

POLICIES OF CASTLEROCK COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP

Adopted: June 2013

To be reviewed annually

Our aim in Castlerock Community Playgroup is to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment, ensuring everyone is happy and respected.

The policies included in this pack promote and facilitate an atmosphere of care and respect within all aspects of the group, and it is very important that each family reads them carefully.

CASTLEROCK COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP

Castlerock Community Playgroup has adopted the following policies. They serve to give parent/carers knowledge of the objectives that staff and the organisation believe to be important. They include rules and regulations and we would be pleased therefore if you might take the time to read them. It is hope that in doing so you will get a better understanding of the Group and its role.

CONTENTS:-

Accident Prevention Policy and Procedure
Admission Policy
Accident prevention policy
Anti-Bullying Policy
Arrival and Departure of Children, Parents and Staff Policy
Child Collection Policy
Child Protection Policy and Procedures
Children's Health and Attendance Guidelines
Committees Policy
Complaints Procedure Policy
Confidentiality Policy
Data Protection Policy
Provision of Food and Drink Policy
Discipline and Behaviour Management Policy
Equal Opportunities Policy
E-Safety, Networking and Mobile Phones Policy
Fees and Payment Policy
First Aid Policy
Fundraising Policy
Health and Hygiene – Policy and Practice
Healthy Lifestyles Policy
Medication Policy
Observation Assessment and Record Keeping Policy
Partnership with Parents/Carers Policy
Pastoral Care Policy
Personal Care Policy
Safety – Policy and Practice

Selecting Equipment Toys Policy and Practice
Settling in Playgroup Policy and Practice
Smoking and Substance Misuse Policy
Special Education needs and Disability Policy
Staffing and Employment Policy
Steps to Positive Behaviour
Student Placement Policy
Training and Recruitment Policy
Whistleblowing Policy

ACCIDENT PREVENTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

We believe the best accident prevention is regular risk assessment and adequate supervision in a happy relaxed atmosphere. In order to achieve this we will ensure:

1. The setting and outside play area are secure and children are never left unsupervised.
2. A comprehensive risk assessment of the premises and equipment is carried out annually and a written plan identifies actions to minimise identified risks.
3. Risk assessments are reviewed if there is a significant change in an activity or setting.
4. Daily checks are carried out before each session, appropriate action is taken to minimize or cancel any risks.
5. All visitors are identified and their access to children is controlled as necessary.
6. Heaters, electrical points and leads are adequately guarded.
7. Plugs and leads are checked quarterly. PAT tests carried out annually by qualified persons.
8. Fire doors are never obstructed.
9. Fire drills are held termly.
10. Fire extinguishers are checked annually and staff receive fire training biannually.
11. Fire procedures and exits are displayed clearly and staff are clear on procedures.
12. A register of both children and adults is completed as people arrive so that a complete record of all those present is available in any emergency.

13. Children have no access to the kitchen, cookers or any cupboards storing hazardous materials including matches.
14. Hazardous substances are stored safely in a cupboard inaccessible to children.
15. The layout and space ratios allow children and children to move safely and freely between activities.
16. Broken equipment is removed, recorded and disposed of appropriately.
17. Equipment offered to children is developmentally appropriate, recognising that materials suitable for older children may pose a risk to younger/ less mature children.
18. Large equipment is erected with care and checked regularly.
19. Activities such as cooking, woodwork, energetic play receive close and constant supervision.
20. Playdough and sand are changed regularly.
21. Soft furnishings and textiles are fire retardant and comply with BSEN standards.
22. Children are encouraged to walk in the playroom.
23. Adults handbags are out of reach of children during session.
24. When lifting heavy objects staff are encouraged to bend knees, keep their backs straight and ask for assistance when necessary.
25. Staff are provided with a step ladder.
26. Warm drinks/ fluids are kept in kitchen.
27. All adults in group both staff and visitors will be aware of and respect the groups safety policies.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)	
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____	
Role in Playgroup _____	Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)	

ADMISSIONS POLICY

It is our intention to make the Playgroup accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community. In order to accomplish this, we will ensure that:

- 1 The existence of the Playgroup is widely known in the local community and surrounding area.
- 2 We allocate PEAG places per year according to the criteria set by NEELB and Castlerock Community Playgroup.
- 3 Depending on the number of places available, children will be accepted as they turn three until all places are occupied.
- 4 A place will be kept available, if this is financially viable, to accommodate emergency, special needs and disability admissions.
- 5 We describe the Playgroup and its practices in terms which make it clear that it welcomes fathers and mothers, other relations and other carers, including childminders and people from all cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups with and without disabilities.
- 6 Monitor the gender and ethnic background of children joining the group to ensure that no accidental discrimination is taking place.
- 7 Make our Equal Opportunities widely known.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)	
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____	
Role in Playgroup _____	Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)	

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

What is Bullying?

Bullying is not always easy to define as it can take many forms and can be either short or long term. It has been defined as '*the wilful conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone,*' (Tattum and Herbert 2000).

Statement of Intent

Castlerock Community Playgroup is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all children and their families, so that they can learn through play in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable.

Links With Other Policies

Anti-Bullying Policy is set in the context of pastoral care and has links with the other policies in this pack.

Preventing Bullying By Means Of Good Practice:

- 1 Encourage a whole group approach to prevent bullying;
- 2 Provide safe, secure and happy environment;
- 3 Promote positive behaviour;
- 4 Work in partnership with parents;
- 5 Encourage respect among children;
- 6 Encourage respect for equipment and resources;
- 7 Ensuring that awareness is raised through staff training;
- 8 Explain boundaries within setting;
- 9 Promote co-operative group work;
- 10 Promote and implement the 'Respecting Difference' curriculum.

Types of Bullying

1 **Verbal bullying**

This is the most common type of bullying and it includes teasing, name calling, taunts and threats.

2 **Non-Verbal bullying**

Non-verbal forms of communication include gesture (a clenched fist), body language and facial expressions.

3 **Physical bullying**

Can range over a wide continuum of severity, ranging from a push, pinch or some form of physical assault.

4 Exclusion bullying

This can be heard in phrases such as, “you’re not playing with us” or “you’re not coming to my party”. To be left out of the social group can be hurtful for young children.

5 Extortion bullying

This may appear to be a strong word but it includes forcing someone to hand over play materials or valuables.

6 Hiding things

Young children are sensitive about their possessions and become upset if their precious items regularly go missing.

7 Spoiling things

Knocking over someone’s work or destroying a game can be very distressing.

Possible signs of being bullied

- 1 Unwillingness to go to Playgroup.
- 2 Visible signs of anxiety when entering certain situations.
- 3 Loss of concentration and enthusiasm when taking part in activities.
- 4 Becoming upset for no obvious reason.
- 5 Complaining about being unwell.
- 6 Reverting to soiling.

This is not an exhaustive list and these signs and behaviours could indicate other problems but bullying should be considered.

Procedures for dealing with bullying

To discourage bullying we will ensure that staff are aware of signs of bullying and a consistent approach is used, following our:

STEPS TO POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

- 1 Bullying is tackled through the curriculum, eg circle time, role play and co-operative play in order to develop social skills.
- 2 Staff create opportunities for caring and sharing.
- 3 Staff monitor and evaluate the situation.
- 4 Staff work in partnership with parents.
- 5 Support is offered to both, the child who is being bullied and to the child who is bullying through building the self-esteem of both children.
- 6 Staff follow appropriate procedures for recording incidents.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)

Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____

Role in

Playgroup _____ Signature _____

Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE OF CHILDREN, PARENTS AND STAFF POLICY

The building will be unlocked at the beginning of the day at 8.30am and all doors will be secured from 9.15 am and no unauthorised access until 11.30 am. During this time any visitors will be seen by caretaker or a member of staff.

On arrival, parents are asked to wait in the lobby with their child until a member of staff opens the Playgroup session at 9.00 am.

There is also a disabled access available and if a parent/carer requires this then they should talk to the Leader in order to make the necessary arrangements.

One member of staff will be in charge of the door at opening time to ensure that no children leave the building. Staff will greet the children, who will come in and put their name on the registration tree. The daily register will be taken by 9.30 am.

The names of staff and rota helpers will also be entered in the register. Children or adults who leave early will be marked off the register as they leave, along with the time at which they leave. This will enable the Playgroup Leader to know how many adults and children are in the building should an emergency arise.

Any visitors will be marked in and out on the signing-in sheet.

At the end of the session 11.30 am, a member of staff will open the door and remain at the door and a member of staff will remain on the mat to ensure that children do not run out. The child will be called to take their name off the registration tree and then go out to their parent/carer. Once a parent/carer has greeted a child, the child's safety becomes their responsibility.

Parents must inform the Playgroup Leader should anybody other than usual be collecting their child. In an emergency parents/carers should telephone the Playgroup and a note will be made in the diary by staff.

If a person who is unknown to the Playgroup arrives to collect a child, with no prior information having been given by the parents, staff will attempt to contact parents to establish whether the child should be permitted to leave with that person.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)	
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____	
Role in Playgroup _____	Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____	by _____ (Chairperson)

CHILD COLLECTION POLICY

It is Castlerock Community Playgroup's aim that the following be strictly adhered to:

- 1 Children must be collected from the Playgroup by a parent/guardian or designated responsible adult ie over 18 years old (by prior arrangement between a parent/guardian and Playgroup staff).
- 2 When collecting the child adults should ensure a member of staff is aware they are removing the child from the premises.
- 3 If the named person is unable to collect your child, the Leader of the Playgroup should be informed of the change.
- 4 Where custody of a child is granted to one parent, we ask that you clarify the circumstances with the Leader in writing.
- 5 Once a child has been collected they become the responsibility of the adult collecting even whilst remaining on Playgroup premises.

Late collection of children

Two members of staff will remain at the Playgroup with any child who has not been collected.

