



Tarmon Afterschool Club Policies and Procedures

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Website: www.happyfeetchildcare.ie
Owner: Anita Flynn
Manager: Ashling Horan

All Staff are furnished with a copy of the within policies and further hard or electronic copies are available from Management.
Copies of these policies are available from Management to parents/guardians of children in the Service.

Updated: August 2023

Review Date: August 2024

Happy Feet Childcare Tarmon After School Policies and Procedures August 2023

CONTEXT:

These policies have been developed with reference to:

The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Registration of School Aged Services) Regulations 2018

Roles and Responsibilities Regarding Policies:

Relevant staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to developing, approving, distributing, and reviewing policies.

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INFORMATION:

SÍOLTA, the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education

1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND FUNCTION

Document Title:	Statement of Purpose and Function
Unique Reference Number:	01
Document Author:	Happy Feet Childcare, CB
Document Approved:	Ashling Horan
Person(s) responsible for developing, distributing, and reviewing Policy	Ashling Horan
Person responsible for approving Policy	Anita Flynn
Method of communication of policies to staff (email / hard copy / induction training)	Email
Method of communication of policies to parents/guardians (full policies via email, hard copy)	Email and hard copy available in Service
Method of communication of policies to Children in the Service	A Child Friendly Version of this policy is available in the Service
Method of communication of policies to Stakeholders (full policies via email, hard copy)	Stakeholders***
Date the Document is Effective From:	August 2023
Scheduled Review Date:	August 2024
Number of Pages:	10

This Statement is developed in accordance with the Child Care Act 1991 [Early Years Services] [Registration of School Age Services] Regulations 2018.

This Statement is available and communicated to parents, staff, and relevant stakeholders.

It is also available in child friendly format to school age children in the Service.

Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to this policy. Relevant staff have received training on this policy.

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Purpose and Function:

The purpose of these policies is to set out the Service's policies and procedures used in this After School service which include but are not limited to:

1. Statement of Purpose and Function
2. Dropping Off and Collection of School Aged Children
3. Fire Safety Policy
4. Medication Management
5. Behaviour Management includes challenging behaviour.
6. Infection Control
7. Outings
8. Missing Child
9. Child and Adult Protection
10. Child Safeguarding Statement
11. Complaints
12. Insurance

The service also has the following additional policies:

- Recruitment
- Settling In
- Absence Management
- Staff Supervision
- Training
- Inclusion
- Accidents & Incidents
- Healthy Eating
- Outdoor Play
- Risk Management

The policies above are the current policies in place, and we will develop further policies as required.

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KEY INFORMATION:

Opening Hours:	2:00p.m. to -6:00 p.m. 8.00am – 6.00pm
No of Weeks per year opened:	50
No. of Children attending the Service	48
Capacity:	48
Age Range:	4-12 years
Ratios:	1:12
Curriculum:	Arts and crafts, board games, gym, Astro pitch, running. track, baking
Address:	Tarmon National School, Tarmon, Castlerea, Co Roscommon
Phone Number:	085 868 0678
Email:	info@happyfeetchildcare.ie ladybirdroomtarmon@gmail.com

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Key Personnel: In-House

Manager (Person in charge):	Ashling Horan
Deputy in the absence of Manager:	Edwina Lennon
Health and Safety Officer:	Ashling Horan
Fire Officer:	Ashling Horan
First Aid Co-Ordinator:	Ashling Horan
Relevant Person for the Purpose of this Statement:	Ashling Horan
Designated Liaison Officer:	Ashling Horan
Deputy Designated Liaison Officer:	Edwina Lennon
Data Controller:	Ashling Horan

Key Personnel: External

TUSLA Early Years Inspection Team:	Early Years Inspector, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon. 090 66378667
TUSLA Social Work Department:	Child and Family Agency, Riverside House, Main Street, Castlerea, Co Roscommon. 090 6637851
Garda:	Knockroe, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon Phone: <u>(094) 962 1630</u>
Hospital:	Roscommon University Hospital 090 6626200
Garda Vetting:	Early Childhood Ireland

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Type of Service:

The purpose of this service is to provide an After-School and out of term full day care service facility for children aged 4-13 years. We open 50 weeks per year and daily from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday to Friday for term time and 8:00am – 6:00pm. We have the capacity to cater for 48 children at any one time and our ratios are listed in the table. We currently cater for 48 children.

This service is privately owned by Anita Flynn.

We provide a range of activities including.

Arts and crafts, board games, gym, Astro pitch, running track, baking.

Range of Services and Facilities:

Our service:

- We are open 50 weeks per year.
- We will close for one week in July and close for Christmas as per our calendar.
- We are offering the following funding schemes:
 - NCS

Our Facilities include:

- Large well-equipped outdoor area
- Playground with safety surface (Astro turf, grass, tarmac, rubber).
- Large, bright, spacious room.
- Hot meals provided by the service chef.
- Trained and qualified staff.
- Homework Support

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Homework Policy:

It is the policy of the service to provide a period of time (30 mins) each day for homework. This session will be scheduled to take place directly after children have had their snack/meal.

- Each child will get 30 minutes to complete written homework only.
- Staff will contribute to a quiet relaxed atmosphere during homework sessions and encourage children to do the same and will be there to help children with their homework.
- However, staff will not be responsible for signing children's homework as it is very important that parents/guardians check each child's homework.
- The After-School Service recognises the importance of the parent's role in homework support and encourages them to check work completed, hear reading etc. and play an active role in the homework supervision and support of their child.

