SUMMARY OF PROCEDURE WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS CONCERNS, OR HAS BEEN GIVEN INFORMATION ABOUT POSSIBLE ABUSE BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF STAFF

Member of staff completes the Note of Concern on what has been observed or shared and must ACT PROMPTLY. Source of concern is notified that the school will follow up appropriately on the issues raised.

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Staff member discusses concerns with the Designated Teacher or Deputy Designated Teacher in her absence and provides note of concern.

↓

Designated Teacher should consult with the Principal or other relevant staff before deciding upon action to be taken, always taking care to avoid undue delay. If required advice may be sought from advice from the Education Authority's Child Protection Support Service.

↓

The Designated Teacher, where appropriate, seeks consent of the parent/carer and/or the child then telephones the Children's Services Gateway Team and/or the PSNI if a child is at immediate risk

Designated Teacher clarifies/ discusses concern with child/ parent/ carers and decides if a child protection referral is or is not required

Child Protection referral is not required School may consider other options including monitoring the situation within an agreed timescale; signposting or referring the child/parent/ carers to appropriate support services

SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES FOR PARENTS/CARERS WHO WISH TO REFER A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

The guidance below outlines procedures for parents/carers when raising a concern.

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

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I can talk to the Head of Year

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If I am still concerned, I can talk to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection: Miss W Faris or a Deputy Designated Teacher: Mr S Bradshaw, Mr G Bingham or Mrs E Hill or the Principal: Mrs R Maxwell

↓

If I am still concerned, I can talk/write to the Chair of the Board of Governors, Mr W Reilly

↓

At any time a parent can talk to the local Children's Services Gateway Team or the PSNI Central Referral Unit (cru@psni.police.uk). Telephone number for Gateway Team Referrals (Western HSC Trust): 028 71314090. Out of hours number for Gateway Team Referrals (after 5pm and bank holidays): 028 95049999.

If you have escalated your concern as set out in the above flowchart, and are of the view that it has not been addressed satisfactorily, you may revert to the school's Complaints Policy. This policy culminates in the option for you to contact the NI Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO) who has the legislative power to investigate your complaint.

OMAGH ACADEMY CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

A SUMMARY

SAFEGUARDING TEAM

Chair of Governors:
Mr W Reilly

Principal:
Mrs R Maxwell

Designated Teacher:
Miss W Faris

Deputy Designated Teachers:
Mr S Bradshaw
Mr G Bingham
Mrs E Hill

Designated Governor for Child Protection:
Mr G Young

info@omaghacademy.omagh.ni.sch.uk
Telephone: 028 82 242688

INTRODUCTION

The Child Protection Policy sets out guidance on the action, which is required where abuse or harm to a child is suspected and outlines referral procedures within our school. This leaflet provides a summary of our Child Protection policy. The full policy document is available on request from the school office or can be downloaded from the school website. All adults – teaching staff, support staff and volunteers in Omagh Academy accept that they have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of our pupils. No concern about the welfare of any child will be ignored by staff in Omagh Academy. Children's safety and feeling secure and happy in their environment is of paramount importance.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles form the basis of our Child Protection Policy:

• The child or young person's welfare is paramount;
• The voice of the child or young person should be heard;
• Parents are supported to exercise parental responsibility and families helped stay together.
• Partnership;
• Prevention;
• Responses should be proportionate to the circumstances;
• Protection; and
• Evidence based and informed decision making.

THE SAFEGUARDING TEAM

A Safeguarding Team consisting of the Chair of Governors, the Designated Governor for Child Protection, the Principal, the Designated Teacher and Deputy Designated Teachers is also in place, ensuring that safeguarding procedures are adhered to.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS

The primary responsibility for safeguarding and protection of children rests with parents who should feel confident about raising any concerns they have in relation to their child.

DEFINITION OF HARM

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, defines 'harm' as ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development.

CATEGORIES OF HARM

Harm can be caused by:

- Physical abuse;
- Emotional abuse;
- Sexual abuse;
- Neglect;
- Exploitation;
- Ill treatment of another person or abusive behaviour directed at another person, including domestic abuse.

Harm may result from:
• A single incident;
• A pattern of behaviour over time; or
• Acts of omission, including neglect.

What is Significant Harm?
"Significant harm" is the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention by statutory services. It is determined by comparing:

• The child's health and development with what could reasonably be expected of a similar child.

Factors considered include:
• Severity and impact of the harm;
• Duration and frequency;
• Vulnerability of the child; and,
• Parental capacity to protect.

All staff must:
• recognise signs of harm;
• act promptly on concerns;
• record accurately; and,
• report through appropriate channels.

Remembering at all times:
• the child's welfare is paramount;
• decisions must be child-centred, proportionate, and timely; and,
• early action prevents escalation.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Information given to members of staff about possible child abuse cannot be held "in confidence". In the interests of the child, staff have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals particularly the investigative agencies. In keeping with the principle of confidentiality, the sharing of information with school staff will be on a 'need to know' basis