

# Ballywalter Primary School



## Child Protection Policy

Reviewed: September 2017

## **Introduction**

This statement of school policy and procedure in Ballywalter Primary School has been compiled with the collaboration and support of the teaching staff and has the approval of the Board of Governors.

The central thrust of the children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, which came into effect on 4 November 1996, is that the welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration.

The School Policy Mission Statement states: “The staff of Ballywalter Primary School will endeavour to promote a safe, stimulating, positive and caring environment for all pupils, teachers and adults involved in the life of the school. Pastoral care will play an integral part in the academic, social, emotional, physical and moral development of our pupils.”

Each teacher is concerned with the personal development and well-being of the individual pupils in his/her class. Pupils are encouraged to develop an awareness of the needs of others, to take responsibility for their own actions and to develop self-respect and self-esteem. We believe that the school is a community within a community and therefore aim to develop good relationships, based on respect, between pupils, staff and parents.

## **The Children Order**

The central thrust of the Children Order is that the welfare of the child must be the paramount consideration, and it is this essential principle which underpins the advice which follows.

- All schools and colleges have a pastoral responsibility towards the children and young people in their charge, and should take all reasonable steps to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded and their safety is preserved;
- Every school should designate a teacher to have a specific responsibility for child protection, and all staff, teaching and non-teaching, should know who this is;
- There should be clear procedures in place to be followed where the school has been alerted to possible abuse, drawing, as appropriate, on the guidance provided by the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC), the Education and Library Board and CCMS; procedures should provide for a second teacher to assume the responsibilities of the designated teacher in case of absence;
- All staff, teaching and non-teaching, should be aware of the signs of possible abuse and alert to these, and should be aware of the procedures to be followed;
- Where abuse is suspected, the designated teacher should immediately make a referral either to, the social services of the local Health and Social Services Trust or to the Police, and alert the Principal. Where an arrestable offence is suspected, the referral should be to the Police. Controlled schools should also notify the designated officer of the Education and Library Board;
- Any preliminary enquiries should be made carefully and sensitively: it is not the responsibility of the education staff to undertake investigations or to make extensive enquiries of other family members or carers.

- At least one member of the Board of Governors should be Child Protection trained to sit on a selection panel. New Governors need to be vetted.
- All staff, paid or unpaid, in a school need to be vetted.
- Substitute teachers must be on the N.I. Register of Substitute Teachers.

### **Definition of Child Abuse**

“Child abuse occurs when a child is neglected, harmed or not provided with proper care. Children may be abused in many settings, ...by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger. There are different types of abuse and a child may suffer more than one of them.”

*(ACPC Regional Policy and Procedure Ch 2)*

### **Categories of Abuse**

This abuse may take a number of forms including:-

#### **Neglect**

- Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s physical, emotional and/or psychological needs, likely to cause 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 medical care or treatment, lack of stimulation or lack of supervision.
- It may also include non-organic failure to thrive. *(ACPC Regional Child Protection Policy and Procedures)*

#### **Physical Abuse**

- Physical abuse is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the willful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering.
- This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocation, confinement to a room or a cot, or inappropriate giving drugs to control behaviour. *(ACPC Regional Child Protection Policy and Procedures)*

#### **Emotional Abuse**

- Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on a 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 involve causing a child to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of a child.

- Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- Domestic violence, adult mental health problems and parental substance misuse may expose a child to emotional harm. (*ACPC Regional Child Protection Policy and Procedures*)

### **Sexual Abuse**

- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts.
- They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation**

- Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse in which a person(s) exploits, coerces and/or manipulates a child or young person into engaging in some form of sexual activity in return for something the child needs or desires and/or for the gain of the person(s) perpetrating or facilitating the abuse.

**Possible Signs of Abuse:** (*See Appendix 6*)

## **PROCEDURES**

Where a member of staff is concerned that abuse may have occurred, or has been informed that abuse may have occurred, he or she must report this immediately to the designated teacher.

The relationships which teachers, other educational professionals and other staff in the school have, with the children in their charge, is based on trust and, often, on confidentiality: such relationships are an integral feature of a secure, caring environment, which fosters learning and personal development. Staff have, however, a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies. All staff should recognise, therefore, that, in order to protect children from harm, cases may arise where confidentiality must be subordinated to the need to take appropriate action, by involving others, in the child's best interests.

