**St.Anthony's Nursery School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Governors and staff of St Anthony’s Nursery School fully recognise the responsibility and contribution it makes to safeguarding the children in our care. We recognise that all staff, including volunteers, have a full and active role in protecting our pupils from harm.

All staff and Governors believe that our school should provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment which promotes the emotional, social, physical and moral development of the individual child. We aim to create and maintain an ethos which contributes to the care, safety and well being of the children in our care.

This policy is informed by the guidance and procedures set out by DE Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection (1999) and the Area Child Protection Committees (ACPC) Regional Policy and Procedures (2005).

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 states that “*the welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration”* in all decisions concerning the child.This is also reflected in Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child *– “the best interests of the child shall be of primary consideration.”* The ‘paramountcy’ of the child principle underpins our Child Protection policy and procedures.

Our policy applies to all staff, governors, students and volunteers working in the school. The purpose of the procedures set out in this policy is to safeguard and protect our pupils by ensuring that every adult who works in our school – teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers – has clear guidance on the action which is required where abuse or neglect of a child is suspected. The issue of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in our school, and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence.

There are five main elements to our policy:

1. Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop
2. Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
3. Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children
4. Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
5. Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan

**THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM AT ST ANTHONY’S NURSERY SCHOOL**

Chair of Governors: **Mr** **John Byrne**

Designated Governor for Child Protection Governance: ***Mr Owen Fisher***

Principal**: Mrs Marie-Claire Ilroy**

Designated Teacher for Child Protection: **Mrs Marie-Claire McIlroy**

Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection  **Mrs Roisin Gamble**

**WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?**

(A child is a person under the age of 18 years as defined in the Children Order)

"Child abuse occurs in families from all social classes and cultures and in communities, agencies and organisations. Abusers come from all walks of life and all occupations and professions. " -(DE Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools- A guide for schools-Jan 2018)

Child abuse can manifest in a number of ways and can involve a combination of forms of abuse.

A child in need of protection is a child who is at risk, or likely to suffer significant harm which can be attributed to a person, persons or organization, either by **an act of** **commission** or **omission or a child who has suffered or is suffering significant harm**

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.’ (SCPS, 2018)

**Types of Abuse**

Child abuse may take a number of forms including

**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.

**Physical Abuse** – is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the wilful neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, biting, pinching, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour. (SCPS, 2018)

Possible signs or symptoms of physical abuse include:

* Unexplained bruises (in places difficult to mark)
* Human bite marks, welts or bald spots
* Unexplained lacerations, fractions or abrasions
* Untreated injuries
* Self-destructive tendencies
* Chronic runaway
* Fear of going home

**Emotional Abuse** – is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse It can cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that he is worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as he meets the needs of another person. 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. It may involve causing a child frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child. Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose a child to emotional abuse. (SCPS, 2018)

Possible signs or symptoms of emotional abuse include:

* Bullying of others
* Change in personality from outgoing to withdrawn
* Difficulty in forming / maintaining relationships with others
* Depression
* Signs of mutilation
* Attention seeking
* Chronic runaway
* Wetting and soiling
* Sudden speech disorders
* Low self-esteem

**Sexual Abuse** – occurs when others use and exploit children sexually for their own gratification or gain or the gratification of others. It involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration- rape, or oral sex: or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children to look at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate way 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 (SCPS, 2018)

Possible signs or symptoms of sexual abuse include:

* Bruised or sore genitals
* Genital infection
* Difficulty in walking or sitting
* Inappropriate sexualised language or behaviour
* Low self-esteem
* Chronic depression
* Substance abuse
* Personality changes
* Fear of going home

**Neglect** – is 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 care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision. It may also include non-organic failure to thrive. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of neglect include:

* Poor hygiene
* Constant hunger/cramming food
* Inadequate / inappropriate clothing
* Constant tiredness
* Exposed to danger / lack of adequate supervision
* Untreated illness
* Lack of peer relationships
* Compulsive stealing / begging

**Exploitation- i**s 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.

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.