Fees:

Parents/guardians are required to sign a Parent Agreement regarding fee payment:

- Fees must be paid monthly.
- Fees must be paid by cash or bank transfer.
- Receipts will be issued if required.

Breakfast Club	€4 per morning / €20 per week
Happy Hour – 2pm-3pm	€4 per day / €20 per week
2pm-6pm	€17 per day / €85 per week
3pm-6pm	€14 per day / €70 per week

Reviewing Fees:

- Fees are reviewed annually by the management.
- Parents/guardians will be informed by giving one month's notice of the increase in fees.
- The increase in fees each year will be related to the cost-of-living increases and/or exceptional cost circumstances.

Payments in relation to Holidays or Illness of the Child/Children:

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- Parents/guardians will be required to pay for any days/weeks that their child/children do not attend the service.
- In the case of a long-term, medically certified illness of a child, parents/guardians are advised to keep in contact with the Manager on a regular basis. Further arrangements will be discussed with the Parent/Guardian.
- There will be no fees charged when the service is on Holidays (e.g., the months of July, August etc.). These dates will be circulated directly to parents/guardians and posted on the parent's notice board well in advance of these closure periods.

Closure in Exceptional Circumstances:

In the event of the closure of the service in exceptional circumstances, that is beyond the control of the Management i.e., adverse weather conditions, the following will apply:

- No fees are payable.

Late Collection of Child/Children from the Afterschool

Two members of staff are required to be with the child/children at all times.

- Parents/guardians are advised to keep within their agreed time for collection of their child/children for the above reasons. We require that all children should be collected by the designated time in order that the service may follow health and safety practices to ensure that the service may close safely.
- Please see the Collections and Arrivals Policy and Procedure.
- **There is a Late Collection Fee of €5 per 5 minutes or part there off.**

Withdrawal of Children:

- Give notice, in writing or via text message that the child/children are leaving the service.
- Give two weeks' notice or pay two weeks of fees.
- Management also reserves the right to request that the Parent/Guardian withdraw their child/children from the service if they are not 'settling in' or adapting to the environment. The Management agrees to give two weeks' notice of this to the Parent/Guardian so that they can make alternative arrangements.

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Withdrawal and Exclusion

We are an inclusive service and open our doors to children with abilities and disabilities. We ask parents to share with us as much information as possible to ensure the child's individual needs are met. Our aim is to make reasonable accommodation to be inclusive, since it is within our resources and within the interest of the individual child and the group of children.

In certain circumstances it may be necessary to exclude children temporarily

When a child has an illness as outlined in our infection Control Policy

When a risk assessment shows that the child should not attend as it may not be safe to do so following a risk assessment. This includes.

- a. when children have severe behaviour difficulties that may be a danger to himself/herself and/or the group
- b. where a child is ill or recovering from an illness and is not fit to attend. This is relevant when a child may require one-to-one attention.
- c. where there are exceptional circumstances where group care is not suitable

In very rare circumstances we will have no option to terminate the place, but this will be a last resort, following risk assessment and discussion with the parents. We will always endeavor to resolve any issues in a professional, practical manner and with the highest respect for the child and family.

Non-payment of Fees:

- Non-payment of fees will result in loss of placement.
- A repeated failure to pay fees may result in suspension or withdrawal of your child's place until the matter is resolved. Fees will still be charged will this matter has been resolved.
- Any delays in payments must be discussed in advance and agreed with management.

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Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Name:

Person responsible for approving the Policy

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2. DROPPING OFF AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN (includes General Collection Policy)

Document Title:	Dropping off and Collection of Children (includes General Collection Policy)
Unique Reference Number:	002
Document Author:	Happy Feet Childcare, CB
Document Approved:	Ashling Horan
Person(s) responsible for developing, distributing, and reviewing Policy	Ashling Horan
Person responsible for approving Policy	Anita Flynn
Method of communication of policies to staff (email / hard copy / induction training)	Email
Method of communication of policies to parents/guardians (full policies via email, hard copy)	Email and hard copy available in Service
Method of communication of policies to Children in the Service	A Hard Copy Child Friendly Version of this policy is available in the Service
Date the Document is Effective From:	August 2023
Scheduled Review Date:	August 2024
Number of Pages:	10

This policy is developed in accordance with the Child Care Act 1991 [Early Years Services] [Registration of School Age Services] Regulations 2018.

This policy is available and communicated to parents, guardians, staff, and relevant stakeholders.

It is also available in child friendly format to school age children in the Service.

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Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to this policy. Relevant staff have received training on this policy.

Our insurance policy covers the collection and transportation of children adequately.

Statement of Intent:

The well-being, safety, and security of all the children in the setting is our main concern. The following procedure has been drawn up to ensure that this is maintained at all times, that an accurate record is kept of all children in the Service including absences, arrival, and departure and that all children leave the premises with either their main carers or the adults who are authorised to do so.

Before any child starts the Service the parent/carer is required to provide the names and contact details of all the people authorised to collect their child on their registration form. Only persons aged 16 years and upwards may be named on the registration form and will be permitted to collect the child.

If the named person/s cannot collect the child they are responsible for, the parent /carer must inform staff of the person, over 16 years of age, who will be collecting the child and give consent in writing where possible, with a clear description and contact details including address and telephone number of the responsible person.

If possible, we would like to meet the person collecting in advance, enabling the staff to feel confident about the child leaving safely and happily.