***No promise of confidentiality can or should be given where abuse is alleged.***

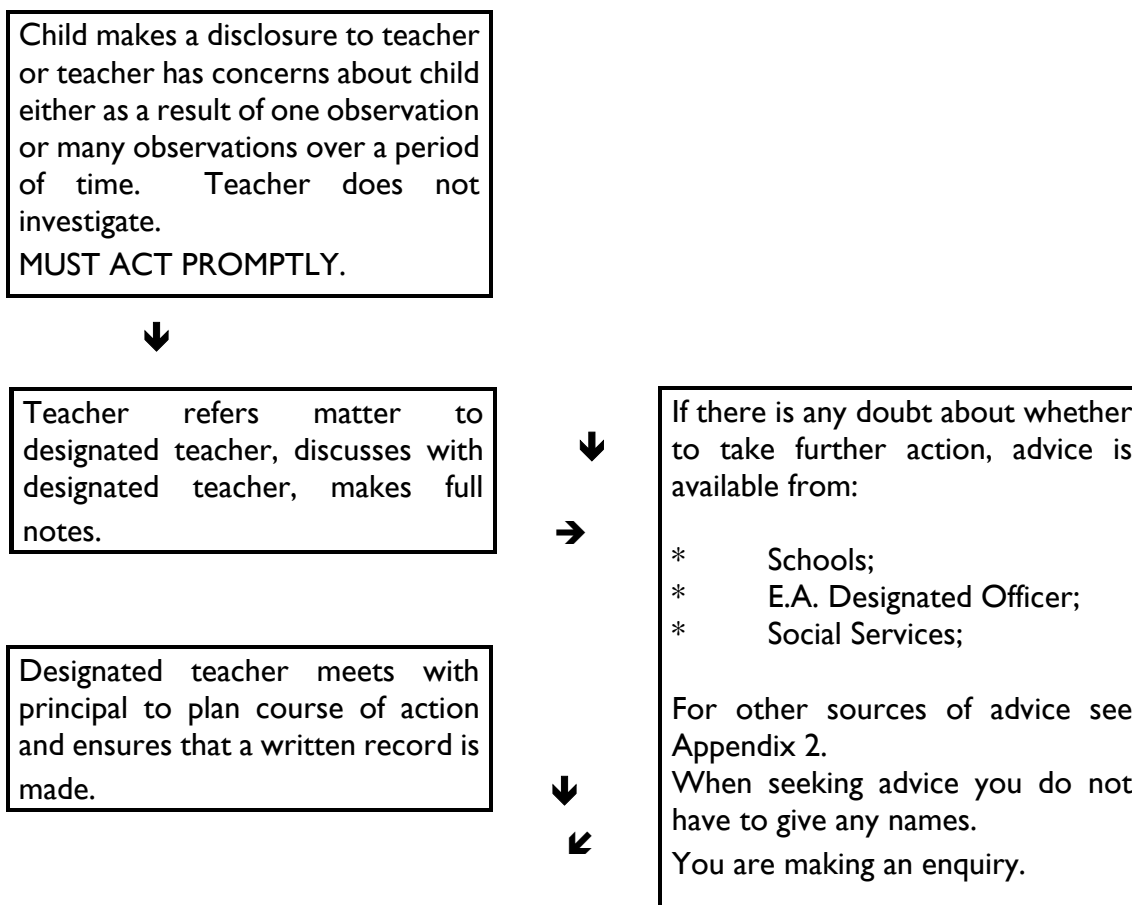
Where teachers see signs, which cause them concern, they should, as a first step, seek some clarification from the child with tact and understanding. Where a classroom assistant or another member of the school's ancillary staff sees such signs, he or she should immediately bring them to the attention of either the class teacher or the designated teacher.

Care must be taken in asking, and interpreting children's responses to, questions about indications of abuse.