We will make every attempt to contact the parents and all emergency contacts until the child has been collected.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____
Role in _____ Playgroup _____ Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)

SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Statement of Intent

It is the policy of Castlerock Community Playgroup to believe that the welfare of every child is paramount, therefore, every child has the right to be free from abuse and neglect, and where any suspicion of abuse or neglect is suspected, prompt appropriate action will be taken. We will create an environment in which children feel safe and secure, and in a setting in which they are listened to and believed.

Procedures

- 1 Exclude known abusers.
- 2 It will be made clear to the applicants for posts within the Playgroup provision that all staff are vetted using the Department of Health and Social Services through Access NI and all staff members are aware of the new arrangement, known as the Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS). Access NI will process all applications for Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) and this will be central to the new arrangements, which will fully replace those established under POCVA from July 2010. Once registered, staff members will receive a unique ISA registration number.
- 3 All applicants for employment within the Playgroup, whether paid or voluntary, will be interviewed before appointed to take up employment and asked to provide two references. All such referees will be followed up, subject to application. In the case of applicants with unexplained gaps in their employment history or those who have moved rapidly from one job to another, then explanations will have to be sought.
- 4 All applicants, paid or voluntary, will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless the Playgroup is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with all children.
- 5 Students, trainees, parents and staff members will be vetted prior to commencement of work through Social Services procedures.

The Playgroup will seek training opportunities for all adults involved in the group to ensure that they recognise the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional or sexual abuse.

THE DESIGNATED OFFICER: Is responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of children, act as a source of advise on Safeguarding issues and for co-ordinating action within the Organisation and liaising with Social Services.

- It is their role to ensure the Organisations Safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented and followed.
- Advise on Safeguarding training needs.
- Ensure records are maintained in locked file.

Procedures for responding to suspicions of abuse or neglect:

- 1 If any member, student or volunteer has any concerns about an individual child within the Playgroup, this should be reported to the designated Staff Safeguarding Officer or Committee Safeguarding Officer.
- 2 Following the raising of concern, observations will be made and records will be kept on the individual child.
- 3 These records will include initials of the child, address and age of the child, time and date of observation, a factual description of the child's appearances, behaviour, the exact words spoken by the child (if any applicable) and the signature of the recorder.
- 4 Ongoing observations will be carried out where there is a general concern regarding a child. These observations will be kept separate from standard children's progress records in a locked cabinet.

If not deemed to put the child at further risk, the designated person will ensure parents are aware of the ongoing observations and record keeping procedure.

The Leader will sensitively approach parents/carers concerning any changes in behaviour or unexplained bruises/marks/withdrawn behaviour providing this will not put the child at further risk.

The Leader will contact the group's Early Years Link Social Worker for advice and support. In case of absence advice will be sought from the Gateway.

Gateway – Tel: - 0300 1234 333
Link Social Worker- [Tel:- 02827 661340](tel:02827661340)

Procedures for reporting abuse or neglect:

- 1 If, following observations and record keeping, there continues to be reason for concern, the Designated Safeguarding Officer will contact the appropriate Social Worker from Northern Health and Social Care Trust and discuss the concerns with them prior to putting the concerns in writing.
- 2 At this stage, all records must be made available to the Trust and confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

- 3 The Leader must inform the Designated Committee Safeguarding Officer of the Management Committee in confidence, without mentioning the child's name.
- 4 Parents of the child must be informed if the case is referred to Northern Health and Social Care Trust.

Sharing information

We do this by:

- 1 Sharing any concerns only with those agencies that need to know;
- 2 Involving parent(s)/guardian(s) and children appropriately, as recommended by 'Getting It Right' procedures.

Support for Families

- 1 The Playgroup will take every step, within its authority, to create trusting and supportive relationships between families and staff within the Playgroup setting.
- 2 Where abuse at home is suspected, the Playgroup will continue to welcome the child and the family while investigations proceed.
- 3 Confidential records will be shared with the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) as long as this is not deemed to potentially further endanger a child.
- 4 Ensuring the care and safety of the child must always be paramount.
- 5 The Playgroup will support and work with the child's family to the best of their ability.

Support for Staff

- 1 Dealing with and reporting suspicions of abuse can be a distressing experience for staff members involved.
- 2 Staff members will be allocated a time to discuss the experience with the Playgroup Leader or the Leader may discuss concerns with the Designated Staff/Committee Safeguarding Officer as well as the designated Early Years staff.

Staffing Policies and Protections:

Staff in the provision, are privileged to be able to work closely with children and their families, forming warm and caring relationships. However, because of the nature of their work, staff are also vulnerable to allegations of abuse.

By having appropriate policies and procedures in place and following the principles of good practice the provision not only protects the children in their setting, but also the adults.

For their part staff need to avoid putting themselves in situations that may lead to allegations being made against them.

They also need to observe closely the provision's code of staff conduct, particularly ensuring:

- 1 That the safety and welfare of the child is always paramount;
- 2 They fulfil their responsibilities and duties towards children by working in partnership with parents;
- 3 Their relationship with children and families are conducted in a professional manner at all times.
- 4 Vigilance in health and safety matters, e.g. recording any bruises/marks a child has on arrival.
- 5 Comprehensive reporting of all children's accidents is made to parents for their signature.
- 6 Any training needs identified in themselves or other team members are passed on to their line manager.
- 7 Advice, help and/or support if they find a child's behaviour is persistently difficult to manage.

Procedures for Responding to Suspicions of Abuse

If an allegation is made against a member of staff an immediate and thorough investigation will be conducted by the Designated Committee Safeguarding Officer and with the child's parents.

- 1 The child's parents will be kept fully informed throughout.
- 2 The staff will be supported throughout the process by the Leader and Designated Committee Safeguarding Officer.
- 3 The staff member against whom the allegation has been made may be given a non-disciplinary suspension pending further investigation.
- 4 Depending on the nature of the allegation and initial inquiry, the matter will be referred to the Link Social Worker / Gateway Care Team.

Staff Code of Conduct

Working within an early years setting requires a caring and sensitive approach. This is often the child's first time away from home and to ensure each child's all round personal and educational development, he/she must feel secure and cared for as an individual.

To facilitate this, staff needs to be alert to feelings of apprehension, fear and panic and to act immediately to reassure and settle a child. Staff need also be aware of a child who finds sharing and being in a group daunting and to offer them enough care and reassurance to cope and change.

It is therefore unrealistic for staff to never handle, lift, or cuddle a child and yet all staff must be aware of the need to protect themselves from allegations of abuse.

Guidelines:

- 1 Ensure the correct ratios at all times.
- 2 When toileting a child, advise another member of staff and encourage the child to be as independent as possible. If you need to go into the cubicle, it is good practice to leave the door ajar and ensure that others

- are within earshot. In case of a child with a disability follow the agreed arrangements that have been made with the parent/carer.
- 3 If a child needs changed, always inform another member of staff. While maintaining the child's dignity, change the child where you can be viewed or monitored by another member of staff.
 - 4 Always listen to children and respect their views. If a child raises worries or concerns, these must be treated seriously and reported to the Playgroup Leader.
 - 5 Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint. The exception to this is restraining a child whose behaviour is likely to pose a hazard to themselves or others. (see **Behaviour Management Policy**)
 - 6 Beware of a child whose attention seeking or craving for attention from staff or visitors concerns you. Discuss this with Playgroup Leader.
 - 7 Never make fun of a child or make derisory remarks about their play or work.
 - 8 Beware of how other staff members handle children, if anything concerns you, discuss it with Playgroup Leader.
 - 9 Maintain confidentiality at all times.
 - 10 Ensure playroom door is locked and buzzer system is operational for access to facilities outside of drop-off and pick-up times.
 - 11 Accidents and incidents to be recorded in designated book, parents/carers to be informed, asked to sign and add any comments.
 - 12 Risk assessments to be carried out for all activities, trips and outings.

Prevent abuse by means of Good Practice

- 1 Adults will not be left alone for long periods with individual children or small groups of children.
- 2 Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of self-sufficiency and independence, through adult support in making choices and expressing their own feelings and finding an acceptable way to express them. This will enable children to have self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.
- 3 The layouts of each room in the Playgroup will permit constant supervision of all children.
- 4 Staff and volunteers will receive clear instructions to update training.
- 5 Appropriate adult/child ratios, one adult to every eight children.
- 6 Appropriate activities enhancing learning through the pre-school curriculum.
- 7 The playroom meets with health and safety guidelines with the Environmental Health, e.g. heating, ventilation and drinking water available.
- 8 All members of staff have up-to-date First Aid Training.
- 9 Accidents and incidents will be recorded in the accidents/incident file and relevant information will be passed on relating to the nature of the above.
- 10 A risk assessment will be carried out for all activities, including trips/outings etc.