In the instance of an unknown /unnamed adult coming to the setting to collect a child, they will be asked to wait outside while contact is made with the main carer. If this is not possible, they will be requested to wait until contact can be made. On no account will a child be allowed to leave the premises with an unauthorised person. Any deviation made by any staff member will be considered as gross misconduct and will be dealt with appropriately.

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Note:

All children are supervised during collection times, and when entering and leaving the service.

Attendance:

It is essential to the efficient running of our service that parents/guardians inform us if their child is unable to attend the service and follow up with a telephone call / text message to inform management when the child will be returning. A register of the times and days that children attend is kept.

Transport arranged by parents/guardians:

Where parents/guardians make their own independent arrangements for their children to be collected from school by car or bus and brought to the service, the safety of the child is a matter for the parents/guardians. The Service is not liable for any loss, damage claims or demands as a result of children travelling in transport so organised.

Transport arranged by the Service:

We have no arrangements in place for the collection of children from other schools.

Collection of Children by Parents/Guardians or Nominated Persons from the Service:

- For their own safety it is the policy of the service that no children will be permitted, under any circumstances, to leave the Service unaccompanied.
- Children must be collected by a parent/guardian or their nominated person.
- Parents/guardian or their nominated person are responsible for their children during collection at the service and must accompany the child off service premises.

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- Parents/guardians or their nominated person gain access to the service by phoning the service phone.
- A member of staff, a parent or guardian or their nominated person will register each child on collection.
- Parents/guardians must collect their child by the agreed collection time. Parents/guardians will be asked to give the names of at least two other people who are authorised to collect the child. If the parent is late arriving to collect the child, the person in charge will endeavor to contact the parent. In the event of being unable to contact the parent, the person in charge will contact the other named persons to collect the child.
- Children will not be released into the care of a person under the age of 16 years or to a person who appears to be incapable of caring for the child. Should this situation arise, the staff will contact an authorised collector. If no one is available to collect the child, then the person in charge should contact the TUSLA social work child protection team. Services are required to get proof of age for people over 16.
- Nominated persons who are unknown to the service will be required to produce either a driving licence, passport or other photographic identification which states the person's date of birth so that the service can ensure that person is over 16 years of age.
- In the event of a parent collecting another child a prior arrangement must be made.

Children of school-going age arriving at or leaving the service unaccompanied:

It is the policy of the service that no minor child may arrive at or leave the service unaccompanied. Where a parent/guardian requires that their minor child(ren) may arrive at or leave the service premises unaccompanied the service requires that such parent or guardian:

Note: Where a parent instructs the service, a parent does so at their own risk and the risk of the child. The Service has no responsibility for and owes no duty of care to such child, parents/guardians before the child's arrival at the service premises and immediately the child has exited the Service's premises.

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Such instruction will only be accepted by the Service from the parent or guardian of a child(ren) and not from a nominated person.

If a child is booked into the After-School Service and they do not arrive we will follow the following procedures:

- The person in charge will check with the class teacher to find out if the child was in school.
- The person in charge will telephone the parent or other emergency contact from the contacts list.
- If the child is in school and the parent cannot be contacted, we will contact the local Garda station to report the child missing.

Attempted collection by a person who is not on the child's records:

Children should be collected only by the adult/s named on the 'Collection Authorisation'. Should the person responsible be unable to collect the child, a text message must be sent to the service phone with a contact telephone number, the staff member will then telephone the parent prior to allowing the child to leave the service. If the parent personally arranges this with the staff the telephone call may not be necessary, but signed consent will be required at all times.

If the parent has not been personally contacted to authorise the collection of their child, the child **will not** be permitted to leave the premises until an authorised collector, as recorded in the child's records is available.

Late Collection of Children:

We understand that sometimes a parent is unavoidably delayed when coming to collect their child. We will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible. Parents/guardians in this situation must contact the Manager.

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to say that they will be late and arrange with staff what to do. Children are only released from the service to individuals named by the parent.

We reserve the right to charge a late collection fee for late collection of children. Our fee is €5 per 5 mins or part thereof.

Early Collection of Children:

We ask parents/guardians to let us know if they or their nominated person will be picking up their child early so that we can have the child ready and minimise disrupting the rest of the group.

Late Drop Off:

We ask parents/guardians to drop children off at the correct time to avoid disrupting the group once they have started so that the child benefits from the afterschool program.

Where a child is not collected:

In the event that child is not collected from the service after the expiration of 5 minutes after the appointed time, the Management will contact the parents/guardians by telephone to ascertain when they will be arriving at the Service to pick up their child. Management will then make arrangements with the parents in relation to collection. Please note that a late collection fee of €5 per 5 minutes or part there of applies.

In the event that Management is unable to contact the parents/guardians by telephone, a text message will be sent to the parent or guardian. If no response is received to this text message within 5 (five) minutes Management will contact the parent/guardian's emergency collection person identified to the Service to make arrangements for the emergency person to collect the child from the Service.

Where Management is unable to make contact with parents/guardians or the specified emergency person after the expiration of two hours after the appointed collection time, if.

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there is no contact from parents/guardians or emergency person the Management will notify Tusla and An Garda Síochána of the position in case an emergency has arisen.

Separated and Divorced Parents:

Married parents are automatically joint guardians of their children. Neither separation nor divorce changes this.

- We cannot refuse either parent to collect their child unless a court order is in place. However, we reserve the right to seek clarification of identity when one parent has not had any contact with the service, or the contract has been with one parent only and a second parent makes unexpected contact. This is usually in circumstances where a separation is happening.
- We ask that parents give us information on any person that **does not** have legal access to the child.
- Where custody of a child is granted to one parent, we would ask parents to clarify the circumstances with us. This information will remain confidential and will only be made known to the relevant staff. If there are any legal documents, i.e., custody order, barring order, we would ask parents to provide us with a copy to keep on file.