- Staff should not ask the child leading questions, as this can later be interpreted as putting ideas into the child's mind;

- They should, therefore, not ask questions which encourage the child to change his or her version of events in any way, or which impose the adult’s own assumptions. For example, staff should say, “Tell me what has happened”, rather than, “Did they do X to you?”;
- The chief task at this stage is to listen to the child, and not to interrupt if he or she is freely recalling significant events, and to make a note of the discussion to pass on to the designated teacher. The note should record the time, date, place and people who were present, as well as what was said. Signs of physical injury observed should be described in detail, or sketched, but under no circumstances should a child’s clothing be removed;
- Any comment by the child, or subsequently by a parent, carer or other adult, about how an injury occurred should be written down as soon as possible afterwards, preferably quoting words actually used;
- Staff should not give the child or young person undertakings of confidentiality, although they can and should, of course, reassure that information will be disclosed only to those professionals who need to know;
- They should also be aware that their note of the discussion may need to be used in any subsequent court proceedings.

## PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING AN INCIDENT OF CHILD ABUSE IN SCHOOL



Designated Teacher makes referral to:

- \* Social Services and Care Unit  
Copy of referral to E.A.'s  
Designated Officer.

**Indicate** that it is a Child Protection issue in an envelope marked 'CONFIDENTIAL'.



**Other Action:**

- \* Record Advice Given;
- \* Monitor;
- \* Review.

**REFERRAL AND THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHER**

The designated teacher is Ms C Stevenson. The deputy designated teacher is Mrs C Craig.

The designated teacher has responsibility for:-

- Ensuring that all teaching and ancillary staff, whether full-time or part-time, or temporary, are aware of the child protection procedures;
- Alerting the principal to a case by providing a copy of the report and discussion;
- Co-ordinating action by staff in cases of suspected child abuse
- The Principal or Designated Teacher will report to the appropriate Social Services Officer and the Board's Designated Officer;
- Ensuring that the Principal, Teachers and the school's Education Welfare Officer are kept aware of children 'Looked After' or on the Child Protection Registrar;

Where the designated teacher is suspected to have abused a child, or such an allegation is made, the member of staff who is made aware of the possible offence should inform the principal immediately, who will instigate the normal reporting procedures. Where the principal is suspected, or an allegation is made against him or her, the matter should be reported to the designated teacher and he or she should report the matter immediately to social services (or as the case may be, to the Police), the Chairperson of the Board of Governors, Mr J Rogers, and, to the designated officer of the Education Authority.

**ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED OFFICER OF THE EDUCATION AUTHORITY**

The Designated Officers for Child Protection are Alison Casey and Colum Boal.  
**(Tel: 028 9056 6434 / 028 9056 6274)**

- Provide advice, guidance and support for designated teachers on the handling of child protection issues.
- Provide training to all relevant staff.
- Provide guidance and advice on risk assessment and case management.
- Assist in dealing with Child Protection complaints against EA Officers.
- Represent EA on a range of Child Protection
- Maintain a register of school's designated teachers.

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL STAFF

The Code of Conduct is intended to assist in respect of the complex issue of child abuse, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on prudent conduct. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust and that their behaviour is above reproach.

### CODE OF CONDUCT

- a) Staff should be aware of the dangers, which may arise from private interviews with individual pupils. It is recognized that there will be occasions when confidential interviews must take place. As far as possible, staff should conduct such interviews in a room with visual access or with the door open. (Open door being preferable).
- b) Where such conditions cannot apply, staff are advised to ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place.
- c) If a child touches you or talks to you in a sexually inappropriate way or place, record what happened and tell the designated teacher. As it could be totally innocent, do not make the child feel like a criminal. However, remember that ignoring this or allowing it to go on may place you in an untenable situation.
- d) If you take children in vehicles always ensure you have parental permission and never take a child alone. If a lone child needs transport always take another adult, preferably of a different sex. On residential visits children should not sleep in a room on their own.
- e) Do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with one child away from other people.
- f) If you are in a residential setting, never, under any circumstances, take a child or children into your room. Be conscious of how your actions in a dormitory or bedroom could be interpreted by children **or** by other adults.
- g) If a child has soiled themselves or requires any form of assistance of an intimate nature, ensure that another teacher/adult is present. In such circumstances an Intimate Care Form should be completed. A copy of this form should be retained by the teacher and another given to the Principal for filing.
- h) Never do something of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves. This includes changing underwear or any type of activity that can be misconstrued.
- i) Do not take a child to the toilet alone if possible.
- j) Be mindful how and where you touch a child. Never pat a child on the bottom and never let a child sit on your lap.
- k) Do not allow extended hugs and kisses on the mouth from children.

