



# **RAINEY ENDOWED SCHOOL**

## **SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Implementation Date – June 2021

Review Date – June 2022

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ BoG

## INTRODUCTION

The Governors and staff of Rainey Endowed School have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the pupils in their charge, and will carry out this duty through the school's pastoral care policy, which aims to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment, valuing individuals for their unique talents and abilities, in which all pupils can learn and develop to their full potential. One way in which we seek to protect our pupils is by helping them learn about the risks of possible abuse, helping them to recognise unwelcome behaviour in others and acquire the confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe.

We recognise that all staff, including volunteers and visitors, have a full and active part in protecting our pupils from harm. All our staff and volunteers have been subject to appropriate background checks and are required to apply a Code of Conduct in their behaviour towards pupils.

The purpose of the following procedures on Child Protection is to protect our pupils by ensuring that everyone who works in the 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 overriding concern of all caring adults must be the care, welfare and safety of the child, and the welfare of each pupil is our paramount consideration. The problem of child abuse will not be ignored by anyone who works in this school, and we know that some forms of child abuse are also a criminal offence.

This policy is informed by the guidance and procedures set out by DE Circular 2017/04 - Principle guidance of child protection in schools.

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.

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

## Rainey Endowed School Safeguarding Team

For more information on our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures please scan the QR code.



**Mr N McClements**  
Principal



**Mr C Simpson**  
Designated Teacher



**Mrs J Quigley**  
Designated Teacher



**Dr L Peggs**  
Deputy Designated  
Teacher



**Dr E Kyle**  
Deputy Designated  
Teacher



**Mr R Henderson**  
Deputy Designated  
Teacher



**RAINEY ENDOWED SCHOOL**  
...A CARING SCHOOL, COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE...

### The Safeguarding and Child Protection Team at Rainey Endowed School

Designated Teachers for Child Protection:

Mr C Simpson & Mrs Quigley

Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection:

Mr R Henderson, Dr Kyle & Dr Peggs

Principal

Mr McClements

Chair of Governors

Mr D Henry

Designated Governors for Child Protection:

Rev J Curry & Mrs C Keatley



## OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES

This policy complements and supports a range of other school policies including:

Behaviour and Discipline	Educational Visits
Intimate Care	MLRP Anti-Bullying
Use of Reasonable Force/Safe Handling	Pastoral Care
Special Educational Needs	Pupil Medication
Mobile Phones/Cameras	E-Safety
Relationships and Sexuality Education	Attendance
MLRP Drugs	Code of Conduct for Staff
Code of Conduct for Pupils	ICT Acceptable Use Policy

## INTIMATE CARE

The management of all pupils with intimate care needs will be carefully planned. Pupils who require intimate care will be treated with respect at all times; their welfare and dignity is of paramount importance and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them. A separate Intimate Care Policy is available in Staff Area.

## WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

A child is a person under the age of 18 years as defined in the Children Order. 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.' (ACPC, 2005)

### Types of Abuse

**Physical Abuse** – is the deliberate physical injury to a child, or the willful neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, confinement to a room or cot, or inappropriately giving drugs to control behaviour. (ACPC, 2005)

Possible signs or symptoms of physical abuse include:

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

**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 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 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. (ACPC, 2005)

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 (e.g. FGM)
- Attention seeking
- Chronic runaway
- Wetting and soiling
- Sudden speech disorders
- Low self-esteem

**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 to look at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. (ACPC, 2005) Possible signs or symptoms of sexual abuse include:

- Bruised or sore genitals
- Genital infection
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Inappropriate or harmful 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** - 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 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
- child trafficking

Exploitation extends to the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation can be sexual in nature.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. **“Co- operating To Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland” (DHSSPS 2016)**

**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.**

### **IDENTIFYING ABUSE**

Teachers and non-teaching staff are particularly well placed to observe outward symptoms of abnormality or change in appearance, behaviour, learning pattern or development. Such symptoms may be due to a variety of causes and these may be identified with some sensitive questioning.

Victims of abuse often display emotional or behavioural difficulties but the signs described above can do no more than give cause for concern - they are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred. More detailed indications of abuse are to be found in the document “Pastoral Care in Schools: Child Protection” with which all teachers should be familiar. Copies are available in Staff Area T.