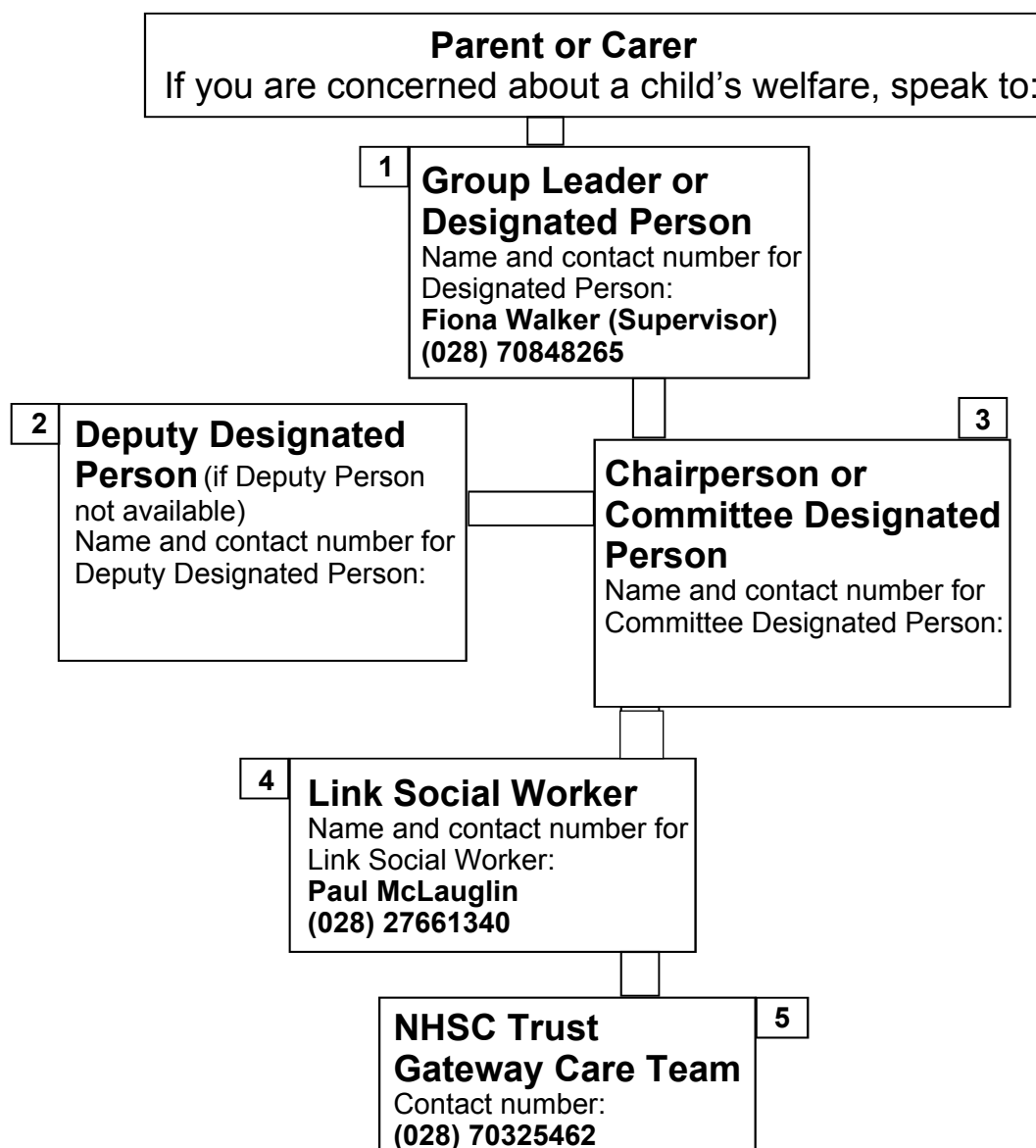
This Policy Statement was formally adopted by Castlerock Community Playgroup and applies to all persons acting on behalf of Castlerock

Community Playgroup. This includes employees, volunteers, committee members, and all others acting on behalf of Castlerock Community Playgroup.

Notification will be made to Social Services regarding any changes to the staff team in the Playgroup. All playroom volunteers will be vetted by Social Services.

Staff is aware of the UNOCINI referral system and can avail support from Health and Social Services or from the Volunteer Development Agency, Belfast. **Telephone number: 02890 236100 (Volunteer Development Agency)**

Child Protection Policy



1 Parent raises concern with Designated Person who may consult with Committee Designated Person and/or Link Social Worker. Records will be retained.
 2 If outcome is unsatisfactory, the Leader/Designated Person is unavailable, or if the concern is about the Leader, parent may contact the Deputy Designated Person or Committee Designated Person.
 3 The matter will be investigated, in accordance with relevant Group policies (eg Confidentiality; Disciplinary procedures).
 4 Link Social Worker will be consulted for advice.
 5 If there is evidence that a child is at risk, contact the Gateway Care Team or PSNI.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)

Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____
 Role in _____
 Playgroup _____ Signature _____

Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)

CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

Children's 'Sick Day' Guidance

Decisions regarding attendance or absence:

Use common sense when deciding whether or not your child is too ill to attend Playgroup. Ask yourself:

- Is your child well enough to carry out the activities of the Playgroup day?
If not, keep your child at home.
- Does your child have a condition that could be passed on to other children or Playgroup staff?
If so, keep your child at home.
- Would you take a day off work if you had this condition?
If so, keep your child at home.

Common Conditions

Most illnesses can be classified as one of a few minor health conditions. Whether or not you send your child to Playgroup will depend on how severe you judge the illness to be. This guidance can help you to make that judgement. If you're concerned about your child's health, please consult a health professional.

Cough & cold – a child with a minor cough or cold may attend Playgroup. If the cold is accompanied by shivers or drowsiness, the child should stay off Playgroup, and return to Playgroup 24 hours after they are feeling better. If your child has a more severe and long lasting cough, consult your GP, who can provide guidance on whether the child should stay off Playgroup.

Raised temperature – if your child has a raised temperature or is feeling ill with signs of an acute illness, they should not attend Playgroup. They can return when they are feeling better.

Rash/rashes - can be the first sign of many infectious illnesses such as chickenpox and measles. Children with these conditions should not attend Playgroup. If your child has a rash, check with your GP or Practice Nurse before sending them to Playgroup.

Headaches – a child with a minor headache does not usually need to be kept off Playgroup. If the headache is more severe or is accompanied by other symptoms such as raised temperature or drowsiness, then keep the child off Playgroup and consult your GP.

Vomiting and diarrhoea – children with these conditions should be kept off Playgroup. They can return 48 hours after their symptoms have settled. Most cases get better without treatment, but if symptoms persist consult your GP.

Sore throat – a child with a sore throat alone does not have to be kept from Playgroup. If your child is feeling ill with it, the child should stay at home.

To minimise the risk of transmission of infection to other children, and staff, the following guidelines are suggested.

DISEASE/ILLNESS	MINIMAL EXCLUSION PERIOD
Chickenpox and shingles	5 days after onset of the rash. Immuno-compromised children/adults – should take separate advice from their GP
Conjunctivitis (pink eye)	A child should stay away if eye is discharging until treated for 24 hours and/or eye(s) appear normal again
Diarrhoea & Vomiting	Until there has been no diarrhoea or vomiting for 48 hours
German Measles (Rubella) or Measles	5 days from onset of rash and until child feels well
Head lice	No period of exclusion but helpful to let school know
Impetigo	Once the spots have crusted or healed or 48 hours of antibiotics and the child feels well
Mumps	7 days from onset of swollen glands and child feels well
Scabies	Child can return to school the day after treated
Scarlet Fever	When child feels well, and 48 hours after start of antibiotics
Threadworm	Child may return the day after treatment
Whooping Cough	5 days from commencing antibiotics or 21 days without treatment
Cuts/sores	Child may attend provided the cut/sore is securely covered with a hypoallergenic plaster or dressing

<p>This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)</p> <p>Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____</p> <p>Role in _____</p> <p>Playgroup _____ Signature _____</p> <p>Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)</p>

COMMITTEES POLICY

It is the policy of the group that there should be a committee to run the management side of the Playgroup. This is as follows:-

- 1 The committee shall consist of a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasury and at least 6 other members; one of these should be the Playgroup Leader (Non Voting).
- 2 The above should be parents past and present of the children-attending Playgroup and other interested bodies.
- 3 The Committee should ensure that all records and financial accounts are correct and up-to-date.
- 4 All subscriptions and insurances are paid and that notes of decisions made at meetings are recorded.
- 5 All fee's paid from children are accounted for and recorded.
- 6 All Annual General Meetings should be held annually.
- 7 There should be a committee meeting each month.
- 8 The committee are responsible for all staff recruitment and supplying staff contracts, job descriptions and ensuring that all staff receive relevant training.
- 9 The Committee is responsible for all fundraising events with the help of parents and staff.
- 10 The Committee ensures that confidentiality should be kept at all times.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)

Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____

Role in

Playgroup _____ Signature _____

Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE POLICY

As a member of the Early Years Organisation we aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all our children. We aim to offer a welcome to each individual child and family and to provide a warm and caring environment in which all children can learn and develop as they play.

We believe children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with parents and the community generally and we welcome suggestions on how to improve our group at any time.

Many concerns can be resolved by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff.

We welcome the views of parents, carers and children about the services we provide. Comments, concerns and complaints help us to ensure that views, preferences and requests can be taken into account in the development and adaptation of Playgroup services and, acted upon as appropriate.

All users of our facilities will have the opportunity to make comments via our suggestion box, which can be confidential if required.

A person wishing to express a concern or make a complaint should do so first to the Playgroup Leader whenever possible, either verbally or in writing.

Verbal Complaints

When possible, a parent/carer who is uneasy about any aspect of the group's provision should first of all talk over any concerns privately with the Playgroup Leader. The Leader is available after the Playgroup session most days and will try to be available before the session by request.

Playgroup Leader - Fiona Walker

The staff can be contacted during sessions on Telephone: (028) 70848265

Whilst long telephone conversations cannot be held during Playgroup sessions the Leader or Deputy Leader answering the phone will be happy to arrange a suitable time to talk over any concerns.

If a satisfactory outcome has not been achieved, or if the concern regards the Playgroup Leader, a complaint should be put in writing to the Committee Chairperson.

Name _____

Contact details _____

Written Complaint

A written complaint will be acknowledged within seven days. In instances where the complaint concerns the welfare of a child, staff/committee has a responsibility to inform Social Services without delay.

Complaints will be recorded and filed in the complaints file.

All complaints will be fully investigated.

Where a complaint is made against a member of staff, that person will be informed of the nature of the complaint.

The Management committee will be informed concerning written complaints. However, anonymity will be maintained whenever possible and confidentiality will be observed when requested and when appropriate according to the nature of the complaint. Names are not used in staff or committee documentation whenever they can be avoided.

A complainant may make a request to meet with representatives from the Management Committee.

Where the request is made of the Management Committee, the person making the complaint will be invited to meet within 28 days with two members of the Management Committee and an independent person appointed by the Committee. The members of this panel should not be directly involved in the complaint or be a personal friend of parties involved.