**Bullying**

The Addressing Bullying In Schools Act NI 2016 gives as the definition of bullying

1. Bullying includes (but is not limited to) the repeated use of

a. any verbal, written or electronic communication

b. any other act, or

c. any combination of these

By a pupil or a group of pupils against another pupil or group of pupils, with the intention of causing physical or emotional harm to that pupil or group of pupils

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in St. Anthony’s Nursery School.

Our anti- bullying policy is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

Staff are vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring, and will take immediate steps to stop it happening to protect and reassure the victim and to discipline the bully. Parents of both the bully and the victim will be personally contacted when bullying has been identified.

Any complaints by a parent that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be fully investigated by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection, Mrs Marie-Claire McIlroy and team action will be taken to protect the victim. This will usually include ensuring that another child or a group of small children befriends and supports the child being bullied during the school day. A parent making a complaint about bullying will have a personal response from the DT within one week of making the complaint, indicating the investigation which has been carried out and the action taken.

The sanctions taken against a pupil who bullies will depend on the seriousness of the case, but will include the loss of privileges in the school. His/her behaviour will be carefully monitored until staff are satisfied that the problem has stopped. If a pupil’s bullying behaviour persists, the second stage will be to instigate the child protection procedures.

**Specific Types of Abuse**

The DT and DDT will have attended up to date training and will inform staff of the Specific Types Of Abuse- Guidance for staff is available in Section 6-SCPIS Jan 2018.

These include-

Grooming

Child Sexual Exploitation

Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse

Female Genital Mutilation

Forced Marriage

Children who Display Harmful Sexualised Behaviour

E-Safety/ Internet Abuse

**Gender Identity Issues/ Sexual Orientation**

Schools should strive to provide a happy environment where all young people feel safe and secure. All pupils have the right to learn in a safe and secure environment, to be treated with respect and dignity, and not to be treated any less favourably due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

**ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER (DT) AND DEPUTY DESIGNATED TEACHER (DDT)**

Every school is required to have a Designated (DT) and Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT) with responsibility for child protection. These are highly skilled roles developed and supported through a structured training programme, requiring knowledge and professional judgement on complex and emotive issues

The DT s role involves-:

* To provide induction and training to all school staff including support staff
* Being available to discuss safeguarding or child protection concerns of any member of staff
* Responsibility for recordkeeping of all child protection concerns
* Maintaining a current awareness of early intervention supports and other local services eg Family Support Hubs
* Making referrals to Social Services or PSNI Public Protection Units
* Liaising with EA /CCMS Designated Officers for Child Protection
* Keeping the school principal informed
* The lead responsibility for the development and updating of the school’s child protection policy
* Ensures parents receive a copy of the school’s child protection policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made to Social Services and the role of the school regarding this
* Promotion of a safeguarding and child protection ethos in the school
* Written reports to the Board of Governors regarding child protection
* Maintains all records pertaining to child protection in a secure location (accessed only by the Designated Teacher and the School Principal as appropriate)

DDT:

To support and undertake the duties of the Designated Teacher for Child Protection as required and to undertake Designated Teacher Duties in case of the absence of Designated Teacher.

**PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED (OR DISCLOSED) CHILD ABUSE**

**The Designated Teacher for Child Protection (DT)** is **Mrs Marie-Claire McIlroy**

In her absence **the Deputy Designated Teacher for child protection (DDT)**  **Mrs Roisin Gamble** will assume responsibility for child protection. On the rare occasion that neither DT nor DDT is in the school any concerns must be reported to the Designated Governor for Child Protection Mr Owen Fisher and the Child Protection Support Services on

 **02894 482223.**

If a child makes a disclosure to a teacher or other member of staff which gives rise to concerns about possible abuse, or if a member of staff has concerns about a child**, the member of staff must act promptly.**

**She/he should not investigate –** this is a matter for social services – but should report these concerns immediately to the DT, discuss the matter with him/her, make full notes (signing and dating them), and hand the note to the DT.

The DT will discuss the matter with the DDT as a matter of urgency to plan a course of action, and ensure that a written record of decisions is made.

The DT, in consultation with the DDT, will decide whether, in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to social services. **If there are concerns that the child may be at risk of significant harm, the school is obliged to make a referral to social services.** Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parents will be informed immediately.