- l) When taking children on an outing, think how your actions appear to the public – they may **and do** misinterpret your actions.
- m) If you have to physically restrain a child for any reason, be conscious of the amount of force you use and consider again how your actions may be perceived by others. It is prudent to keep written notes of any incidents.
- n) Never keep suspicions of abuse or inappropriate behaviour by a member of staff to yourself. We all must act professionally and legally if such circumstances arise. If there is an attempted cover-up, you could be implicated in the silence.
- o) Personal cameras including the camera function on a mobile phone or tablet should not be used for any reason while on the school premises or on a school trip.
- p) Mobile phones must not be used to make and receive personal calls, text messages or for any other purpose during working hours. Mobiles should be switched off or placed on silent and kept out of sight of children.

## **GUIDELINES FOR SELF PROTECTION**

In the event of injury to a child, ensure that:

- a) It is recorded and witnessed by another adult;
- b) Records are kept of any false allegations a child makes against you or other staff, eg 'Keep your hands off me', 'don't touch me', 'you pushed me'. As always get the written comments from an adult witness.

## **PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH PUPILS**

- a) As a general rule, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with children.
- b) It is unrealistic and unnecessary, however, to suggest that staff should touch children only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed child, especially a younger child, may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. Staff should not feel inhibited about providing this.
- c) Staff should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that he/she is, or would be, uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm.
- d) Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint.
- e) Staff who have to administer First Aid to a pupil should ensure whenever possible that this done in the presence of other children or another adult. However no member of staff should hesitate to provide First Aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present.



- f) Any physical contact, which would be misinterpreted, by the pupil, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.
- g) Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to his/her line manager.
- h) Staff should be particularly careful when supervising pupils in a residential setting, or in approved out of school activities, where more informal relationships tend to be the usual and where staff may be in proximity to pupils in circumstances very different from the normal school/work environment.
- i) In extreme cases, a teacher might have to restrain a pupil physically to prevent him/her causing injury to himself/herself, to others or to property. In such instances no more than the minimum necessary force should be used.

## **STAFF TRAINING**

Staff Training on Child Protection Policy and Procedures will be carried out annually, by the Designated Teacher, Deputy Designated Teacher or Principal.

## **CURRICULUM**

Through the curriculum, children can also be taught about the risks of different kinds of abuse, and can be equipped with the skills they need to help them to stay safe, by recognizing unwelcome approaches or behaviour and developing the confidence to resist them as far as possible. Teaching children possible ways to prevent or tell about abuse must be done carefully so as not to cause anxiety or upset normal, stable relationships between adults and children. Regular visits from the PSNI also equip the children with information on staying safe.

## **CHANGING FOR P.E.**

It is imperative, in the course of pupils changing for P.E. that teachers pay due regard to-

- The safety of children
- The personal privacy of children

- The implications of the above for their own legal protection

P1 and P2 pupils change for P.E in their own classrooms.

Classes from P3 – P7 in the main building – Girls will change in the toilets and boy will change in the classroom or vice versa, with the door open. The teacher will go from classroom to toilets supervising each group of children.

Classes from P3 – P7 in mobiles – boys will change in the cloakroom and girls will change in the classroom or vice versa.

## **TOILETING & INTIMATE CARE**

The children coming into P1 should be fully capable of looking after themselves, with regards to toileting. If not, parents will be asked to take appropriate measures during the day e.g. come into school.

As part of our 'ongoing routines' we will continue to remind the children re flushing of toilet, washing of hands etc.

If 'accidents' occur, the teacher will stand outside the main door to the toilets. Dry items of clothing, plus a plastic bag (for wet items) will be passed over the door, and the child will be left to sort himself out. Wet items will be sent home for washing. The parent will be informed and requested to return the borrowed items of clothing when laundered.

The parent will be called if there is heavier soiling, or vomiting, to sort the child out, either within school or at home.