Another person may accompany the complainant. At all stages, the time limit may be altered by mutual agreement.

An agreed written record of panel meetings will be made.

The panel will inform the complainant and other members of the Management Committee, within seven days, of the outcome of the meeting, including any recommendations.

It is preferable, in most instances, that concerns and complaints are addressed to the Playgroup leader or committee chairperson initially and dealt with using the above procedures. However, as a registered group, complainants may choose to take the complaint directly to Northern Health and Social Trust, Early Years Team 028276 61340.

We believe that most complaints are made constructively and can be sorted out at any early stage. We also believe that it is in the best interests of the Playgroup and parents that complaints should be taken seriously and dealt with fairly in ways which respect confidentiality.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____
Role in _____
Playgroup _____ Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

The Playgroup's work with children and families will sometimes bring us into contact with confidential information.

To ensure that all those using and working in the Playgroup can do so with confidence, we will respect confidentiality in the following ways:-

- 1 Parents will have ready access to the files and records of their own children but will not have access to information about any other child.
- 2 Staff will not discuss individual children, other than for purposes of curriculum planning/group management, with people other than the parents/carers of that child. Staff and committee are bound by confidentiality outside playschool hours not to discuss individual children therefore will not engage in conversation.
- 3 Information given by parents/carer to the Playgroup leader will not be passed on to other adults without permission.
- 4 Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, will remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
- 5 Any anxieties/evidence relating to a child's personal safety will be kept in a confidential file and will not be shared within the group except with the Playgroup Leader and the Chairperson. If following observations and record keeping there continues to be reason for concern, the Leader will contact Early Years Social Worker and discuss concerns. At this stage all records will be made available to the trust and confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
- 6 Students, trainees or staff members observing in the Playgroup will be advised of our confidentiality policy and required to respect it.

All the undertakings above are subject to the paramount commitment of the Playgroup that is to the safety and well being of the children.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)	
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____	
Role in Playgroup _____	Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)	

DATA PROTECTION POLICY

Castlerock Community Playgroup will comply with –

- 1 The terms of the 1998 Data Protection Act and any subsequent relevant legislation. Any guidance on or update to this policy is notified by The Early Years Organisation.

Name of Data Controller: Fiona Walker

- 2 **Data Collection**

Only relevant personal data will be collected. The persons from whom it is collected will be informed of its intended uses and of any possible disclosures that may be made. Systems will be put in place to facilitate updating information held.

- 3 **Storage & Security**

Manual data will be stored in a secure place only accessible to those with a legitimate reason to view and/or use that data. Sensitive personal data e.g. Medical Records, Child Protection Records, interview material will be stored in a secure place and access will be strictly limited and recorded.

- 4 **Data Update**

Forms will be issued to staff, parents & others to ensure that data held is both up to date and accurate.

- 5 **Data Disclosure**

The consent of the data subject will be obtained before the group discloses personal information to any organisation or individual. All requests for disclosure will be in writing and any telephone enquirers advised accordingly. In cases of Child protection, information may be passed on without consent to relevant Social Services personnel and/or the Police Service of Northern Ireland. If a request for information relating to Child Protection is received by telephone, steps will be taken to ensure that such information is disclosed only to the individual entitled to receive such information by way of seeking verification of identity.

- 6 **Data Access**

Data Subjects have the right to access any personal data held about them. Any persons wishing to exercise this right must make this request in writing to the Data Controller named above.

- 7 **Data Disposal & Destruction**

The Data Controller will review personal data regularly and delete information that is no longer required for the purposes of the group. The Data Controller will not, however, delete any information relating to accidents on the premises or child protection issues until the required statutory period has expired.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____
Role in _____
Playgroup _____ Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)

Provision of Food and Drink Policy

The sharing of refreshments can play an important part in the social life of the Playgroup as well as reinforcing children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating. The Playgroup will ensure that:-

- 1 All snacks provided are nutritious, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt, additives, preservatives and colourings.
- 2 Children's medical and personal dietary requirements are respected.
- 3 A multi-cultural diet is offered to ensure that children from all backgrounds encounter familiar tastes and that all children have the opportunity also to try unfamiliar foods.
- 4 The dietary rules of religious groups and also of vegetarians/vegans are known and met in appropriate ways.
- 5 Milk provided for children is whole and pasteurised.
- 6 Water is constantly available.
- 7 Menu will be displayed on the notice board each week.

Drinks -----water or milk

Food -----bread and cereal

Yogurt

Fruit and vegetables are always available

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)

Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____

Role in

Playgroup _____ Signature _____

Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)

DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY

Links With Other Policies

Discipline and Behaviour Management is set in the context of pastoral care and has links with the other policies in this pack.

We at Castlerock Playgroup believe that:

- 1 Everyone has the right to feel and be safe at all times at Playgroup;
- 2 Children learn best when they experience success and have positive self esteem;
- 3 Behaviour changes quicker when it is handled in a positive way.

Staff and Parents need to share responsibility by:

- 1 Being consistent;
- 2 Creating a safe, secure environment for children;
- 3 Modelling appropriate behaviours;
- 4 Each child is an individual and comes with varying needs, experiences and understanding.

We accept that:

- 1 All children feel angry, frustrated and upset at times and need help to express their feelings appropriately;
- 2 Children learn from experience and not just being talked with about what acceptable behaviour looks and feels like;
- 3 Children need to experience and know how to manage negative feelings from other people and they are not always going to 'get it right'.

At Castlerock Playgroup we will support and encourage these acceptable behaviours:

- 1 Respecting and caring for each other;
- 2 Sharing equipment;
- 3 Taking turns;
- 4 Listening;
- 5 Being polite to others;
- 6 Helping someone;
- 7 Use appropriate language and actions to express feelings;
- 8 Being friendly.

Discourage these unacceptable behaviours:

- 1 Shouting/talking loudly;
- 2 Hitting/pushing;
- 3 Spitting/biting;

- 4 Swearing;
- 5 Uncontrolled running/chasing;
- 6 Throwing;
- 7 Not sharing;
- 8 Destroying what someone else has made without permission.

STAFF ATTITUDE TO DISCIPLINE

Castlerock Community Playgroup staff and committee agreed that discipline in the Playgroup should be a positive learning experience.

Discipline should not be confused with punishment. We adhere to a positive approach to child management, emphasising 'positive' behaviour rather than 'negative' behaviour.

However, certain behaviours (such as listed below) are not acceptable in the Playgroup as this affects Health and Safety, other children's well-being, and the smooth running of the group.

- 1 Running around the room.
- 2 Throwing sand, water, toys or books.
- 3 Spitting, nipping, kicking or fighting.
- 4 Biting.
- 5 Bad language.
- 6 Children who disrupt other children's play.
- 7 Bullying.

Should any of these occur in play-group, our policy is to:

- 1 Explain to the child why this behaviour is not acceptable.
- 2 If necessary, redirect the child to a more constructive activity.
- 3 Where re-occurrence of unacceptable behaviour, which is causing staff concern, it will be noted, monitored, recorded, discussed with parent/legal guardian for further action.

SPECIFIC DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

Running In The Setting

The child will be taken back and asked to walk.

Throwing

The child will be asked not to throw and the dangers of throwing will be explained to the child, eg, sand can hurt eyes.

Kicking/biting/scratching/hitting

The adult will step in to stop. See to the upset/injured party and explain that the above are not allowed in the Playgroup and why.

Bad Language

“We do not use these words in Playgroup”. The child will always be given the opportunity to express their feelings and appropriate language to do so will be encouraged.

Disruptive Behaviour

Any child displaying disruptive behaviour will be re-directed to a more constructive activity.

Confrontation Over Toys, Equipment, etc

The adult will step in and explain “sharing in the Playgroup”. The children will be given the opportunity to resolve the conflict through discussion or, for example, the use of a sand timer. The children will be given the opportunity to share the toy or object. If both are unwilling to do so, then the toy/object will be removed for a short period (seconds) from both children and a strategy used by the member of staff to re-introduce the toy/object. Positive role modelling from staff during session is also vital.

Bullying Type Behaviour

This is highly distressing and damaging for children and will not be tolerated in the Playgroup. Any complaint by a parent/carer that their child is, or may be, being bullied will be fully investigated by the designated key-worker. Please see Anti-bullying policy.

If bullying is witnessed, staff will:

- 1 Comfort the bullied child in question.
- 2 Explain to the more dominant child reasons why this is unacceptable and the need for respect.
- 3 1-3 warnings will be given to the dominant child.

NOTE – If unacceptable behaviour persists after relevant behaviour management strategies have been employed, 1-3 ‘warnings’, together with explanations may be given. After 3 ‘warnings’ with explanations the child will be removed from that activity, depending on the severity of the behaviour, for approximately 3 minutes. On re-entry to the activity, if behaviour is repeated again, then time away from that activity will be for the remainder of the session. Staff must make each other aware of the situation to ensure consistency.

In the event of restraint being required, ideally two members of staff are needed to deal with the child. All other children will be diverted to another area by remaining staff.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)

Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____
Role in _____
Playgroup _____ Signature _____

Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Early Years organisation is committed to helping Playgroups provide equality of opportunity for all children and families. As a member of NIPPA **CASTLEROCK COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP** works in accordance with all relevant legislation.

We believe that the Playgroup's activities should be open to all children and families, and to all adults committed to their welfare. We aim to ensure that all who wish to work in, or volunteer to help with, the Playgroup have an equal chance to do so.

ADMISSIONS

The Playgroup is open to every family in the community. Places are offered through the PEAG selection following the criteria set down by NEELB and Castlerock Community Playgroup. Children who turn three years old throughout the year will be admitted if places are available.

Families joining the Playgroup are made aware of its equal opportunities policy.

EMPLOYMENT

The Playgroup will appoint the best person for each job and will treat fairly all applicants for the jobs and all those appointed.

