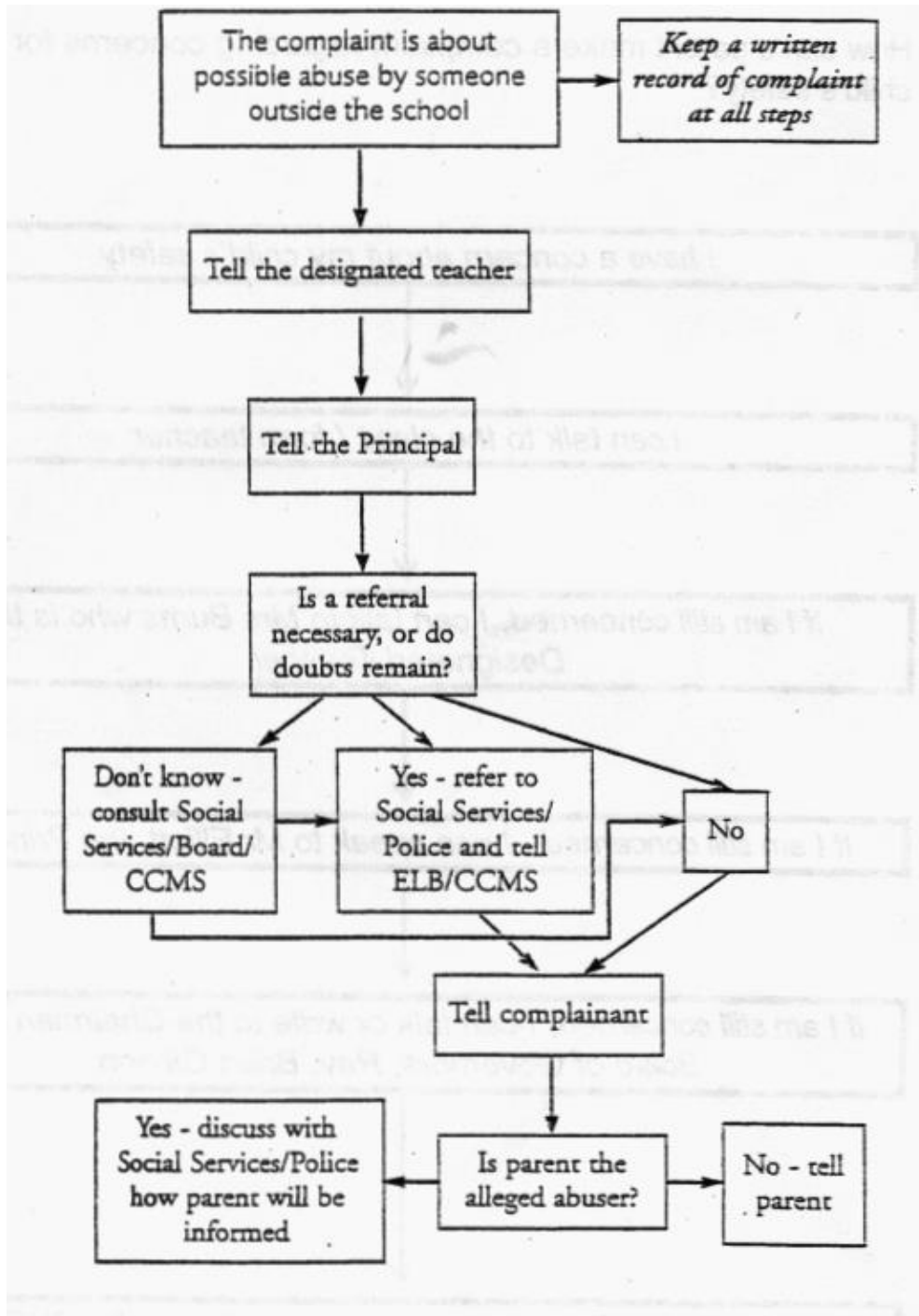
A Short Guide to Regional Policy and Procedures, Area Child Protection Committees

Appendix 1 - The following procedures illustrate how concerns relating to Child Protection are dealt with in the school:

How can a parent make a complaint regarding concerns for their child's safety?



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



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