Attempted collection by a parent who has been denied access in a court order:

- A parent who has been denied access to a child through a court order will not be permitted to be on the premises.
- If the parent who has been denied access becomes threatening or violent and insists on removing the child from the service, this will be viewed as trespassing. The service will in this event contact the Local Garda.

By law, an unmarried mother is the automatic guardian of a child born outside of marriage. In some circumstances, unmarried fathers have automatic access. The service should be informed about access rights. Unmarried fathers will automatically become guardians of

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their children if they meet a cohabitation requirement. An unmarried father who cohabits for 12 months with the child's mother, including 3 months following a child's birth, will automatically become the child's guardian. This provision is not retrospective, so guardianship will only be acquired automatically where the parents live together for at least 12 months after 18 January 2016.

If a parent/guardian or the nominated person arrives in an unfit state:

Parents/guardians/nominated Persons should be in a fit state to collect their children. If a parent/guardian/nominated person arrives in an 'unfit' state, for example under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the senior member of staff on duty will contact the other parent or nominated person as listed on the child's registration form (depending on authorisations and circumstances) or will contact the duty social worker or the Gardaí. The child's welfare and safety will always come first.

Informing the Service if a child is not attending.

If a child has not attended school due to appointment, illness etc. the service should be informed no later than 10am. This policy also applies to un-notified changes of collection times. This should also apply in any event whereby the child does not need to be collected from school. Failure to do so can waste valuable time and causes undue concern for staff collecting the child from their school.

- It is the responsibility of the parent to make the necessary arrangements to get the child/children to the service and to inform the person in charge in writing of these arrangements.
- It is also the parents' responsibility to comply with the Service's policy which prohibits children arriving unaccompanied to the Service.

Note: Records of all Collections are kept for two years from the time ceases attending the service.

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Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Name:

Name of Person Approving Policy

3. FIRE SAFETY

Document Title:	Fire Safety
Unique Reference Number:	003
Document Author:	Happy Feet Childcare, CB
Document Approved:	Ashling Horan
Person(s) responsible for developing, distributing, and reviewing Policy	Ashling Horan
Person responsible for approving Policy	Anita Flynn
Method of communication of policies to staff (email / hard copy / induction training)	Email
Method of communication of policies to parents/guardians (full policies via email, hard copy)	Email and hard copy available in service
Method of communication of policies to Children in the Service	A Child Friendly Version of this policy is available in the Service
Method of communication of policies to Relevant Stakeholders (full policies via email, hard copy)	Email or hard copy
Date the Document is Effective From:	August 2023
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Number of Pages:	9

This policy is developed in accordance with the Child Care Act 1991 [Early Years Services] [Registration of School Age Services] Regulations 2018.

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It is also available in child friendly format to school age children in the Service.

Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to this policy. Relevant staff have received training on this policy.

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Children will be taught how to evacuate in a child-friendly manner and this procedure will be built into the curriculum. Children will be taught about fire safety and staff will be cognisant of the children's age and stage of development in doing this.

Statement of Intent:

We will follow all relevant legislation. We will also ensure we follow the 'Guide to Fire Safety in the Premises used for Preschool Services' from the Department of the Environment as a guideline. This is to ensure the safety, health and welfare of the children, staff and parents/guardians who are in the service.

Fire drill procedures are carried out in a child friendly format to ensure the safe evacuation of the children availing of the Service.

In the interests of a child friendly approach children are taught the fundamentals of fire safety and drills are carried out in a manner that the children can understand. Staff will be aware of any children who may become upset during fire drills will offer reassurance.

Policy and Procedures:

We will ensure that:

- Retain records of all fire drills held by the Service.
- Fire drills will be carried out monthly at different times and days during the sessions to ensure we know how to respond in all circumstances. A written record will be kept on file and will be available for inspection.
- Records of fire drills will demonstrate that:
 - They are initiated by setting off the fire alarm.
 - All children attending the Service are included in the drill.
 - how many children and staff are present.
 - The fire drill is carried out at different times of the day and on different days of the week and includes all groups.

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- the date and time of the drill.
- the length of the drill.
- routes of escape used.
- the location of the fire assembly point(s)
- Fire extinguishers and blankets will be stored appropriately, ready for use and in good working order.
- Staff are familiar with the location of all firefighting equipment and are trained in its use.
- A record of the number, type and maintenance record of all firefighting equipment including fire extinguishers and smoke alarms will be kept and they will be serviced annually with a record maintained of the service dates. The records will include:
 - A maintenance certificate from a competent contractor or company.
 - Smoke alarms will be tested monthly.
- All employees will be trained on the Fire Safety Policy
 - The procedure to be followed in case of fire with particular awareness of the layout of the premises and the ages of the children.
 - Where firefighting equipment is located.
 - How to use firefighting equipment.
 - The location and operation of fire doors and fire exits.
 - Carrying out and recording fire drills.
 - Fire safety risk assessment.
 - Staff will be trained/retrained at least every 2 years.

A record of this training will be recorded and kept on file for inspection and a Fire Notice setting out the procedure to be followed in a fire drill is displayed in the Service.