Commitment to implementing the group's Equal Opportunities Policy will form part of the job description for all workers.

FAMILIES

The Playgroup recognises that many different types of family successfully love and care for children.

THE CURRICULUM

All children will be respected and the individuality and potential recognised and values nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Appropriate opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

RESOURCES

These will be chosen to give children a balanced view of the world and an appreciation of the rich diversity of a multi-racial society.

Materials will be selected to help children to develop their self-respect and to respect other people by avoiding stereotypes and derogatory pictures or messages about any group of people.

SPECIAL NEEDS

The Playgroup recognises the wide range of special needs of children and families in the community, and will consider what part it can play in meeting these needs.

Planning for Playgroup meetings and events will take into account the needs of people with disabilities, also see Special Needs Policy.

DISCRIMINATORY BEHAVIOUR/REMARKS

These are unacceptable in the Playgroup.

The response will aim to be sensitive to the feelings of the victim(s) and to help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices.

LANGUAGE

Information written and spoken will be clearly communicated in as many languages as necessary.

Bilingual/multilingual children and adults are an asset. Their values and the languages recognised will be respected in the Playgroup.

FOOD

Medical, cultural and dietary needs will be met.

MEETINGS

The time, place and conduct of meetings will ensure that all families have an equal opportunity to be involved in the running of Playgroup.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____
Role in _____ Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)

E-SAFETY, NETWORKING, AND MOBILE PHONES POLICY

Purpose

E-Safety concerns safeguarding children, young people and staff in the digital world. Technology is an important part of everyday life and so E-Safety focuses on learning to understand and use new technology in a positive and safe way.

The purpose of this Policy therefore is to help support and protect children and staff when using technology in the setting.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, visitors and members of the public who use our premises.

The policy covers internet, e-mail and all electronic communications via computers, laptops, mobile phones, i-Phones and wireless technology.

Responsibilities

All staff members are responsible for the following:-

- Understanding the risk and responsibility that is part of the 'Duty Of Care' that applies to everyone working with children.
- Understanding the significance of E-Safety which highlights the importance of safeguarding children and keeping them safe, which is of paramount importance.
- Reporting any knowledge or suspicion of behaviour that contravenes this policy.
- Being aware of the potential risks of using social networking sites eg Facebook, and the importance of considering the materials they post and how publishing unsuitable materials may affect their professional status.
- Protecting themselves from legal challenge and ensuring that they work within the boundaries of professional behaviour.
- Ensuring that they do not create any unnecessary business risk to Castlerock Community Playgroup by the misuse of the internet or e-mail systems.
- Complying with current legislation.
- Using the Internet in an acceptable way.

In particular, the following is deemed unacceptable use or behaviour of staff:-

- Visiting Internet sites that contain obscene, hateful, pornographic or otherwise illegal material.

- Sending, forwarding, distributing or retaining e-mail or text messages that contain language or images that are abusive, aggressive, obscene or offensive.
- Using the internet to send offensive or harassing materials to others.
- Making any improper or discriminatory reference to a person's race, colour, religion or belief system, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disabilities or physique, and not forwarding or distributing any material which does so.
- Publishing defamatory and/or knowingly false materials about Castlerock Community Playgroup.
- Using work e-mail systems to set up or send chain letters, viral emails or spam.
- Using the internet for personal purposes during work time.
- Using the computer to participate in any form of fraud, theft or software or music piracy.
- Failing to take due care to make sure confidential and/or personal information goes to the correct recipient.
- Broadcasting personal views on social, political, religious or other non-business related matters.
- Undertaking deliberate activities that waste staff effort or networked resources.
- Sending an unauthorised e-mail on behalf of an individual inside or outside Castlerock Community Playgroup without their knowledge or consent.

Specific arrangements for the use of mobile phones are as follows:-

- Staff personal mobile phones must be switched off and not used during the session; the setting has a telephone/mobile for incoming and outgoing calls – this number may be given by staff as a work/emergency contact number for incoming calls only.
- If a member of staff is expecting an emergency or important call, their personal mobile phone may be switched on but must not be kept on their person. Permission may be sought from the Leader/senior staff member who will agree and determine a suitable area or place where the phone is accessible should the need arise.
- During group outings nominated staff will have access to the setting's nominated mobile phone, which is to be used for emergency purposes only.
- Practitioners and their managers who will be required to drive on behalf of the early years setting must ensure any work and/or personal mobile phones are to be switched off whilst driving.

Managers/Senior Staff Member

Managers/Senior Staff Members are responsible for the following:-

- Ensuring that staff are aware of and understand this policy and how it links to other relevant policies.

- Putting relevant systems in place to ensure the protection of information and appropriate access to the internet, eg passwords on computers, limited access to certain websites.
- Monitoring the policy to ensure that staff are complying with it. This includes the right of managers/senior staff members to access e-mails, images and internet sites visited, where there is a suspicion of improper use.
- Dealing with breaches of the policy and ensuring that the highest standards of practice are maintained.

Other Key Policies

This policy is relevant to a number of other policies and should be read alongside them:-

Child Protection Policy
 Use of Images of Children Policy
 Confidentiality Policy
 Disciplinary Policy

Breach of Policy

All employees should be aware that any failure to comply with this policy will be taken seriously and may be dealt with in accordance with Castlerock Community Playgroup Disciplinary Policy and Procedures. If an employee is found to have breached the policy, they will face a disciplinary penalty ranging from a verbal warning to a dismissal. Where a criminal offence is suspected, the matter will be referred to the PSNI.

<p>This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)</p> <p>Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____</p> <p>Role in _____</p> <p>Playgroup _____ Signature _____</p> <p>Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)</p>
--

FEES AND PAYMENT POLICY

The policy of the group regarding fees and payments is as follows:-

- 1 One designated member of the committee will ensure that all records and financial accounts are correct and kept up to date ie Treasurer.
- 2 A registration fee of £20 is payable when each child commences Playgroup, £10 should the child commence after Christmas and £5 after Easter. (See Information Booklet).
- 3 All requests for fees to be presented to parents in the form of a bill, advising how much, name of child and date that payments should be made.
- 4 A receipt for all money received regarding bills will be issued.
- 5 All fees to be paid monthly, bills will be sent out by the last Monday of each month and payments due to be received by the 10th of each month.
- 6 All fees must be paid with the exception of hospitalisation and recovery period after.
- 7 All money/fees should be lodged on a monthly basis and a record kept of same by the treasurer.
- 8 Any other payments given to staff should be forwarded to Treasurer where a receipt or record can be made.
- 9 Non-payment of fees - if fees are not paid by due date, the Leader will give a verbal reminder, thereafter the treasurer will send out a letter regarding the non-payment of fees. Where arrears of more than one month exist without prior consent of the Management Committee, attendance of your child may be restricted until balance is cleared in full.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)	
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____	
Role in _____	Signature _____
Playgroup _____	
Reviewed on: _____	by _____ (Chairperson)

FIRST AID POLICY

Accident prevention is preferable to first aid, but in spite of all precautions, now and again someone will need to administer first aid in our setting.

Our aim is to ensure that appropriate first aid measures are in place, applied promptly and efficiently as required by the designated First Aider.

1. At least one member of staff with a current first aid certificate will be on duty at all times.
2. Staff are required to re-qualify every 3 years and update annually.
3. A correctly stocked first aid box containing guidance on treatment of injured people will be maintained at all times.
4. First Aid Box is located on the top shelf of the bathroom.

In the event of an accident the First Aider will assess the injury;

If MINOR:

- Appropriate first aid will be given, complying with our policy for handling spills of body fluids.
- Treatment will be given and parents will be notified.
- An accident report form will be completed and signed by staff and parent/carer.

If SERIOUS:

- Apply first aid.
- Notify parent/carer/emergency contact/if a staff member contact next of kin.
- If necessary an ambulance will be called, the supervisor will make every effort to contact emergency cover to allow a member of staff to accompany child in ambulance.
- A complete written report of incident will be completed and action taken.
- Report will be signed by leader/chair and parent/carer/next of kin or emergency contact.
- Incident must be reported to chairperson as soon as possible.
- Insurance company and Social Services will be informed on same day.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)

Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____

Role in

Playgroup _____ Signature _____

Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)

FUNDRAISING POLICY

The policy of the group regarding fundraising is as follows:-

- 1 To explain the reason why fund-raising is necessary.
- 2 To have at least 4 fundraising events during the year, with smaller ones to cover additional costs. (These fundraisers can take any form but the organisation in question is that of a charity and a children's group).
- 3 When organising events the group should aim towards parents and the general public together with including the children in some of the events.
- 4 The responsibility of fundraising lies with the Committee in the planning and organising of such events with the help of staff and parents.
- 5 All fundraising and the reason for it should be explained to the parents at the AGM plus handbook.
- 6 Parents informed of events either by handouts, posters, monthly newsletter or on notice board.