The DT may seek clarification or advice and consult with The Child Protection Support Service for Schools (CPSSS) - Designated Officer for Child Protection at the EA, or a senior social worker before a referral is made. No decisions to refer a child to social services will be made without full consideration and on appropriate advice. **The safety of the child is our first priority.**

Where there are concerns about possible abuse, the DT will ring The EA Child Protection Support Services on **02894 482223** and seek advice.

If advised to then the DT will contact the **Gateway** team on **0300 1234 333** and raise their concern to a social worker. If advised to by the Child Protection Support Services at the NEELB social services and/or CCMS’s Designated Officer for Child Protection for guidance.

**Please see figure 1 - 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**

**Complaint against a member of Staff - How a parent/ guardian can make a complaint**

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or the DDT if the Principal is unavailable) must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about

the Designated Teacher/the Principal). The Chair of Board of Governors will be informed immediately. Where the matter is referred to social services the member of staff may be removed from duties involving direct contact with pupils, and may be suspended from duty as a precautionary measure pending investigations by social services. This decision will be made by CCMS /Board Of Governors.

 **How a parent/ guardian can make a complaint**

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against the Principal, the DDT must be informed immediately. She will inform the Chairperson of the Board of Governors and together they will take appropriate advice and ensure the necessary action is taken.

If any member of staff feels unsure about what to do if he/she has concerns about a child, or unsure about being able to recognise signs or symptoms of possible child abuse, he/she should talk with the DT.

It should be noted that the 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 informed.**

**Figure 1 - Procedures where a parent/ guardian has a potential child protection concern**

I have a concern about my/ a child’s safety

I can talk to the class teacher

If I am still concerned I can talk to the Designated/Deputy Designated Teacher for child protection **Mrs Marie-Claire McIlroy & Mrs Roisin Gamble**

**Mrs R. Gamble**

If I am still concerned I can talk or write to the Board of Governors member responsible for Child Protection**- Mr Owen Fisher**

**o**

If I am still concerned I can contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman

Tel 0800 343 424

At any time I can talk to the local Children's Services Gateway Team or the PSNI Central Referral Unit at 028 9025 9299

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

(Pastoral Care in Schools CHILD PROTECTION 1999)

All staff and volunteers are aware of and have received a copy of our Code of Conduct. The Code is informed by guidance from DE.

The code of conduct is known to all staff – permanent and non-permanent and to volunteers. It reflects the safeguarding ethos of the school and is as follows;

* In all circumstances we will use our professional judgement and follow good practice and guidance
* We will not make any inappropriate physical contact with our pupils but we will provide reassurance involving physical comforting if a child is distressed or upset, provided the child is happy with such contact
* We will come into physical contact with our pupils while helping them with toileting, washing them and changing their clothes. While doing so we will be aware of the child’s dignity and as far as possible his/her needs will be dealt with in a room with visual access
* Staff will not change a child who has clearly indicated that he/she is not fully comfortable for staff to do so. The child’s parents will be contacted in such incidents
* We will come into physical contact with our pupils in teaching and learning situations
* Students and volunteers working in the school will contact a member of staff if a child is distressed or needs to be changed
* We will not respond physically to misbehaviour unless we have to safely handle a child who is;
1. In danger of causing injury to him/herself or another
2. Causing damage to property
3. Behaving in a way that will prevent the maintenance of good order and discipline during teaching time or otherwise
* We will always be aware of how we behave and speak so that we do not intimidate or bully intentionally or unintentionally the pupils in our care.

In addition staff are required to sign up to the Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers in Schools (Annex C- SCPIS 2018)

In addition staff are asked to complete a Relationships With Students Outside of Work Declaration (Appendix 1- SCPIS 2018)

A record of any complaints made against staff will be recorded and this record book shall be signed off annually by the Board Of Governors Child Protection

Governor Mr John Byrne

**Parental/ Guardian responsibility**

**School Collections/ Informing School**

Parents/ guardians must ensure that any additional family members, friends or child minders that are involved in dropping off or collecting children from school are named on the school permission form- The Collection From Nursery Form.