- Smoke detectors will be placed at strategic points in the building and 'hard wired'.
- The smoke detectors will be checked at least once a month to ensure they are working. A record will be maintained of the dates on which the detectors are checked.
- Materials contained in bedding and internal furnishings within the service will be of EU standard (i.e., kite symbol or CE compliant) in relation to fire retardant properties and will be nontoxic.

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- Heat emitting surfaces will be protected by a fixed guard and/or thermostatically controlled to ensure safe temperatures.
- A system for giving warnings in the event of fire must be provided.
- The escape route and exit doors should be maintained free from obstruction so that they can be safely and effectively used at all times.
- All flammable materials (oils, polish etc.) are safely stored outside of the children's areas. Waste is promptly disposed of and, in general, precautions are taken to ensure the prevention of occurrences likely to constitute a fire hazard.
- Daily attendance records are kept.

Access to Records:

- File records are stored securely.
- The fire drill and maintenance records are available to:
 - parents and guardians of children attending the service.
 - parents and guardians of children proposing to attend the service.
 - employees.
 - any authorised person.

Record Retention Period:

Records of fire drills and maintenance records of fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms are kept for 5 years after their creation.

Fire Notice:

There is a notice setting out the procedures to be followed if there is a fire.

The notice is displayed on the noticeboard.

The fire assembly point is located in the car park at the fire assembly point notice.

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Fire Drill Policy:

The service has a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire drill or evacuation posted on the wall in all areas. All staff members will be trained and should be familiar with their responsibilities with regard to fire drills and the procedures in case the fire alarm goes off. The fire alarm procedure must be shown to all students, substitutes and relief employees commencing work in the service.

We have a lesson with the children about fire and why fire drills must be practiced. We do mock fire drills with the children.

Fire drills will be practiced on a regular basis, at least once a month. All people on the premises at the time are expected to participate.

All children and staff members must be signed in and out according to the attendance record. This record will be used for fire drills.

The main consideration is to stay calm and not to panic. The children should be filed out and brought to the fire assembly point where roll call will take place.

A record of the fire drill should be kept on file in the office - how long it took, equipment needed, how you dealt with it, how the children dealt with it etc. If a child in your group was upset this should be noted in his/her individual file.

Fire Drill Procedures:

If you discover a fire or one is reported to you:

- Sound the alarm and shout FIRE!
- On sounding or hearing the alarm, stop whatever you are doing and leave the building with the children by your designated fire exit route. Using the following routine.
- When the fire bell sounds, the children are asked in a calm manner to form a line without delay.
- Led by one member of staff they leave the building by the shortest route.
- The staff member/s will take the roll book, check the premises, cloakrooms and then leave last.

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- A designated person will take the visitor book.
- Once outside stay outside.
- Do not stop collecting personal belongings or putting on coats.
- If possible, close doors and windows en-route.
- Meet at the assembly point.
- Do not re-enter the building until the management of the fire brigade – fire safety officer informs you it is safe to do so.
- Roll call will be carried out by management at the assembly point to ensure all persons are accounted for.

Fire Control:

You should only attack the fire if you know what you are doing and if you are not placing your own life in danger. Fire extinguishers and firefighting equipment are provided for this purpose.

General:





Staff should follow procedures for operating the fire alarm as outlined in the Health and Safety Statement. All employees should be aware of:

- All escape routes from the premises.
- All fire exits are clearly identified and easily opened from the inside.
- Method of operation of fire doors.
- The importance of keeping fire doors closed.
- How to isolate power supplies where appropriate.
- The importance of general fire precautions and good housekeeping.
- The staff are made aware of the potential fire hazards as a result of their activities and smoking on site is forbidden on site or adjacent to the building.
- All staff will take reasonable care in their work activities to ensure that they do not generate any potential fire hazards. Any flammable liquids used on site will be stored away from heat sources in suitable containers which will be kept sealed to avoid build-up of flammable vapors.

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- All firefighting equipment located on the premises will be in accordance with the requirements of the area that it is being located and will meet the required classification for that area based on the classifications as per I.S. 290: 1986 standard.
- All firefighting equipment is tested and serviced annually by certified contractors. In accordance with the recommendation of the appropriate *Irish Standard I.S 291.1998* for fire equipment, 30% of extinguishers will be discharged each year and relevant employees trained in the safe and efficient use of the equipment.
- The chart outlines the correct use of the most commonly available fire extinguishers. Please note that CO₂ extinguishers should not be used on paper or light material as they may spread burning fuel causing the fire to further spread.

Fire Extinguisher Chart

Extinguisher		Type of Fire				
Colour	Type	Solids (wood, paper, cloth, etc)	Flammable Liquids	Flammable Gasses	Electrical Equipment	Cooking Oils & Fats
	Water	✓ Yes	✗ No	✗ No	✗ No	✗ No
	Foam	✓ Yes	✓ Yes	✗ No	✗ No	✓ Yes
	Dry Powder	✓ Yes	✓ Yes	✓ Yes	✓ Yes	✗ No
	Carbon Dioxide (CO ₂)	✗ No	✓ Yes	✗ No	✓ Yes	✓ Yes

When Dealing with a Fire:

Staff should be aware of the location of the firefighting equipment on the premises and the method of operation of this equipment prior to use in an emergency. If a person's clothing is on fire, wrap the fire blanket, rug, or similar article closely around them and lay them on the ground to prevent flames reaching the head. If electrical appliances are involved, switch off the power before dealing with the fire. Shut the doors and, if possible,

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the windows of the room in which the fire is discovered ensuring the main routes of escape are maintained at all times.