For older girls we should continue to have a senior female teacher, to whom they may go, if needed --  
- either for a chat or for items of female hygiene.

The teacher will complete an Intimate Care Form if a child has had a toileting accident or needs clothes changed.

## **USE OF CHILD PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO RECORDING**

Children's photographs/images have been used in the past, in a number of ways:

- Photographs of children are regularly taken in school, on school trips, in sports/music groups, during school productions and on other special occasions. Many of these photographs are used in school publications, e.g. school prospectus (no names are used) and weekly bulletins
- Occasionally local newspapers come to school to photograph the children making charity presentations or on other special occasions. These are then published in the particular newspaper. Children's names usually accompany the photograph
- From time to time TV companies will request if they can come to film some particular item of interest
- The school web site or social media platform may have photographs of children (no names are used in conjunction with photos.)

All parents will be required to complete a form granting permission for their child's photograph/image to be used in any of the above way.

## **APPENDICES**

Child Protection Initial Concern Form	Appendix 1
Child Protection follow Up Form	Appendix 2
Intimate Care Record Form	Appendix 3
Volunteer Helpers – Child Protection Legislation to Parents	Appendix 4
Voluntary Help Registration Form	Appendix 5
Possible Signs of Abuse	Appendix 6
Index of suspicion of sexual abuse	Appendix 7

C.P. Policy and Procedures – amended November 2017



**Ballywalter Primary School**  
**Child Protection - Initial Concern Form**

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of initial concern: \_\_\_\_\_  
Concern raised by: \_\_\_\_\_

**Brief details of concern:**

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**Action taken with relevant dates:**

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**Ballywalter Primary School**  
**Child Protection – Follow Up Form**

**Child's Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Details of development; further action taken; relevant dates:**

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**Ballywalter Primary School - Intimate Care Form**

To be completed each time a child requires his / her clothing changed due to an incident of wetting / soiling / vomiting. These books are centrally stored.

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Date		Child's Name		Year Group		Name of Parent Contacted		Tel. No.		Time																																																									
Staff Name & Signature						2nd Signature																																																													
Child Collected by										Time																																																									
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								<b>Ballywalter Primary School</b> <b>Tel: 02842 758486</b>		<b>REPORT SLIP No.</b> <b>000184</b>																																																									

Education Authority - South Eastern Region  
**BALLYWALTER PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Principal: C Craig B Ed(Hons) PQH (NI)**

**Ballywalter**  
**Telephone: (028) 4275 8486**  
**Fax: (028) 4275 7218**

**e-mail: ccraig758@c2kni.net**



**12 Stump Road**  
**Ballywalter**  
**NEWTOWNARDS**  
**Co Down BT22 2NT**

**Website: [www.ballywalterps.co.uk](http://www.ballywalterps.co.uk)**

**Volunteer Helpers**  
**Child Protection Legislation**

Dear Parents

It has been our policy for some time to encourage parents and friends to help with activities in school. Every school now has to operate under the latest Child Protection policy from the Department of Education. I am sure as parents you will all agree on the crucial importance of safeguarding our children.

All volunteer helpers are required to complete an application form which gives consent to a criminal check and to seeking references from people who have known the volunteer. The form and all subsequent information will be held in total confidence by the school. Should you feel you may wish to assist with any activity / event during the year it would be helpful if you would complete the form now, in advance, so that all relevant checks are in place. Forms may be collected from Mrs Bailie and these will be passed to the Designated Teacher.

While this is an additional layer of administration, the Education Authority is very clear about the need to make certain our young people are safe in school. If you have any queries or would like to discuss the procedure please contact me.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support and to record the sincere appreciation of everyone in the Primary School.