Members of staff concerned that such abuse has occurred must report this immediately to

#### **The Safeguarding and Child Protection Team at Rainey Endowed School**

Designated Teachers for Child Protection:	Mr C Simpson & Mrs J Qigley
Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection:	Mr R Henderson, Dr E Kyle & Dr L Peggs
Principal	Mr N McClements
Chair of Governors	Mr D Henry
Designated Governors for Child Protection:	Rev J Curry & Mrs C Keatley

Where a child approaches a member of staff to confide in him/her any information likely to lead to suspicion of child abuse, the member of staff must recognise that, in order to protect the child, 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 ever be given where abuse is alleged.

## **BULLYING**

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and is not tolerated in Rainey Endowed School. An agreed, joint MLRP **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. All 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 victim and bully will be personally contacted immediately bullying behaviour is identified.

Any complaint by a parent that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be fully investigated and action will be taken to protect the victim. This will usually include ensuring that another pupil or small group of pupils befriends and supports the pupil being bullied during the school day. A parent making a complaint about bullying will be informed by the school of the investigation which has been carried out and the action being taken.

The sanctions taken against a pupil who bullies will depend on the seriousness of the case, but will include the loss of any privileges or position of responsibility he/she holds in the school. His/her behaviour will be carefully monitored until staff are satisfied that the problem has stopped.

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

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. He/she should not investigate - this is a matter for the Social Services - but should report these concerns immediately to the Designated Teacher, discuss the matter with her, and make full notes.

The Designated Teachers will discuss the matter with the Principal as a matter of urgency to plan a course of action, and ensure that a written record of decisions is made. The Designated Teachers, in consultation with the Principal, will decide whether, in the best interests of the child, the matter needs to be referred to Social Services via a UNOCINI Form. **If there are concerns that the child may be at risk, the school is obliged to make a referral.** Unless there are concerns that a parent may be the possible abuser, the parents will be informed immediately. The Designated Teachers will seek clarification or advice and consult with the Education Authority (Northern Region) Board's Designated Officer for Child Protection or/and the appropriate Gateway Duty Social Worker before a referral is made. No decision to refer a case to Social Services will be made without the fullest consideration and on appropriate advice. **The safety of the child is our first priority.**

Where there are concerns about possible abuse, the Designated Teacher will inform:

- Education Authority (Northern Region) Board's Designated Officer for Child Protection
- Social Services- Gateway

If a complaint about possible child abuse is made against a member of staff, the Principal (or the Designated Teacher, if he is not available) must be informed immediately. The above procedures will apply (unless the complaint is about the Designated Teachers). 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 investigation by Social Services. The Chair of the Board of Governors will be informed immediately.

In accordance with circular 1999/10, if a complaint is made against the Principal, the Designated Teachers (or the Deputy Designated Teachers, if he/she is not available) must be informed immediately. The Chair of the Board of Governors will be informed 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 the signs or symptoms of possible abuse, he/she should speak to the Designated Teachers or the Deputy Designated Teachers.

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.

### **ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED TEACHERS & DEPUTY DESIGNATED TEACHERS**

- Providing training to all school staff including support staff
- Being available to discuss the child protection concerns of any member of staff
- Responsibility for recordkeeping of all child protection concerns
- Making referrals to Social Services or PSNI Public Protection Units
- Liaising with EA Designated Officers for Child Protection
- Keeping the school principal informed
- Responsibility for the development and updating of the school's Child Protection Policy
- Ensuring parents receive a text every year directing them to the Child Protection Policy on the School Web site and they sign a pro forma which confirms that they have read the policy and that they can email the school with any feedback
- Promoting a Child Protection ethos in the school
- Reporting annually to the Board of Governors regarding child protection
- Maintaining all records pertaining to child protection in a secure location (accessed only by the Designated Teachers and the School Principal as appropriate)

### **RAINEY ENDOWED SCHOOL'S VETTING PROCEDURES**

The school's vetting processes are compliant with practice advised in DE circulars 2006/6, 2006/07, 2006/08, 2006/09, 2008/03, 2012/19 and 2013/01. Copies of these circulars are available on the DE website: [www.deni.gov.uk](http://www.deni.gov.uk)

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL STAFF**

The school's Code of Conduct for Members of Staff in their Behaviour towards Pupils (Appendix 1) should be known to all staff – permanent and non-permanent and volunteers and reflects the safeguarding ethos of the school.