Call the Fire Brigade – The designated person(s) should call 999 and give precise instructions as to the address, including the name of the nearest main road and/or other landmarks.

Evacuation – Commence an orderly evacuation of the building. The Manager will check that all the rooms are unoccupied and bathrooms. Close the doors and windows as each check is completed. The Manager will take the daily attendance sheets and a list of parents/guardians' telephone numbers to the Assembly Point.

Assembly – Assemble children and staff at a safe pre-arranged point. A roll call or head count should be carried out, based on the daily attendance sheets held by the Manager. The group should then proceed to a nearby safe house, from which the parents/guardians can be contacted.

Staff Report – A member of staff should be on hand when the Fire Brigade arrives to provide any information they require.

Attack Fire – You can try to extinguish the fire but only if it is safe to do so, using proper equipment. Otherwise, wait until trained personnel arrive.

The above procedure should be practiced as a Fire Drill at regular intervals to familiarize the children with the procedure without frightening them.

Sections 18 and 19, Fire Services Act 1981 ("the Act")

In compliance with Section 18 of the Act it shall be the duty of every person having control over premises to which this section of the Act applies to take all reasonable measures to guard against the outbreak of fire on such premises, and to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable the safety of persons on the premises in the event of an outbreak of fire.

It shall be the duty of every person, being on premises to which this section applies, to conduct themselves in such a way as to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable any person on the premises is not exposed to danger from fire as a consequence of any act or omission of their part.

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Section 19 of the Act: The owners of the Service hereby confirm that the Service is not contained within a potentially dangerous building as defined by Article 19 of the Act.

We have a Designated Fire Safety Officer.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Name:

Person responsible for approving the Policy.

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4. MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

Document Title:	Medication Management
Unique Reference Number:	004
Document Author:	Happy Feet Childcare, CB
Document Approved:	Ashling Horan
Person(s) responsible for developing, distributing, and reviewing Policy	Ashling Horan
Person responsible for approving Policy	Anita Flynn
Method of communication of policies to staff (email / hard copy / induction training)	Email
Method of communication of policies to parents/guardians (full policies via email, hard copy)	Email and hard copy available in Service
Method of communication of policies to Children in the Service	A Child Friendly Version of this policy is available in the Service
Date the Document is Effective From:	August 2023
Scheduled Review Date:	August 2024
Number of Pages:	11

This policy is developed in accordance with the Child Care Act 1991 [Early Years Services] [Registration of School Age Services] Regulations 2018.

This policy is available and communicated to parents, staff, and relevant stakeholders.

It is also available in child friendly format to school age children in the Service.

Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to this policy. Relevant staff have received training on this policy.

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Statement of Intent:

To facilitate promotion of health and wellbeing and to promote an inclusive setting, we will work in consultation with parents to ensure the safe administration of medication.

Procedure:

We do not routinely administer non-prescription/prescription medications. We only administer medicines with the correct signed permission.

Only named authorised persons will administer medicines.

Where a child or children attending the Service have specific medical conditions which require specialised treatment or administration of medication it is the policy of the Service that key staff will be trained specifically in relation to such treatments and administration of medications pertaining to same.

Medicines must only be brought into the service for administration by the staff when it is essential. This means where it would be detrimental to the child's health if it were not to be administered.

- Designated personnel are only permitted to administer medicine.
- Staff will be trained on medicine administration.
- The Manager must be informed if your child is taking antibiotics or any other prescription or non-prescription medication.
- A full medical and medicine history must be provided for each child.
- A record of the child's medical history will be required on the registration form.
- Essential medicines will only be administered where a parent/guardian has signed a consent form which is contained in the Registration Form or on a separate consent form,
- We will only follow the dosage as instructed by the doctor who prescribed the medication.
- If the administration of prescribed medication requires medical knowledge, individual training is provided for the relevant member of staff by a health professional.

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- No child may self-administer.
- If a child refuses to take their medication staff will not force them to do so. But will seek advice from the parents.
- Parents/guardians must keep the service up to date on their child's medical needs.
- Parents/guardians must fill in the medicine consent form of the service, authorizing the administration of medicine (prescription or non-prescription) to their child. Staff cannot give medicine unless this written permission is given.
- Parents/guardians must hand staff the medicine, which is then stored in the fridge or the medicine cabinet. Any form of medication must never be left in a child's bag, including inhalers.
- Medicines must be in their original packaging clearly labelled with the child's name, the current date, expiry date, storage instructions and dosage plus the name of the health care provider that recommended the medication. We will only administer medicine if licensed for the age group of the child. For example, an anti-febrile medication supplied by a parent for a 4.5-year-old child that is licensed for an over 6-year-old will not be administered.
- We will always have the documentation available related to the medicine to include directions for use, possible adverse reactions.

Care Plans:

Where an individual care plan has been drawn up in respect of a child attending the Service, key and relevant staff will receive additional training where necessary in respect of such care plans. Such staff will be aware of how to implement the instructions contained in the care plan, the medical condition(s) to which it refers, the method of administration of medication referred to.

Storage of Medicines:

- All medication is stored in line with manufacturer's instructions out of reach of the children.
- Medication is stored in a high press.
- For self-medicating children the availability and storage of their medication will be decided during the risk assessment
- The Manager/person in charge is responsible for ensuring medicine is handed back

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at the end of the day to the parents.

- For some conditions, medication may be kept at the Service. The Manager will check that any medication held to administer on an as and when required basis, or on a regular basis, is in date and return any out-of-date medication to the parent.
- Unused medicines should be returned to the parent.
- Medicines, creams, and ointments are not stored in the first aid box.
- All medication is returned to storage immediately following its administration to a child.