Parents/ guardians are informed that these persons must not be under the age of 16.

Parents/ guardians are required to give the names and numbers of four responsible adults who may collect the child in the case of first contact not being available or in the case of an emergency- in the Emergency Contact Information Form

 If there are any last minute changes to arrangements, parents/ guardians must ring the school to inform the staff of the name of the person that will now be collecting their child.

If this call is not made, the school must ring the child’s parent to confirm that they give consent for their child to be collected by a person other than is listed on the permission form. This procedure is in place to ensure the safeguarding of all children attending the nursery school.

Parent/ guardians are required to complete a **Parental Responsibility/ Court Orders Form.**

Parents are required to complete a Parental Responsibility Form indicating parental responsibility for adults who live with or do not live with the child.

**Accident/ Medical**

Parents/guardians are required to sign an **Accident Procedures Form** in the case of a **minor** accident- giving consent to an ice pack, compress, plaster being applied.

Parents/ guardians are required to give consent in the case of a **major** accident where a child has to go to hospital by ambulance.

Parents/ Guardians are asked to provide all medical information and names/ types of agencies- eg SLT/ OT/ Ed Psych/ ASD Paediatrics etc who are involved with the child. This information will be held confidentially and is only known to those who need the information

Staff are not in a position to give medication during the Nursery day and only medication that is absolutely necessary and part of long term treatment can be administered. Where this is necessary parents/ guardians will be asked to complete a **Medication Permission Form.** Parents/ guardians are required to keep staff up to date with their child's medical needs and to ensure medicines are provided and remain in date.

Parents/ guardians are required to sign their child out/in of school if they are being removed/ returned within the Nursery day

The Nursery shall phone home no later than the third day of a child's unexplained absence

Staff will avail of all required training- eg Anaphylaxis, First Aid and all training will be updated as required.

Where a child has a medical condition or need your child's teacher will work closely with you and a Medicines Care Plan will be completed. Any medication required will be kept safely out of children's reach but easily accessible by staff. Care Plans will be visible in Staff Room and classrooms. Adequate information will be provided to sub teachers.

The Nursery operates a NUT FREE ZONE.

**Parental/Guardian Presentation**

In St Anthony’s Nursery School the safety of the child is our first priority.

If staff are concerned that a parent has brought their child/ collected their child from school in an impaired state, (for example, under the influence of drugs or alcohol) the school will request that a family member accompanies the parent/guardian and child home. A meeting with the Designated Teacher for Child Protection/ school Principal will be arranged to discuss the matter and safeguarding measures may to put into practice.

We aim to build up a relationship of partnership with our parents/ guardians and on occasion it may be necessary to require a Parent/ Guardian to accompany their own child on an educational visit or trip for reasons of Health and Safety. The role of the parent/ guardian will be explained to that parent and all parents/ guardians accompanying a school trip will be asked to read and sign to a Parent/ Guardian Code of Conduct on Trips. We encourage our parents/ guardians to join us where possible on educational trips or outings.

**RECRUITMENT,VETTING AND INDUCTION OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS PROCEDURES**

St Anthony’s Nursery School vetting processes are compliant with practice advised in DE circulars 2013/01 (UPDATED Sept 2015) Copies of these circulars are available on the DE website: [www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk/)

Vetting checks are a key preventative measure in preventing unsuitable individuals access to children and vulnerable adults through the education system and schools must ensure that all persons on school property are vetted, inducted and supervised as appropriate.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups NI Order 2007 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 202 provide the legislative framework for a vetting and barring scheme for people who work with children and vulnerable adults.

The responsibilities and processes to be followed are clearly set out in DE Circular 2012/19

**ACCESS NI CLEARANCE**

The following group must have an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate (EDC) from Access NI before taking up post

 All new **paid** teaching and non-teaching staff

**VOLUNTEERS**

There are two types of volunteers working in schools- those who work unsupervised and those who work under supervision

Volunteers who work unsupervised are required to have an EDC. A volunteer who works under supervision is not required to obtain an EDC, However school must determine whether the level of supervision meets the statutory standard- see DE circular 2012/19

Schools must ensure that volunteers eg coaches, music and sports coaches have the necessary clearances in place.

