Pastoral Care & Child Protection in Brackenagh West P.S.

Since the opening of the school in 1972 there has been a strong and sustained tradition of caring for our pupils in the various stages of their academic, spiritual, personal and social development. By doing so we hope to assist each individual to apply himself/herself fully and confidently to the learning process, and hence acquire the skills, attitudes, concepts and knowledge necessary for a successful and satisfying school and future life.

In particular our staff helps pupils to:

- Feel a sense of worth and dignity
- Experience success and achievement
- Develop their talents to the full
- Assume a sense of responsibility towards themselves and others

The delivery of Pastoral Care in Brackenagh West Primary School is integrated into the curriculum and is the responsibility of all members of staff. Our staff are committed to guide and advise pupils on both a formal and informal basis on personal and educational matters, as we wish to fully support the learning and development of each pupil.

A Child Protection Policy operates in Brackenagh West Primary School. Its aim is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in our school – teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers – has clear guidance on the detection and management of situations 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; and the welfare of each child is our paramount consideration. **In all their contact with pupils, the staff in Brackenagh West Primary School follow the guidelines and procedures described in the DENI publication, 'Pastoral Care in School – Child Protection' (1999).**

The following principles form the basis for our Child Protection activity:

- *children should be listened to and taken seriously*
- *in any incident the child's welfare must always be paramount; this overrides all other considerations*
- *a proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting the needs of parents and families; but where there is conflict the child's interests must always come first*
- *children with disabilities are children first and have equal rights to protection. However, they may have particular needs which require specialist attention*

In particular, the central principle of our staff support is that every child has the fundamental right to be safe from harm and to have proper care given to their physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. **In all cases of suspected child abuse, the action that will be taken in Brackenagh West Primary School is that of informing the Social Services and the SELB. The school will NOT be involved in investigating the suspected abuse. These are the requirements now made of ALL schools by law.**

All of the staff, and any students or volunteers who work in school will have gone through all of the relevant vetting procedures/police checks before being permitted to work with our pupils.

Summary for Parents of steps involved:

Disclosure / Concerns regarding abuse or neglect

⇩

Designated Teacher informed (Mrs M Rea)

⇩

Plan of action agreed; referral decision taken

⇩

No referral – (Parents informed of school's concerns)

⇩

School will continue to monitor pupils as appropriate.

⇩

Referral – Social Services & SELB informed. (Parents informed by School or Social Services)

⇩

School will continue to monitor pupils as appropriate.

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.

How a parent can make a complaint

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 Mrs M Rea (Designated Teacher)

⇩

If I am still concerned I can write to the Chairman of the Board of Governors

At any time, I can talk to the Senior Social Worker,
John Mitchel Place, Newry, BT34 2BU, Tel: (028) 30 834200; or the Police.