Examples of fundraisers:-

Teddy Toddle	involving children and parents
Lucky Squares	involving parents and public
Bar-B-Que	involving committee and public
Table Quiz	involving committee and public
Fireside Quiz	involving committee and public
Sponsored Bike Ride	involving children and parents.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)	
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____	
Role in Playgroup _____	Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)	

HEALTH, MEDICATIONS & HYGIENE POLICY

Castlerock Community Playgroup promotes a healthy lifestyle and a high standard of hygiene in its day-to-day work with children and adults. This is achieved in the following ways:

Illness - Please see Health and Attendance Guidelines for more detail (page 18):

- 1 Parents are asked to keep their children at home if they have any infection and to inform the Playgroup as to the nature of the infection so that the Playgroup can alert other parents, and make careful observations of any child who seems unwell.
- 2 Parents are asked not to bring into Playgroup any child who has been vomiting or had diarrhoea until at least **48** hours has elapsed since the last attack.
- 3 If the children of Playgroup staff are unwell, the children will not accompany their parents/carers to work in the Playgroup.
- 4 Cuts or open sores whether on adults or children, will be covered with hypo-allergenic plasters or other dressings. A letter will be sent out requesting parental consent for this.
- 5 The Playgroup will ensure that the first aid equipment is clean, replenished and replaced as necessary. Sterile items will be kept sealed in the packages until needed.
- 6 Written approval will be sought from all parents in order that the Playgroup leader or staff member, in the event of an emergency can take your child to local surgery or nearest hospital for treatment and sign any relevant forms in your absence. Parents will be notified of any such incidents immediately.
- 7 If a child is on prescribed medication the following procedures will be followed:

Medications:

- 1 The staff at Playgroup wish to ensure that children with medication needs receive appropriate care and support at Playgroup.
- 2 Please note that parents should keep their children at home if acutely unwell or infectious.
- 3 Parents are responsible for providing comprehensive information regarding the child's condition and medication.
- 4 Medicines are administered as follows:

- Medicines which have been prescribed by a GP or other authorised prescriber are only administered to the child for whom they are prescribed and in accordance with the prescriber's instructions; and
 - Non- prescribed medicines are administered only on the written request of the parent in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- 5 Staff will not give a non prescribed medicine to a child unless there is specific prior written permission from the parents.
- 6 Only reasonable quantities of medication should be supplied to Playgroup (eg a maximum of four weeks supply at any one time).
- 7 Each item of medication must be delivered to the Leader, in normal circumstances by the parent, **in a secure and labelled container as originally dispensed**. Each item of medication must be clearly labelled with the following information:
- Child's name
 - Name of medication
 - Dosage
 - Frequency of administration
 - Date of dispensing
 - Storage requirements (if important)
 - Expiry date
- 8 Medicines are stored securely in a locked container which is inaccessible to children and in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. This could necessitate storage in a refrigerator.
- 9 A personal medication record is maintained for each child which will be available for parents to view. Such records are constructed, completed and maintained in such a manner so as to ensure a clear audit trail with names, signatures, dates and times include:
- Medicines prescribed or requested;
 - Medicines are administered;
 - Medicines refused; and
 - Medicines returned to parents for disposal
- 10 Before a medicine is administered to a child, the following practices are Followed:
- The child's personal medication record is consulted to identify the medicine, dosage instructions required and to confirm when the medication was last administered;
 - The medicine pack is checked to confirm it is labelled with the child's name, dosage instructions and to ensure the expiry date has not passed;
 - Medicine doses are prepared immediately prior to their administration from the container in which they are dispensed;

- The correct dose is identified and appropriately administered at the specific times according to the prescriber or manufacturer's instructions which should be clearly written on the medication label or product;
- When medicine is administered the medication is immediately updated with details of dosage given, names and signatures of the staff involved and the time and date;
- Parents are informed daily of the medicines that have been administered to their child and asked to sign the record book to acknowledge the entry.

If children refuse to take medicines, staff will not force them to do so, and will inform parents of the refusal, as a matter of urgency, on the same day. If a refusal to take medicines results in an emergency, Playgroup's emergency procedures will be followed.

- 11 It is the responsibility of parents to notify Playgroup in writing if the Child's need for medication has ceased.

Staff who volunteers to assist in the administration of medication will receive appropriate training/guidance through arrangements made with the local health services.

Playgroup will make every effort to continue the administration of medication to a child whilst on trips away from Playgroup premises, even if additional requirements may be required. However, there may be occasions when it may not be possible to include a child on a trip if appropriate supervision cannot be guaranteed.

- 12 The arrangements for the administration of medicines comply with the Terms of any insurance cover.

Suncream Application:

- 13 During the summer months we will be outdoors as much as possible, to avoid sunburn, we would ask all parents to apply sun-cream before session however, key-workers will apply/ top-up sun-cream where written permission has been sought.
- 14 A shaded area is available in the garden but it is recommended that a Sunhat is sent to playgroup with your child.

All staff will be made aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency.

Information Sources:

- 1 Parents will have the opportunity to discuss health issues with Playgroup staff and will have access to information available to the Playgroup.

- 2 The Playgroup will maintain links with health visitors and gather health information and advice from the local health authority information services and/or other health agencies.
- 3 There will always be on the premises a least one qualified First Aider trained to administer first aid to the children. The named first aid person will be posted on the notice board.

Hygiene

To prevent the spread of all infection, adults in the group will ensure that the following good practices are observed: -

Personal Hygiene

- 1 Hands washed after using the toilet.
- 2 Children with pierced ears are not allowed to try on or share each other's earrings.
- 3 A large box of tissues is available and children are encouraged to blow and wipe their noses when necessary. Soiled tissues disposed of hygienically.
- 4 Children are encouraged to shield their mouths when coughing.
- 5 Paper towels are used and disposed of appropriately.
- 6 Hygiene rules related to bodily fluids followed with particular care and all staff and volunteers aware of how infections can be transmitted.

Cleaning and Clearing

- 1 Any spills of blood, vomit or excrement wiped up and flushed away down the toilet. Disposable gloves always used when cleaning up spills of body fluids. Floors and other affected surfaces disinfected using disinfectant, anti-bacterial sprays according to the manufacturer's instructions. Fabrics contaminated with body fluids thoroughly washed in hot water.
- 2 Spare laundered pants and other clothing, available in case of accidents and polythene bags available in which to wrap soiled garments.
- 3 All surfaces cleaned daily with an appropriate cleaner.
- 4 Cleaning records are completed and signed daily which is monitored on a regular basis by Leader.

Food

At Castlerock Playgroup all staff have been trained and follow Hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP) safe catering procedures.

In particular, each adult will:

- 1 Always wash their hands under running water before handling food and after using the toilet.
- 2 Not be involved with the preparation of food if suffering from any infectious/contagious illness or skin trouble.
- 3 Never smoke on the premises.
- 4 Never cough or sneeze over food.
- 5 Use different cleaning cloths for kitchen and toilet areas.
- 6 Ensure waste is disposed of properly and out of reach of the children. Keep a lid on the dustbin and wash hands after using it.
- 7 Wash fresh fruits and vegetables before use.
- 8 Tea towels will be kept scrupulously clean and washed between each session.
- 9 All utensils will be kept clean and stored in a dust-free place, e.g. closed cupboard or drawer or sealed containers.
- 10 Cracked or chipped china will not be used.
- 11 Fridge records are completed daily and monitored on a regular basis.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)	
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____	
Role in Playgroup _____	Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)	

HEALTHY LIFESTYLES POLICY

At Castlerock Community Playgroup, we are committed to our children's health, well-being, growth and development. We believe it is important to establish positive habits early in life and to support parents and families as they seek to develop a healthy lifestyle.

"Children have the right to good quality health care – the best health care possible – to safe drinking water, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help them stay healthy.

Children have the right to relax and play, and to join in a wide range of cultural, artistic and other recreational activities."

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: Summary of Articles 24 & 31

"In the Fit Future, children and young people, of all ages and from all sections of our society, will be motivated and supported to access a range of readily available, quality, enjoyable opportunities to be active and eat healthily."

Fit Futures: Focus on Food, Activity and Young People (DHSSPS 2004)

We will endeavour to promote a healthy lifestyle with reference to the Fit Futures Outcomes to support healthy early years, in the following ways.

- 1 Parents are well-informed and are engaged effectively in the development of plans and programmes to improve the health and well-being of their children.

Information relating to nutrition, dental hygiene and various health issues will be shared with parents through - parent's information evenings, workshops cookery demonstrations, newsletters and promotional leaflets and using the expertise of parents and services of health care professionals where relevant.

Parents will be consulted about the children's dietary needs and menu choices.

- 2 Early Years settings support the learning, development and the health and well-being of children and young people.

Through the planned curriculum and daily routines, children will have many opportunities to learn about health and personal hygiene. Themes such as 'All About Me', Hospital Role Play, the Hairdressing Salon, cookery activities and visits e.g. from Community Dental team or Health Visitor will encourage children to explore and discuss health topics.

Daily routines provoke discussion, which then reinforces the practical message of the importance of physical activity and healthy eating in their growth and development.

- 3 Early Years settings provide quality opportunities for daily physical activity and good nutrition.

It is recommended that young children experience one hour of energetic, physical play each day. While they are in our care, we endeavour to provide them with a significant proportion of this. A varied programme of physical play, using large and small equipment, is planned for 20-30 minutes each day. As Outdoor play is particularly beneficial to health and well-being, it is used as frequently as possible.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)	
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____	
Role in Playgroup _____	Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)	

OBSERVATION, ASSESSMENT AND RECORD KEEPING - POLICY

We consider observation, assessment and recording to be a valuable part of maintaining quality standards in our setting.

We observe children in order:-

- 1 To determine the child's developmental skills and needs.
- 2 To see if the child is healthy.
- 3 To notice changes in behaviour.
- 4 To learn about the child's interests.
- 5 To find out about the child's diet.
- 6 To determine how long the child's concentration span is.
- 7 To find out how a child is feeling.
- 8 To assess the child for particular sensory difficulties.
- 9 To determine how a child learns.
- 10 To determine the progression of a child's development.
- 11 To assess the child's behaviour and learning in relation to the "norm".
- 12 To assess regressive behaviour.
- 13 To acknowledge the complexity of a child's play.
- 14 To consider the interaction of the child with other children and/or adults.

Every child is observed in order to produce a positive record of his/her progress and achievement throughout his/her time in Playgroup.

Each child is observed as an individual and as part of a group.

All observations are written up promptly and accurately and subsequently analysed and evaluated.

Information gained from observers will be used to plan for a child's individual needs. These will be discussed with parents emphasising the partnership between home and group and recognising parents' key role in their child's learning. All records are confidential and are shared only in the interests of the child.

Decisions about passing on information to colleagues and other professionals will be shared with parents.

All staff carrying out observations will have undergone training in observations, assessment and recording.