Disposal of Medication:

The circumstances where disposal is necessary include:

- A child's treatment plan changes
- A child leaves or goes to a new facility.
- The medicine reaches its expiry date.
- Any medication that has expired, is short dated or is no longer needed by the child will be returned to the parent or guardian. This is recorded in the medication diary.

Procedures for staff administering essential medicines (Prescription and non-prescription)/record keeping:

1. Wash hands thoroughly.

2. Staff administering medicines must check:

- The child's name.
- Prescribed dose.
- Expiry date of medicine.
- Written instructions provided by the prescriber on the label or original container.
- Time last dose was given.
- That the directions and instructions are in English
- Staff must check that the medicine contains the directions as prescribed by the doctor and dispensed by the pharmacy.
- Check parents/guardians have completed and signed 'Administration of Medicines' Consent form and Anti Febrile Medication form if relevant.

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- Staff are aware of how the medication reacts with food, fluids, or other medications. e.g., some medications cannot be given with milk, or when taking another medication.
- Following the administration of medication staff will maintain a record of the outcome of the administration of the medication. e.g., was there a reduction in temperature after

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administration of anti-febrile agent; has the child developed a rash following administration of medication.

Anti-Febrile Medication: Emergency Medication

Anti-febrile medication is medication used to reduce a raised body temperature. The most common anti-febrile medications used are Paracetamol and Ibuprofen (Anti-febrile medication is important treatment for high temperatures to prevent febrile convulsions. Parents/guardians are required to complete a form authorising the administration of such medication if the child develops a temperature over 38 degrees C. This medication should not be used unless indicated for high temperature or pain as overdose can cause significant medical problems.

Parents/guardians will always be notified by telephone prior to the administration of an un-prescribed anti-febrile medication. If the anti-febrile medication does not reduce the temperature medical advice will be sought by contacting the child's GP, hospital or emergency services and the advice will be followed by the staff.

Medication forms will be reviewed regularly by the Manager to identify children who require frequent or repeated anti-febrile medications. A child in this category may require to be seen by their doctor. Parents/guardians may be asked to supply a medical report.

If the consent form is not signed, then the parent must be contacted immediately BEFORE any administration of Anti Febrile Medication' to the child to confirm that it is permissible. Parents/guardians upon returning to the service must then be required to sign the correct permission forms.

If a child has a temperature and permission for 'Anti Febrile Medication' has not been granted medical advice should be obtained immediately.

Staff must ask for a person in charge or another member of staff to be present. Ask them to confirm steps 1 and 2 and that the medicine can be administered.

- Staff **MUST** have a witness **PRESENT** to the medicine being administered. [Second person and countersigned by that person]

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- Staff must record the child's name, date, time dosage and route in the medicines record and give a copy to the parent.
- Parents/guardians will be required to sign to say they were informed of the dosage of the medicine upon collection of the child.

It is extremely important that staff follow the procedures as detailed above. These measures are in place to ensure that no mistakes are made. Administering medication is a responsibility which must be undertaken with due caution. If staff are not sure how to administer it or have difficulty doing so, please inform the Manager/person in charge.

The following should always be checked:

- Correct Child
- Correct Medication
- Correct Dose
- Correct Time
- Correct Route

NOTE: Students or volunteers may not administer medicines.

Procedures for Children with Allergies Requiring Treatment with Oral Medication:

- Asthma inhalers are regarded as "oral medication" Oral medications must be prescribed by a GP and have the manufacturer instructions clearly written on them.
- Staff must be provided with clear written instructions on how to administer such medication.
- Inhalers must be provided to the service clearly labelled with the child's name.
- The service must have the parents/guardians' or guardians' prior written consent. This consent must be kept on file.

Emergency Medicines

Where medical conditions exist for a child, we will develop individual medical care plans which will include the management in the event of an emergency relating to the condition. This will be developed in conjunction with the parents and the child's medical advisers.

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Where a child has a condition that may require emergency medical treatment staff will be trained on the condition and the treatment. This would include medications like Ventolin, Glucagon or EpiPen. Where medication is administered in the case of anaphylaxis or asthma emergency the Service will ensure that the emergency services are contacted as soon as is practically possible and the parents and guardians are also contacted as soon as possible. Emergency numbers for the local pharmacist and local medical practitioners are available within the Service.

Life Saving Medication and Invasive Treatments:

Adrenaline injections (EpiPens) for anaphylactic shock reactions (caused by allergies to nuts, eggs etc.) or invasive treatments such as rectal administration of Diazepam (for epilepsy).

Management must have:

- A letter from the child's GP/consultant stating the child's condition and what medication if any is to be administered.
- Written consent from the parent or guardian allowing staff to administer medication.
- Proof of training in the administration of such medication by the by a doctor or appropriate health profession or persons recommended by a manufacturer.
- A copy of such proof may be required by our insurance provider for appraisal so that our insurance can be extended if necessary.
- For medicines like EpiPens it will be decided on individual cases and if staff are happy and competent to administer them.
- Consent forms.

Note: Unused medicine must be returned to parents for safe disposal. Medicines must be stored out of reach of children.

Managing medicines on trips and outings:

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If children are going on outings, staff accompanying the children must include the key person for the child with a risk assessment, or another member of staff who is fully informed about the child's needs and/or medication.