**Visitors to Schools**

Visitors to schools, such as parent/guardians, suppliers of goods and services, to carry out maintenance etc do not routinely need to be vetted before being allowed onto school premises. However such visitors should be managed by school staff and their access to areas and movement within the school should be restricted as needs require.

Visitors should be

* Met/ directed by school staff/ representatives
* Signed in and out of the school by staff
* Given restricted access, if appropriate to only specific areas of the school
* Where possible, be escorted by a staff member
* Be clearly identified by contractor/ visitor passes
* If delivering goods or carrying out building/ maintenance work their work should be cordoned off from pupils for health and safety reasons

**Pupils on Work Experience**

Health and Social Care programmes will require an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate for pupils on long term placement and may be required for pupils on work experience. The Nursery will only accept Work Experience and Placement students who have had Access NI clearance. This is usually done through their School or College and placements cannot begin until these are in place.

The Nursery has a policy of a months trial for a placement and Students are obliged to sign a Code Of Conduct.

**RECORD KEEPING IN SCHOOLS**

**Process**

School staff are aware of the need to record and report child protection concerns. It is essential that an accurate record of all cases of child abuse, or possible abuse, is maintained detailing all actions taken. Circular 2016/20 provides a framework for managing child protection records in order to ensure that schools create and retain reliable records to demonstrate accountability for decisions and actions taken.

The school should ensure that:

School staff are aware of the need to record and report child protection issues and the appropriate procedures to be followed. The importance of confidentiality should be highlighted.

The Child Protection files are held in a separate, secure, confidential filing system, ideally in a fireproof cabinet. This is only accessible to the Designated Teacher, Deputy Designated Teacher or the Principal.

Files must not be removed from school premises except when taken to a case planning meeting or on foot of a court order. A record should be kept of when information is removed, by whom, for what purpose, and when it is returned.

If information is held electronically, whether on a laptop or portable memory device all must be encrypted and appropriately password-protected.

**THE PREVENTATIVE CURRICULUM**

In St Anthony’s Nursery School we recognise that the school plays a significant part in the prevention of harm of our pupils by providing pupils with good lines of communication with trusted adults and an ethos of protection.

The school community will therefore:

* Establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and learn about their emotions and are listened to
* Ensure that all children know to tell the adults in school if they are sad, upset or worried through our How Do You Feel Today wall chart and Circle Time.
* Include in the curriculum opportunities for Personal and Social Development which equip children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and to whom they should turn for help if the need arises.
* In St Anthony’s Nursery School we teach children to respect their own and their peers privacy while toileting and we role model and explain appropriate contact with their peers during play interactions.

**The following Policies run parallel with our Child Protection Policy**

**Intimate Care Policy**

**Health And Safety Policy**

**Confidentiality**

**Multi Media Policy**

**Positive Behaviour Policy**

**Educational Trips Policy**

**Anti Bullying Policy**

For the purposes of PHOTOGRAPHY OR RECORDED IMAGES OF CHILDREN all parents/guardians are required to sign their consent to their child's photograph being displayed in school, on our website, in any school publication, to be published in any newspapers, to appear in any outside broadcast or video recording or used for promotional purposes eg Open Night

The use of mobile phones to record sound or take photographs without the express knowledge and permission of the Principal is not allowed. In the event of eg Christmas concert- where permission is granted- parents/ guardians are advised that they are not permitted to share photos of other people's children on social media without the consent of those parents/guardians. Parents/ guardians will sign to acknowledge that they have been made aware of this policy. Failure to comply will be reported to the Board of Governors, CCMS and PSNI if necessary.

Parents/ guardians are advised that staff are unable to be’ friends’ with current parents/ guardians on social media without the express permission of the Principal in extenuating circumstances eg family member. Parents/ guardians should be aware that staff are legally required to report any concerns that they may become aware of to the Designated/ Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection

**REVIEWING OUR CHID PROTECTION POLICY –** The Policy will be reviewed each year. Staff and Governors will be made aware of any changes. The Chair of the Board of Governors will sign and date the policy accordingly.

**GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS/STUDENTS**

Volunteers/students have an important and beneficial role to play in supporting the work of teachers and other support staff in St Anthony’s Nursery School and in contributing, by their efforts and initiative, to the life of the school.

It is essential however, that appropriate steps are taken, through screening and selection arrangements, to ensure that children are not placed at risk through allowing the unsupervised and unmanaged access of unsuitable adults to the school.

**Who is a Volunteer?**

A volunteer is an individual who, subject to the satisfactory procedures below, either

1. Assumes unpaid duties in a school on a regular basis on more than two occasions or
2. Is engaged by the school to accompany or assist in school visits or trips; residential activities or to undertake coaching in sports activities.

Formal arrangements as to selection and vetting should not be required for volunteers who are involved outside school hours and who do not have unsupervised contact with pupils. These would include fund raisers, people using school premises for meetings etc.

**Who is a Student?**

A student is an individual on placement from an education setting, who must work in the school to attain a qualification or as part of a work experience scheme.

**Use of Volunteers/ Students**

There are three main categories into which the use of volunteers/students might be grouped and to which guidance will apply:

* During school hours involving direct contact with Pupils
* Outside school hours involving direct contact with pupils
* During school hours but not usually involving direct contact with Pupils

**Recruiting and Selecting Volunteers/Students**

The school may on occasion canvass for volunteers/students or people may come forward to offer assistance at their own initiative. It is more likely that local Secondary Schools and Regional Collages students may apply for a work experience or placement. In many cases potential volunteers may already be known to the school. Others may come forward from the local community. Engagement of volunteers/students is only

undertaken with agreement of the Board of Governors.

**Initial Appraisal**

As a minimum requirement all potential volunteers are asked to provide the following information:

* personal details
* qualifications and previous work with children
* if the individual is a student they must provide the school staff with a placement folder including an indemnity form and police check before they begin to work in the school
* a declaration that they have never been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound-over Order
* a declaration as to whether they have been investigated by Social Services for child protection
* agree to a criminal record being carried out
* provide the name of two referees who are not family members or members of staff in the school
* attend an interview with the school Principal with proof of identity
* Undergo an annual criminal record check through Access NI (via EA)

No individual will be admitted to the school as a volunteer until these steps have been completed and the results assessed.

**Accepting Volunteers/Students**

Where the previous procedures have been followed as appropriate and the school is satisfied that:

* the volunteer/ student is a suitable person to have contact with the children and has the character, skills and experience to support the work of the school in a voluntary capacity;
* well defined and worthwhile activities have been identified for the volunteer/student to undertake and he/she is competent to undertake them;
* the school will notify the individual that he/she has been accepted for voluntary duties in the school.
* School and College Students will be asked to provide a request for a placement from their setting and all necessary paperwork will be handled between the two settings with a named tutor with responsibility for the student.
* All students/ volunteers will be provided with our Child Protection/ Safeguarding Policy and are asked to complete a Confidentiality Agreement.

**The use of Volunteers/ Students**

These are thefundamental principles observed when using volunteers:

* the purpose of the volunteer/student is to assist staff, whether teaching or non-teaching. They are not used as substitutes either to cover activities normally undertaken by paid staff who are absent, or to release such staff to undertake other duties:
* volunteers/students only work under the supervision and guidance of paid staff and these arrangements should be such as to minimise the opportunities for direct, unsupervised, access to children;
* volunteers/students are not placed in a position of sole responsibility for the security of children, premises or equipment;
* volunteers/ students should understand the tasks they are to undertake and receive appropriate training to enable them to perform these;
* volunteers/ students are only allocated duties after consultation and agreement with the teacher or other member of staff with whom the volunteer will be closely involved. Teachers are not to be placed under any pressure to accept a volunteer in their classroom;
* volunteers/students are not afforded access to records or other information relating to staff or pupils. An exception might be made where a child has a medical or other condition of which all those working with the pupil should be made aware, and where agreement of the parent has been sought.

**Volunteers/ Students under the age of 18**

Any volunteer/ student working in St Anthony’s Nursery School under the age of 18 will fall under the umbrella of Child Protection as a minor. Procedures for their wellbeing and safeguarding are the same as for any child attending the Nursery School.