Colleagues within the setting will co-operate and facilitate other members of staff carrying out observations and assessments of children.

Shared records enable a partnership between home and group. Good sharing and understanding of information is required so that staff and parents can do their best for each child.

We observe our children regularly and systematically record our children's achievements and progress.

Share our findings with staff members in the strictest confidence to enable us as a team to enhance our children's progress.

Share all our findings and information with parents.

Our setting encourages parents to become involved by sharing information about their children i.e. likes/dislikes, favourite toys or animals.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)	
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____	
Role in Playgroup _____	Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)	

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS/CARERS POLICY

We value parents and primary carers as the first educators of their children and we believe that their involvement is vital to the success of our group. We strive to establish close links with parents and the local community.

“For partnerships to be effective there must be a mutual understanding and respect, a continuing dialogue and sharing of information and knowledge.”

Parents are welcome to become involved in our group at whatever level suits their needs. For example:

- Membership of Management Committee.
- To provide support and recognition for our group.
- To provide materials and resources for our group.
- To help inform planning.
- To take part in fundraising events.
- To participate in social events and outings.

We issue parents with a questionnaire about our service on an annual basis and we always welcome parents' views and comments at any time.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)

Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by **(print name)** _____

Role in

Playgroup _____ Signature _____

Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)

PASTORAL CARE POLICY

The staff and management committee of Castlerock Community Playgroup have a responsibility for the pastoral care arrangements, welfare and safety of all the young children in our setting, and the welfare of each child is our paramount consideration. Child welfare embraces all aspects of pastoral care, behaviour management, health and well-being, safety and security.

Castlerock Community Playgroup is to provide a caring, supportive and safe environment, valuing individuals, ensuring they are respected and happy, and an atmosphere where all young children can develop their full potential.

The overall well-being of each child will be promoted as an intrinsic aspect of the pre-school curriculum. It will reflect the staff training and the child protection procedure agreed with parents, staff and the management committee.

Parents are always welcome and are encouraged to contact staff if they have any concerns or worries. If they have any urgent concerns they will be given immediate attention.

All information will be treated as confidential, however, if information is given to a member of staff about possible child abuse this will not be held in confidence within the Playgroup. In the interest of the child, staff may need to share this information with other relevant professionals, namely, Social Services, Health Visitor, Child Psychologist, etc, and only those who need to know will be told.

We will encourage parent(s) to share concerns about home circumstances or medical matters which may affect the child's behaviour in the setting at Playgroup.

Children have a right to be protected from all forms of abuse, whether physical, mental, negligence or sexual, by those who are caring for them.

Responsibility:

If a member of the Playgroup staff has an initial concern relating to a child protection matter, it will be dealt with in the following sequence:

The matter will be referred to:

- 1 The Leader of the group.
- 2 Or, in the event of the Leader's absence the Deputy Leader.
- 3 The designated social worker at Early Years.
- 4 If necessary, the Child Protection Officer on the management committee.

These Pastoral Care policies are expanded in the Child Protection Procedures attached.

PERSONAL CARE POLICY

Policy:

To ensure the well-being of the children in our care and to promote their all-round development, we encourage independence in toileting and personal hygiene, whilst supporting appropriately those who still need adult supervision.

We appreciate that young children may have accidents from time to time and aim to make them feel as appreciated as possible. (Please see Child Protection Policy)

Procedure:

A supply of underwear and clothing will be kept in the group, in case a child needs changed. Parents may send a spare set of clothes (in a labelled bag) for their child, if they so wish. This is helpful when a child is experiencing a period of difficulty.

If a child soils themselves a member of staff will change child.

Parents are asked to launder and return Playgroup clothes promptly.

When changing or helping a child at the toilet, one member of staff must be present.

Adult will inform another member of staff and door will be left slightly ajar, never closed tight.

Students/ Trainees will not carry out toileting/ changing of children duties.

Disposable gloves are to be worn by staff changing soiled or wet underwear or clothing.

A record will be maintained by staff, indicating when children have been changed.

Parents will be informed when their child has been changed by staff, including the reason. For example: toilet accident, water play.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____
Role in _____
Playgroup _____ Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)

SAFETY – POLICY AND PRACTICE

The safety of young children is of paramount importance. In order to ensure the safety of both children and adults, the Playgroup will ensure that:-

- 1 All children are supervised by adults at all times and will always be within sight of an adult.
- 2 A file is available at each session for the reporting of any accident/incident.
- 3 Regular safety monitoring will include checking of the accident and incident record.
- 4 All adults are aware of the system(s) in operation for children's arrivals and departures and an adult will be at the door during these periods.
- 5 Children will leave the group only with authorised adults.
- 6 Safety checks on premises are made every day.
- 7 Low-level glass will be covered, or replaced by safety glass.
- 8 Outdoor space is securely fenced.
- 9 Equipment is checked regularly and any dangerous items repaired/discarded.
- 10 The layout and space ratios allow children and adults to move safely and freely between activities.
- 11 Fire doors are never obstructed.
- 12 Fire/heaters/electric points/wires and leads are adequately guarded.
- 13 All dangerous materials including First Aid Kit and cleaning materials are stored out of reach of children.
- 14 Children do not have unsupervised access to kitchen, cookers or any cupboards storing hazardous materials including matches.
- 15 Adults do not walk about with hot drinks or place hot drinks within reach of children.
- 16 Fire drills are held termly.
- 17 A register of both children and adults is completed as people arrive so that a complete record of all those present is available in any emergency.
- 18 There is no smoking in rooms used by children.

- 19 A correctly stocked first aid box is available at all times.
- 20 Fire extinguishers are checked annually and staff will receive regular training on use of equipment.
- 21 Whenever children are on premises at least two adults are present.
- 22 Large equipment is erected with care and checked regularly.
- 23 Activities such as cooking, woodwork and energetic play receive close and constant supervision.
- 24 On outings, the adult: child ratio will be at least 1: 2.
- 25 If a small group goes out, there will be sufficient adults to maintain appropriate ratios for staff and children remaining on the premises.
- 26 Equipment offered to children is developmentally appropriate, recognising that materials suitable for older children may pose a risk to younger/less mature children.
- 27 The premises are checked before locking up at the end of the day.
- 28 Risk assessments will be carried out for outdoor play areas and outings.

Adult safety

All adults in the group, both staff and visitors, will be aware of and respect the group's safety policies.

If adult needs to reach up for stored equipment, they will be provided with a step ladder. Heavy materials will not be stored above head height.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)	
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____	
Role in Playgroup _____	Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)	

SELECTING EQUIPMENT/TOYS POLICY AND PRACTICE

The toys and equipment in Playgroup provide opportunities for children, with adult help, to develop new skills and concepts in the course of their play and exploration. The equipment we provide:-

- 1 Is appropriate for the ages and stages of the children.
- 2 Offers challenges to developing physical, social, personal and intellectual skills.
- 3 Features positive images of people, both male and female, from a range of ethnic and cultural group, with and without disabilities.
- 4 Includes a range of raw materials, which can be used in a variety of ways and encourages an open-ended approach to creativity and problem solving.
- 5 Will enable children to develop individual potential and move towards required learning outcomes.
- 6 Conforms to all relevant safety regulations and is robust and well constructed.
- 7 Furniture and equipment is checked for faults on a daily basis. All faulty or broken equipment will be removed and recorded.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)	
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____	
Role in Playgroup _____	Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)	

SETTLING IN PLAYGROUP – POLICY AND PRACTICE

We recognise that going to Playgroup is a big step in a child's life and in order to give them the best chance to adapt positively, the staff team at Castlerock Community Playgroup has a clear and structured plan which includes the following:

- 1 Annual Open Day for all prospective families, where parents and children will learn about the Playgroup.
- 2 This will also help to familiarise the child with the Playgroup setting.
- 3 When the child starts, the parent/carer will be welcome to stay for as long as necessary and/or return to collect their child early if desired.
- 4 Initially, the child may relate to one staff member and this will be encouraged.
- 5 Consistent attendance will be encouraged to establish a pattern in the child's life. This is especially so in a child's pre-school year, as it is a requirement laid down by the Pre-School Expansion Programme.
- 6 At the beginning of your child's pre-school he/she will be allocated a key worker, who will be responsible for observation, record keeping and staff/parent meetings.
- 7 To facilitate the settling-in process, intake will be staggered over a period of time.
- 8 It must be noted that not all children settle immediately but, with time, patience and support, the majority of children adapt well.
- 9 There will be regular communication with the parents/carers, particularly in this settling in period. Open and two way communication is always encouraged.
- 10 An emergency contact number will be listed on the child's records.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____
Role in _____ Playgroup _____ Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)

SMOKING AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY

We always strive to promote healthy lifestyles and therefore we do not want to promote smoking nor present adult smokers as role models.

The building operates a no smoking policy.

Staff members are entitled to a smoke break but this must be taken off the premises.

Adults are not permitted to smoke in the company of the children or in any area the children have access to. This applies to all adults taking part in any events, e.g. Outings.

The Playgroup has a zero tolerance policy to drugs or alcohol, any adult breaking this policy will be suspended until further notice and the matter will be immediately referred to the management committee.

Other adults breaking this policy will be asked to leave the premises immediately.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)	
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____	
Role in _____	Signature _____
Playgroup _____	
Reviewed on: _____	by _____ (Chairperson)

SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY

Our aims are:

- 1 To provide education for children with differing needs and requirements (whether it is “short-term” needs, or more long-term educational needs) within the Playgroup setting.
- 2 To fully integrate all the children in the ‘working’ Playgroup environment.
- 3 To monitor and record children’s progress and development through the record-keeping system, and thus aim to identify individual needs.
- 4 To work closely in partnership with parents/carers, social services and other professional bodies to assess these needs and monitor how they are being met.
- 5 To work closely in partnership with parents/carers, social services and other professional bodies, to ensure we can meet these needs, with the facilities, staff and equipment available at the Playgroup.
- 6 To ensure that there is a range of equipment and resources accessible at the Playgroup to meet these individual needs .