### **THE PREVENTATIVE CURRICULUM**

The staff of Rainey Endowed School recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. School may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour



maybe challenging or they may be withdrawn. Rainey Endowed School will endeavour to support the pupils who are exposed to risk of harm through supporting such pupils in accordance with his/her agreed protection plan.

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, supportive friends and an ethos of protections. Support for all pupils in the school in developing skills in self-protection and developing confidence will be afforded as follows:

- The content of the curriculum, particularly Personal Development, which equips children with the skills they need to stay safe from harm and which they should turn to for help if the need arises.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment giving pupils a sense of being valued, where they are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- Ensure that all children know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as Social Services, Education Welfare Service, Educational Psychology, School Counsellor, PSNI and the school nurse.

### **PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

Our policy on physical restraint by staff is set out in a separate policy, **Use of Reasonable Force**, in accordance with DE guidelines. It acknowledges that staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another person.

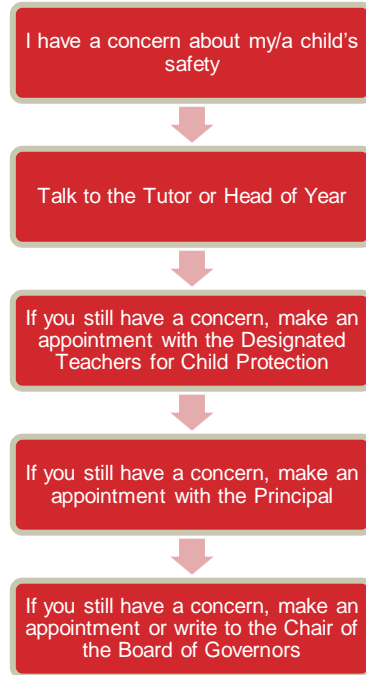
### **THE INTERNET AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES**

The School's online policy (incorporates the Internet, Digital Technologies and ICT Acceptable Use Policy) are clearly set out and are informed by DE guidance. It acknowledges the opportunities for learning as well as the risks attached to the internet and digital technologies. Specifically, it addresses safeguarding issues that may arise in the use of the internet and digital technologies.

## **RAINEY ENDOWED SCHOOL**

### **CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES TO BE USED BY PARENTS**

Parents who have a concern about their child's or another child's safety at school and who wish to make a complaint may use the following procedure:



At anytime, you can contact the Family Support and Intervention Team (028 8675 8877), or the PSNI (0845 600 8000).

In the event of a complaint being made, the Designated Teachers, Principal or Chair of the Board of Governors will contact the complainant within one week of the complaint being made to report on the progress of the investigation.

## RAINEY ENDOWED SCHOOL

### CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES FOR PUPILS

- If you have something important to talk to a member of staff about
- If you are worried about something that is happening to you, or to someone you know
- If you need help, or if you need to know how to get help the staff are here to listen and to help - they will try to do what they can.
- If you are worried about telling things in confidence
  - tell the staff - they will understand. If they are concerned about your safety, they may need to share this with others, but they will always tell you first.
- If you are still unsure about talking to a member of staff, you can telephone ChildLine on 0800 1111 NSPCC on 0800 800 500

These calls are free and they will not show up on your phone bill. They will help you work out what to do next.

The Designated Teachers for Child Protection are Mr C Simpson & Mrs J Quigley.

The Deputy Designated Teachers for Child Protection are Mr R Henderson, Dr E Kyle & Dr L Peggs .

Child Protection Guidelines are provided in the school's Student Planner for pupils at the Rainey Endowed School. This includes phone numbers for both Childline and the NSPCC

### **CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES TO BE USED BY RAINEY ENDOWED STAFF**

Rainey Endowed staff are trained each year on Child Protection and are issued with guidance, copies of which are found on the school's intranet in Staff Area T. If in doubt, please ask any member of the Safeguarding and Child Protection team.

