

Our School Ethos

We in Our Lady of Lourdes have a responsibility for the Pastoral Care, general welfare and safety of the children in our care and we will carry out this duty by providing a caring, supportive and safe environment, where 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. The Child Protection and Safeguarding 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 procedures of students

If you have a concern you can speak to any member of staff within the school or to the designated persons for Child Protection.

Designated Teacher

Mrs A. Sloan



Principal

Mr S. Smyth



Deputy Designated Teachers



Mrs S. Mullan



Miss R. Wilson



Mr A. Brown



Miss S. Coyles

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING

2025/2026



A guide to the principles and policy of Safeguarding and Child Protection. For the full document please see the school website.

Caring, Sharing, Learning together to meet the future

Principles:

Our safeguarding work is underpinned by the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the duties set out in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995. The school's safeguarding and child protection arrangements follow the Department of Education's current statutory guidance, Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools – A Guide for Schools, issued under Circular 2017/04 and updated in September 2024, which replaces the earlier Pastoral Care in Schools – Child Protection (DENI Circular 1999/10). Our procedures also align with the regional framework provided through the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) Online Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Manual, which supersedes the former Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Policy and Procedures.

The following principles form the basis of our Child Protection / Safeguarding Policy.

- It is a child's right to feel safe at all times, to be heard, listened to and taken seriously.
- We have a pastoral responsibility towards the children in our care and take all reasonable steps to ensure their welfare is safeguarded and their safety is preserved.
- In any incident the child's welfare must be paramount; this overrides all other considerations.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the rights and needs of parents and families; but where there is conflict the child's interest must always come first.

How a parent can make a complaint:



STEP ONE

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

At any time, I can talk to the local Children's Services Gateway Team or the PSNI Central Referral Unit at 02890259299

STEP TWO

I can talk to the Form Tutor/ Head of Year

STEP THREE

If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Principal or the Designated Teacher for Child Protection/Safeguarding

STEP FOUR

If I am still concerned, I can talk/write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors or the Designated Governor for Child Protection/Safeguarding

Types of Abuse:

Physical Abuse - Physical injury to a child, whether deliberately or knowingly not prevented.

Emotional Abuse - Is 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 involved conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in as far as they meet the needs of another person.

Sexual Abuse - Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

Neglect - Is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or physiological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or guardian failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or treatment.

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 of situation, for personal gain. It may manifest itself in many forms such as child labour, slavery, engagement in criminal activity or child trafficking.