Yours faithfully

C Craig  
Principal



Education Authority - South Eastern Region  
Ballywalter Primary School

Child Protection – Voluntary Helper Registration

Name (IN BLOCK CAPITALS) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship with school: \_\_\_\_\_  
(eg parent / former pupil / etc)

1 Do you have a current driving licence? **Yes /No** Use of a car? **Yes / No**

2 Have you previously been involved in voluntary work involving children and young people?  
**Yes/No**  
If yes, please detail.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3 Have you have any disability which would affect the type of voluntary work you could undertake? **Yes/No**  
If yes, please detail.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4 Please include below any other information which you feel may be relevant.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



5 Please tick your 'area' (areas) of voluntary help.

Preparation of healthy breaks	<input type="checkbox"/>	Class Visits	<input type="checkbox"/>
Swimming	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sports Activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Library (Organise books)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Structured Play (weekly/fortnightly)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supervision Transport	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
		(Please specify) _____	

6 Are you willing and available to be called upon, at short notice, for any of the above?  
**Yes / No**

**REFEREES**

Please give the names and addresses of 2 referees who may be contacted to support your application.

Referees should not be family members or members of School Staff.

1. Name: _____	2. Name: _____
Address: _____	Address: _____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Name: (Please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Possible signs of neglect**

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Emaciation
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems
- Destructive tendencies
- Low self-esteem
- Neurotic behaviour (eg rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)
- No social relationships
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing
- Scavenging for food or clothes

### **Possible signs of physical abuse**

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Untreated injuries
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Flinching at sudden movements
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home
- Fear of medical help
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Aggression towards others
- Chronic running away

### **Possible signs of emotional abuse**

- Physical, mental and emotional development delay or disturbance
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Over-reaction to mistakes
- Sudden speech disorders
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to stressful situations
- Neurotic behaviour (eg rocking, hair-twisting, thumb-sucking)
- Self-mutilation
- Fear of parents being contacted
- Extremes of passivity or aggression

- Drug/solvent abuse
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing
- Scavenging for food or clothes
- Enuresis/encopresis (bedwetting/soiling)

### **Possible signs of child sexual exploitation**

- Acquisition of money, clothes, mobile phone etc without plausible explanation
- Leaving home/care without permission
- Persistently going missing or returning late
- Receiving lots of phone calls/texts prior to leaving
- Agitated/stressed prior to leaving home/care
- Returning distraught/disheveled or under the influence of substances
- Truanting from school
- Inappropriate sexualized behavior for age
- Physical symptoms or infections e.g. bruising, bite marks, sexually transmitted infections
- Concerning use of the internet
- Entering or leaving cares driven by unknown adults or by taxis
- New peer groups
- Significantly older 'boyfriend' of 'girlfriend'
- Increasing secretiveness around behaviours
- Low self-esteem
- Change in personal hygiene (greater attention or less)
- Self harm and other expressions of despair
- Evidence or suspicion of substance misuse

**Index of suspicion of sexual abuse**

Key: Red = high probability of sexual abuse occurring  
 Green = sexual abuse possibly occurring  
 Blue = one hypothesis amongst many

<b>Under 5 years</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>5 – 12 years</b>	<b>Red</b>
	Disclosure		Pregnancy/abortion
	Genital injuries		Disclosure
	VD		Genital injuries
	Vivid details of sexual activity (such as penetration, oral sex, ejaculation)		VD
	Compulsive masturbation (contextually abnormal)		Explicit sexual stories/poems
	Sexual drawings		Exposing themselves
	Sexualised play, with explicit acts		Masturbation in contextually inappropriate fashion
			“Promiscuity”
			Suicide attempts
			Running away
			Alcohol and drug abuse
			Offending /abusing
			Gender identity difficulties
	<b>Green</b>		<b>Green</b>
	Person specific fear		Arson
	Nightmares		Soreness of genitals/bottom
	Chronic genito-urinary infections		Chronic genito/urinary infections
	Soreness of genitals/bottom		Obsessive washing
	Fears of specific situations		Depression
	Fear of being bathed		Bedwetting/enuresis
	Fear of being changed		Anal incontinence/encopresis
	Fear of being put to bed		Anorexia
			Glue sniffing
			Nightmares
			Truancy
			Unexplained large sums of money/gifts
	<b>Blue</b>		<b>Blue</b>
	Developmental regression		Abdominal pains
	Hostile/aggressive behaviour		Developmental regression
	Psychosomatic condition		Peer problems
	HIV		HIV
			School problems
			Psychosomatic conditions

**No list of symptoms can be exhaustive.**

**Also, it must always be remembered that alternative medical, psychological or social explanations may exist for the signs and symptoms described.**