



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Information for Parents

Updated November 2020

Gateway Team for

Southern Trust

028 3756 7100

Regional Emergency Social Work Service

028 9504 9999

PSNI Central Referral Unit

02890259299

Or Call 101 extension 30299

Rathfriland High School

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THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

In keeping with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991 and the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, we in Rathfriland High School place a high priority on the health and welfare of our pupils.

Our well established Pastoral System, with its emphasis on communication and co-operation between class teacher and Year Tutor, and the subsequent links to Senior Management and Principal, is designed to ensure that the general welfare of our pupils is embedded in, and central to, the school's ethos.

Whilst most of our Pastoral work centres on educational attainment, attendance and minor disciplinary issues, occasionally teachers, Tutors or Senior Management are required to deal with instances of, or suspicions about, possible safeguarding concerns.

This summary of the policy is designed to ensure that everyone is aware of the relevant literature, procedures and current practice and that any such matters, when they do arise, can be handled in a sensitive and effective manner.

A copy of the complete policy can be downloaded from the school website or obtained from the school office.

CHILD PROTECTION

THE AIMS OF THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

- To seek to provide a safe, pleasant and regulated environment for all children.
- To ensure the safety and welfare of pupils.
- To foster a caring atmosphere where pupils feel valued and able to voice their concerns.
- To develop an awareness amongst all school staff of potential signs of abuse in children.
- To establish clear procedures to be followed in a case of suspected abuse.
- To comply with relevant legal requirements and implement relevant DE guidance.

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER

In accordance with DENI Circular 1997/4 'Designated Teacher - Rules and Responsibilities', one of the senior staff shall act as Designated Teacher for this school and have responsibility for "activating the co-ordination arrangements by notifying the local Social Services office and a designated officer of the Education Authority in the event of a case, or a suspected case, of child abuse coming to light within the School".

In the absence of the Designated Teacher, these responsibilities will be carried out by another member of the Safeguarding Team.

Designated Teacher: Mrs R Chalmers

Deputy Designated Teachers:

Mr D Barron

Mr P Robinson

Safeguarding Governor: Mrs McCartan

THE ROLE OF THE PUPIL

Pupils are encouraged to discuss any concerns they might have on any issue with one of the Senior Teachers, the Principal, the Vice Principal, Tutor or any teacher to whom they can relate with ease.

THE ROLE OF STAFF

In addition to in-service training, all teachers have a responsibility to make themselves aware of the school policy and procedures and other relevant documentation.

REFERRAL PROCEDURES WITHIN THE SCHOOL

Any member of staff who has suspicions of possible abuse in any form, or who has been confided in by an individual pupil, should complete a Note of Concern and report to the Vice Principal as Designated Teacher for the school. No promise of confidentiality should be given where abuse is alleged.

The Designated Teacher may seek further advice and or information from the Principal, appropriate Year Tutor and where it is thought to be appropriate, may also meet with the pupil concerned.

Depending on individual circumstances, the Designated Teacher will, if there is reason for concern and in consultation with the Principal, contact Child Protection Support Services for Schools at the EA, Social Services or PSNI as appropriate.

During the process of referral, the teacher concerned and the Designated Teacher should keep appropriate notes and times of information and contacts with the pupil concerned, signed and dated.

In all cases of suspected child abuse, the action to be taken by the school is that of informing Social Services and the EA. The school or any member of staff must not be involved in investigating the suspected abuse.