**Health and Safety Insurance**

Volunteers/ students are owed a duty of care under the requirements of Health and Safety Legislation. St Anthony’s Nursery School therefore ensures that volunteers are treated no less favourably than paid employees in terms of St Anthony’s Nursery School’s obligations under the legislation.

**Duration**

St Anthony’s Nursery School places a time limit on the period of the volunteer’s service. This is done where the work earmarked for the volunteer/ student is likely to be completed within a specific period. Where a volunteer’s/ students involvement is likely to be long term, the school advises the volunteer that he/she will be subject to a trial period, during which the Principal monitors the volunteers/ students effectiveness in contributing to the life and work of the school.

**Information and Training**

The school ensures that the volunteer receives such information, guidance, preparation and where necessary, training to enable him/her to perform tasks effectively. As a minimum, volunteers are briefed on:

* the policy of the school and the management authority in relation to pastoral care and child protection, including its behaviour/discipline policy, including rewards and sanctions, and the extent of the volunteer’s authority within it; its child protection procedures
* St Anthony’s Nursery School’s Health and Safety Policy

**School Security**

St Anthony’s Nursery School has drawn on the advice from the guidance Document “Security and Personal Safety in Schools” 1997 to establish arrangements for the admission and supervision of volunteers on school premises. Particular attention is drawn to:

* The volunteer registering at the beginning of each visit

Here in St Anthony’s Nursery School we have a policy of partnership between home and school, but with child abuse, or suspicion of child abuse, our first and only responsibility is to the child.  This may mean that parents/guardians are not informed or consulted in some instances.  We may not be able to prevent child abuse, but with the following child protection procedures, we are trying our best to protect all our children and they are our first and only responsibility

**Code of Conduct for Parents on School Trips.**

Below is the Code of Conduct for Parents on School Trips, which all parents are asked to complete before they can attend School Trips:-

**CODE OF CONDUCT - FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS ON SCHOOL TRIPS**

Thank you for attending as a Parent/Guardian Helper for your child. To ensure the safety, educational value and happiness of all the children and other adults involved, we ask you to read and sign this Code of Conduct for Parents on School Trips.

**DO**:

* Hold the hand of your child while walking to and from the venue
* Keep with the school party at all times
* Ask staff to help if you are having any difficulties
* Talk to your child about the venue and point out things of interest
* Join in with songs and rhymes where possible
* Dress appropriately
* If on a bus, keep your seat belt on at all times
* Stay with the group, and inform a staff member if you need to leave the group

**DON'T**:

* Let the child in your care out of your sight at any time
* Shout at or strike any pupil, including your own child, during the trip
* Smoke at any time in front of the children
* Allow your child to eat until the designated lunch break
* Bring extra food for your child
* Buy sweets/drinks for your own/other children
* Take any other children, other than your own, to the toilet - see a member of staff
* Use cameras or mobile phones to take pictures, make audio or video recordings
* Use swear words or inappropriate language during the school trip
* Attend as a helper volunteer if you are under the influence of alcohol or drugs
* Do not leave the group without informing the class teacher
* Do not attend if under the influence of alcohol, medication or drugs
* Do not attend if you are feeling unwell

Due to Health & Safety and Insurance reasons, we are unable to accommodate siblings on school outings/visits.

At all times the directions of the Principal/ Teacher in Charge should be adhered to.

I agree to follow the Code of Conduct for Parent/ Guardian Helpers on School Trips in St Anthony's Nursery School.

Child/Children’s Name/s: .......................................................................................................

Signed ................................................................ Date .......................................................

**Operation Encompass**

St. Anthony’s Nursery School signed up to Operation Encompass, a joint PSNI and schools programme, in February 2023.

Under Operation Encompass school will be notified by the PSNI if a child is a victim/ witness to domestic abuse overnight. In this way school can be prepared for receiving a child who has had such an experience through the night.

The Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teacher have undertaken Operation Encompass training and any information shared by the PSNI is confidential to DT and DDT.

Policy Date: April 2023 Proposed date for review: April 2024

Signature of Principal: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature Chairperson BOG: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_