We will do this by:

Ensuring that staff members are informed and thus confident in their ability to meet these individual needs through:

- 1 Working in partnership with the child’s parents/carers.
- 2 Communication and support from outside professional bodies where appropriate (eg. Social worker, health visitor, integrated play-therapist, child psychologist, educational psychologist).
- 3 Training courses or workshops.
- 4 Using observation and records in the Playgroup setting to:
 - Meet the immediate needs of the child
 - To proactively plan activities/situations that will encourage development and progression.
 - To monitor and record changes/progression.

If any cause for concern is highlighted through this observation system the child’s needs/progress will be discussed with the parents/carers. In

consultation with the parents/carers, other professionals such as the health visitor may be sought for advice.

- 5 Regularly assessing our range of equipment and resources to meet differing needs, and to strive to enhance existing provision.
- 6 Ensuring that the equipment and facilities are accessible to all the children.
- 7 Adapting activities/layout for individuals where necessary.

This was drawn up with reference to Education (NI) Order 196 – Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (published by DENI).

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)	
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____	
Role in Playgroup _____	Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)	

STAFFING AND EMPLOYMENT POLICY

A high adult child ratio is essential in providing good quality care in a Playgroup setting.

In Castlerock Community Playgroup:

- 1 There is a ratio of at least one staff member to every eight children.
- 2 Regular staff meetings provide opportunities for staff to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss the children's progress and any difficulties within a supportive forum.
- 3 We work towards an equal opportunities employment policy, seeking to offer job opportunities equally to both women and men, with and without disabilities, from all religious, social, ethnic and cultural groups.
- 4 We will aim to ensure that the Playgroup Leader has an NVQ Level III in Child Care and Education or equivalent qualification.
- 5 Training courses are available to all staff, through any recognised training body. The leader will bring relevant courses to the attention of the committee who will decide what courses staff may attend
- 6 The Playgroup budget includes an allocation towards training costs.
- 7 We support the work of our staff by means of regular monitoring/appraisals.
- 8 We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant legislation.
- 9 The committee and leader will monitor attendance of staff closely.
- 10 Interviewees will be kept on file for a period of six months in the event of a member of staff leaving.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____
Role in _____
Playgroup _____ Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)

STEPS TO POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR (HIGH SCOPE APPROACH)

The six steps summarised below are used to help children settle disputes and conflicts.

Children can often carry out this sequence on their own by programs end.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION STEPS

1. **Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions.** Place yourself between the children, on their level; use a calm voice and gentle touch; remaining neutral rather than taking sides.
2. **Acknowledge children's feelings.** Say something simple, such as "you look really upset." Let children know you need to hold any object in question.
3. **Gather information.** Ask "what's the problem?" Do not ask "why" questions, as young children focus on that what the problem is rather than understanding the reasons behind it.
4. **Restate the problem:** "So the problem is" Use and extend the children's vocabulary, substituting neutral words for hurtful or judgemental ones (such as "stupid") if needed.
5. **Ask for solutions and choose one together.** Ask "what can we do to solve this problem?" Encourage children to think of a solution but offer options if the children are unable to at first.
6. **Be prepared to give follow up support.** Acknowledge children's accomplishments, eg "you've solved the problem!" Stay nearby in case anyone, not happy with the solution, and the process needs repeating.

Adults respect children's ideas for solving problems, even if the options they offer don't seem fair to adults.

What is important is that the children agree on the solution and see themselves as competent problem solvers.

MORE SERIOUS PROBLEMS

- If a child repeats unwanted behaviour they will be encouraged to use the **CHILL-OUT** space.
- When child is ready an adult will approach and discuss child's feelings.
- Parent/carer will be informed on day of incident.
- Incident and outcomes will be recorded in an additional information sheet, signed by parent/carer and kept in child's file.

PERSISTENT/AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Observations may be used to establish an understanding of the cause.

- All of above.
- All other children will be moved to ensure their safety.
- Any equipment that could cause harm will be moved.
- Parents may be phoned to take child home for remainder of session.
- Staff and parents will work together to promote more positive behaviour using an individual plan.

<p>This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)</p> <p>Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____</p> <p>Role in Playgroup _____ Signature _____</p> <p>Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)</p>
--

STUDENT PLACEMENT POLICY

We recognise that the quality and variety of work which goes on in a Playgroup makes it an ideal place for students on placement from school and college childcare courses as well as those on the Diploma in Pre-school or Tutor Fieldwork Course.

Students are welcomed into the Playgroup on the following conditions:-

- 1 The needs of the children are paramount. Students will not be admitted in numbers, which hinder the essential work of the Playgroup.
- 2 Students must be confirmed by their tutor to have an expressed interest in childcare, which would provide them with the necessary background understanding of children's development and activities.
- 3 Students required to conduct child studies must have the written permission from parents of the child to be studied, subsequent approval from the parent on completion of study and provide a full copy of the study to the parent.
- 4 Any information gained by students about the children, families or other adults in Playgroup must remain confidential.
- 5 Students will be vetted prior to commencement of placement as in keeping with Social Services requirement.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____
Role in _____ Signature _____
Playgroup _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)

TRAINING AND RECRUITMENT POLICY

Castlerock Community Playgroup is an equal opportunities employer and aims to comply with all employment legislation and provide opportunities for ongoing training in order to acknowledge the responsible and skilled nature of the work with children and to protect the rights of its employees.

We aim to do the following:-

RECRUITMENT OF STAFF

- 1 Provide at least one member of staff to every 8 children aged 3-4 years old.
- 2 Work toward an equal opportunities employment policy, seeking to offer job opportunities equally to both men and women, with and without disabilities from all religious, social, ethnic and cultural groups.
- 3 We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all relevant and current legislation. We will appoint the best person for each job and will treat fairly all applicants for jobs and those appointed.
- 4 All jobs will be advertised locally and externally i.e. Job Centre and local paper, to cover the whole community.
- 5 Provide job description/specifications regarding vacant posts, when the need arises.
- 6 Set up short-listing, interview panels and seek at least two references from the applicants, one of which is from a previous employer (if applicable).
- 7 Seek all pre-employment checks in conjunction with Social Services and Police.
- 8 Set up contract of employment detailing terms and conditions, grievances and disciplinary procedures.
- 9 Provide an induction for staff as well as students and volunteers at Playgroup.
- 10 Introduce a probationary period for all new staff employed with a review period built in of 12 weeks.
- 11 Review of wages of staff on an annual basis each June/September.

TRAINING

- 1 We aim to ensure that staff training meets all regulatory requirements. In addition we aim to ensure that at least half of our staff hold relevant qualification and all staff hold or are working towards qualifications appropriate for their position of the group.
- 2 We support the work of the staff and identify their ongoing training and development needs by means of regular monitoring/appraisals.
- 3 Provide regular staff meetings to enable staff to undertake curriculum planning and to discuss the children's progress and any difficulties.
- 4 The Playgroup budget includes an allocation towards training costs.

<p>This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)</p> <p>Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____</p> <p>Role in _____ Playgroup _____ Signature _____</p> <p>Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)</p>
--

WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY

Principle

Castlerock Community Playgroup is committed to the highest standards of openness, integrity and accountability. Where an individual member of our staff, parent or professional, working closely with our facility, discovers information they believe to show serious malpractice or wrongdoing within the group, should be prepared to disclose this information without fear of reprisal.

Statement of Intent

The Public Interest Disclosure Act (1998) provides legal protection to employees against being dismissed or penalized as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious concerns. The group has endorsed the provision set out below as to ensure that no member of staff should feel at a disadvantage in raising legitimate concerns.

Procedures

Castlerock Community Playgroup is committed to delivering a high quality pre-school service, promoting accountability and maintaining public confidence. This policy provides individuals in the workplace with protection from victimisation or punishment when they raise a genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice in the setting. The policy is underpinned by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, which encourages people to raise concerns about misconduct or malpractice in the workplace, in order to promote good governance and accountability in the public interest. The Act covers behaviour, which amounts to:

- 1 A criminal offence;
- 2 Failure to comply with any legal obligation;
- 3 A miscarriage of justice;
- 4 Danger to health and safety of an individual and/or environment;
- 5 Deliberate concealment of information about any of the above.

It is not intended that this policy be a substitute for, or an alternative to the settings formal complaints procedure. It is designed to nurture a culture of openness and transparency within the setting, which makes it safe and acceptable for employees and volunteers to raise, in good faith, a concern they may have about misconduct or malpractice.

An employee or volunteer who, acting in good faith, wishes to raise such a concern should report the matter to the Playgroup leader who will advise the employee or volunteer of the action that will be taken in response to the concerns expressed.

Concerns should be investigated and resolved as quickly as possible. If an employee or volunteer feels the matter cannot be discussed with the Playgroup leader then they should contact the Chairperson. A disclosure in good faith to the leader/chairperson will be protected. Confidentiality will be

maintained wherever possible and the employee or volunteer will not suffer any personal detriment as a result of raising any genuine concern about misconduct or malpractice within the setting.

This policy was adopted on: _____ (Date)	
Signed on behalf of Castlerock Playgroup by (print name) _____	
Role in Playgroup _____	Signature _____
Reviewed on: _____ by _____ (Chairperson)	

CASTLEROCK COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP

These policies were read, revised, updated and adopted at a Castlerock Playgroup committee meeting.

Date Policies Adopted: _____

Signed on behalf of Playgroup by (print name):

Role in Playgroup: _____

Signature: _____

Reviewed on: _____

By (chairperson): _____

REVIEWED

I have read and understood all the Policies of Castlerock Community Playgroup contained within this booklet and hereby agree to abide by them at all times. I am fully aware that the Policy booklet of Castlerock Community Playgroup will remain available at all times upon request for further consultation for whatever reason.

Signed	Print Name	Date