Procedures:

Any allegation by a child that he or she is suffering or has suffered abuse will be treated seriously and will immediately trigger the reporting procedures. Where teachers see signs that cause them concern, they should

1. Seek some discrete preliminary clarification from the child with tact and understanding (Non-teaching staff should immediately bring their concern to a teacher or to the designated/deputy designated teachers).
2. Be aware that the way they ask questions or talk to a child can have an effect on the evidence put forward if there are subsequent criminal proceedings. They should
  - not ask the child leading questions
  - listen carefully and assure the child that he/she is believed
  - not ask the child questions which encourage the child to change his/her version of events or impose the adult's own assumptions
  - listen and not interrupt if the child is recalling events freely
  - inform the designated teachers recording time, date, place, people present, what was said and any signs of physical injury.

- under no circumstances remove a child's clothing
- not give the child any promise of confidentiality
- reassure the child that only those who need to know will be informed
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing
- note down any comment(s) made by the child or informant
- be aware that the notes taken may need to be used in subsequent court proceedings

**The safety of the child is the first priority.**

3. Refer the matter to a Designated Teachers, **Mr C Simpson/Mrs J Quigley** or the Deputy Designated Teachers, **Mr R Henderson/Dr E Kyle/ Dr L Peggs**. The Designated Teachers or Deputy Designated Teachers will then inform the Principal.

In all cases where abuse is suspected, or where an allegation has been made by a pupil or third party that abuse has taken place, or where serious concerns exist about a child's welfare, a referral to the Education Authority Designated Officer for Child Protection, Social Services - Gateway and/or the Police is required.

While discreet preliminary clarification may be sought in order to confirm or allay concerns, it is not the responsibility of teachers or the school to carry out investigations into cases of suspected abuse or to make extensive enquires of members of the child's family or other carers.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**NOTE OF CONCERN**

CHILD PROTECTION RECORD - REPORTS TO DESIGNATED TEACHER

Name of Pupil:

Year Group:

Date, time of incident / disclosure:

Circumstances of incident / disclosure:

Nature and description of concern:

Parties involved, including any witnesses to an event and what was said or done and by whom:

Action taken at the time:

Details of any advice sought, from whom and when:



Any further action taken:

Written report passed to Designated Teacher: Yes ☐ No ☐  
If 'No' state reason:

Date and time of report to the Designated Teacher:

Written note from staff member placed on pupil's Child Protection file If 'No' state reason: ☐

Name of staff member making the report: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Staff Member:

Date:

Signature of Designated Teacher:

Date:

## **Code of Conduct for Members of Staff in their Behaviour towards Pupils**

### **Introduction**

This policy applies to all members of staff including: Board of Governors, teachers, support staff, volunteers, visitors, casual workers, temporary and supply staff and students on teaching placements.

All actions concerning pupils must uphold the best interests of the pupil as a primary consideration. Staff should always remember that they hold a position of trust, and that their behaviour towards the pupils in their charge should be above reproach. This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences pupils gain from positive interaction with staff. It is intended to assist staff in respect of the complex issue of child abuse and protection, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on prudent conduct to achieve the highest possible standards of conduct and minimise the risk of inappropriate conduct occurring.

### **Code of conduct**

#### **1. Private Meetings with Pupils**

- (a) Staff should be aware of the dangers that may arise from private interviews with individual pupils. It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential interviews take place. As far as possible, staff should conduct such interviews in a room with visual access, or with the door open. Staff should manage these situations with regard to the safety of the pupil to themselves
- (b) Where such conditions cannot apply, staff are advised to ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place. It may be necessary to use a sign indicating that the room is in use, but it is not advisable to use signs prohibiting entry to the room.
- (c) Where possible another pupil, or preferably another adult, should be present or nearby during the interview, and the school should take active measures to facilitate this.
- (d) RES Board of Governors does not permit private tutoring for personal gain on school premises.

#### **2. Physical Contact with Pupils**

- (a) As a general principle, staff should not make unnecessary physical contact with their pupils.
- (b) In dealing with a distressed child staff should provide the necessary support appropriate to their professional role.
- (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. (DENI Circular 1999/9, on the use of reasonable force, gives guidance on Article 4 of the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (Power of member of staff to restrain pupils).
- (d) Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint.

- (e) Departments should, in particular circumstances such as use of certain areas like prep rooms, rehearsal rooms and offices, draw up their own guidelines for these circumstances.
- (f) Staff who have to administer first-aid to a pupil should ensure wherever possible that this is 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.
- (g) Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the pupil, parent or other casual observer should be avoided. It must never be secretive, for the gratification of the adult or represent a misuse of authority.
- (h) 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 the designated teacher for Child Protection Procedures or, in their absence, the designated deputy.
- (i) 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 occur and where staff may be in proximity to pupils in circumstances very different from the normal school environment.

### **3. Relationships and Attitudes**

Within the Pastoral Care Policies of the school, staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age, maturity and sex of the pupils. They should take care that their conduct does not give rise to adverse comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly when staff are dealing with adolescent boys and girls.

### **4. Social networking and communication**

The open nature of the internet and social networking means that every member of staff should take active steps to protect themselves and their school by taking simple precautions. The school reserves the right to monitor the use of information systems including internet access, the interception of email, phone calls, documentation and the detection of inappropriate materials where it believes unauthorised use or misuse of the information system has or may be taking place, or the system may be being used for criminal purposes or for the storing of unauthorised or unlawful text, sound, imagery, or any other irregularity. This is carried out primarily to avoid offensive or nuisance material, to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure the effective use of systems.

- Staff should not access social networking sites for personal use during classes.
- Anything that is posted online or sent by text or email is potentially public or permanent even if you subsequently delete posts and emails and if you use privacy settings.
- Never make social network friends with pupils.
- It is advisable that you do not make social network friends with past pupils or parents
- Never send emails or messages that you would not be happy for your employer or colleague to read.
- Do send emails and communications in a professional language.
- Do act in accordance with and follow advice from your professional association or Union.
- If in doubt, do not post the communication!

## **Conclusion**

It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all the circumstances in which staff interrelate with pupils, or where opportunities for their conduct to be misconstrued might occur. In all circumstances, the professional judgement of members of staff will be exercised and for the vast majority of staff this Code of Conduct will serve only to confirm what has always been their practice, acting in the best interests of the pupils and the school. If staff have any doubts about points in this policy, or how they should act in particular circumstances, they should consult the designated teacher for Child Protection Procedures, seek advice from the Principal or a representative of their professional association/Union.

Breach or failure to observe this policy is likely to result in disciplinary action being taken under the school disciplinary procedures, including, but not limited to, dismissal. Staff are responsible for updating their understanding of this policy in line with existing school policy and procedures.

## **GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS**

Volunteers have an important and beneficial role in supporting the work of teachers and other support staff in Rainey Endowed 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.

### **Use of Volunteers**

There are three main categories into which the use of volunteers 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**

The school may canvass for volunteers or people may come forward to offer assistance at their own initiative. In many cases potential volunteers may already be known to the school. Others may come forward from the local community. Engagement of volunteers 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



- 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
- attend an interview with the Principal with proof of identity
- Undergo a criminal record check through Access NI

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

### **Accepting Volunteers**

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

- the volunteer 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 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. The use of Volunteers

These are the fundamental principles observed when using volunteers:

the purpose of the volunteer 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 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 are not placed in a position of sole responsibility for the security of children, premises or equipment
- volunteers should understand the tasks they are to undertake and receive appropriate training to enable them to perform these
- volunteers 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 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

### **Health and Safety Insurance**

Volunteers are owed a duty of care under the requirements of Health and Safety Legislation. Rainey Endowed School therefore ensures that volunteers are treated no less favourably than paid employees in terms of Rainey Endowed Schools' obligations under the legislation.

### **Duration**

Rainey Endowed School places a time limit on the period of the volunteer's service. This is done where the work earmarked for the volunteer is likely to be completed within a specific period. Where a volunteer's 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 volunteer's 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
- Rainey Endowed School's Health and Safety Policy

Arrangements are made for the volunteer to have a formal line of communication to the appropriate Subject Leader, Assistant Principal of Pastoral Care (Mr C Simpson) or Principal (Mr N McClements) for reporting issues of concern or the welfare of the children in the school.

### **School Security**

Rainey Endowed 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
- Providing the volunteer with a readily identifiable name badge or pass giving his/her name and status

The school ensures passes are surrendered at the end of each day and when the volunteers' involvement with the school comes to an end.