- Medication for a child is taken in a sealed plastic box clearly labelled with the child's name and the name of the medication. Inside the box is a copy of the consent form and a card to record when it has been given, with the details as given above.
- On returning to the setting the card is stapled to the medicine record book and the parent signs it.

Sunscreen:

- We will send letters home asking for parents/guardians to apply sun cream to their child before bringing them to school each morning.
- We will also ask parents/guardians for permission for staff to apply sun cream onto their child when appropriate.
- Parents "must" supply sun cream in the original bottle. It should be individually labelled with the child's name, and we store it in a press out of reach not in the child's bag.

All records kept by the service are kept secure and confidential. Children's medical records are kept for a period of two years.

Medication Errors:

All medication errors will be recorded, and we will seek medical advice immediately. This includes medication is given to wrong child; wrong route; wrong dosage; wrong time; omitted to be given as scheduled. We will contact the GP, Pharmacist, or other emergency service, depending on the error. Parents/guardians will be informed immediately.

Important Note: If parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact persons (as identified on the Child Registration Form) will be contacted.

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Where a Child Suffers an Allergic Reaction to Medication Administered in the Service:

The length of time for an allergic reaction varies from person to person. Some people may react right away, while others might take the drug several times before they have an allergic reaction. Most of the time symptoms will appear between 1-2 hours after taking the drug unless someone has a more rare, delayed type reaction. Symptoms of these less common drug allergies include fever, blistering of the skin, and occasionally joint pain.

Symptoms from a drug allergy can be like other allergic reactions and can include hives or skin rash, itching, wheezing, light headedness or dizziness, vomiting and even anaphylaxis. A combination of these symptoms makes it much more likely that it is an allergy than nausea and vomiting on their own, which are common side effects of medications.

Where the Service suspects that a child has suffered an allergic reaction to medication administered, the parents/guardians will always be notified as soon as is practically possible by telephone.

The Service will ensure that the emergency services are contacted as soon as is practically possible.

Emergency numbers for the local pharmacist and local medical practitioners are available within the Service.

When it is necessary to contact the emergency services to bring a child to hospital, a member of staff will escort the child if the parent or guardian is unavailable. The staff member will remain with the child until the parent or guardian arrives at the hospital.

If advice is needed contact:

GP: Kelly Henry Medical Centre Ph. 094-9620168

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Pharmacist: McSharry's Pharmacy, Kelly Henry Medical Centre

Ph. 094-9625400

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name:

Person responsible for approving the Policy

5. BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT (including Managing Challenging Behaviour)

Document Title:	Behaviour Management (including managing challenging behaviour)
Unique Reference Number:	005
Document Author:	Happy Feet Childcare, CB
Document Approved:	Ashling Horan
Person(s) responsible for developing, distributing, and reviewing Policy	Ashling Horan
Person responsible for approving Policy	Anita Flynn
Method of communication of policies to staff (email / hard copy / induction training)	Email
Method of communication of policies to parents/guardians (full policies via email, hard copy)	Email and hard copy available in Service
Method of communication of policies to school age children (full policies via email, hard copy)	A copy of this policy is available in the service.
Date the Document is Effective From:	August 2023
Scheduled Review Date:	August 2024
Number of Pages:	23

This policy is developed in accordance with the Child Care Act 1991 [Early Years Services] [Registration of School Age Services] Regulations 2018.

This policy is available and communicated to parents, staff, and relevant stakeholders.

It is also available in child friendly format to school age children in the Service.

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Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to this policy. Relevant staff have received training on this policy.

Statement of Intent:

We will work with the children to ensure they receive positive guidance, support, and encouragement to find positive solutions to manage their own behaviour. The service sets realistic expectations of behaviour in accordance with the age and stage of development of the child. We apply rules and expectations fairly and consistently to all children. We do not use any form of physical punishment. We encourage children to respect themselves, others, and the environment. We facilitate children to make positive decisions and choices about their own learning and development to develop a positive sense of self. We aim to create a happy, caring environment with stimulating activities for all children. In the case of a particular incident, or persistent unacceptable behaviour, we will *always* discuss ways forward with the parent(s)/guardian of the child.

Note: If child abuse or neglect is suspected, it is managed in line with the service's Child Protection and Welfare Policy.

The Social and Emotional Wellbeing of all Children is Fostered

- Children are supported to recognise, express and cope positively with emotions.

Examples:

- Being supported to communicate their needs and wants, verbally and non-verbally (picture cards, hand signals) in a positive way.
- Discussing and naming their wide range of emotions and feelings, while empathising with feelings of others (happy, sad, angry, feelings of exclusion and feeling hurt).
- Assisting children to develop techniques that help them manage their positive and negative feelings OWL (observe, wait, listen).

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- Listening to children in a caring, gentle way when they express emotions, and reassuring them that it is normal to experience positive and negative emotions at times.
- Acknowledging and accepting children's feelings (positive and negative) and the relationships between children's actions and other responses.
- Children are supported to demonstrate self-confidence.
- Staff respond to children in a timely and appropriate way when they cry or become upset.
- Children who show signs of social and emotional difficulties are given the appropriate care and support within the service.

Children Are Supported to Develop Self-Regulation and Pro-Social Behaviour

- The social and physical environment is stimulating, challenging, and interesting for children and is focused on their active engagement and involvement.
- Staff help children to recognise and understand the rules for being together with others (examples: waiting their turn, listening to each other, solving problems together, sharing).
- A climate is fostered where children know the boundaries and know how they're expected to behave within the service.
- Staff support children to enter into social groups, develop friendships with other children and to learn to help and positively engage with other children and adults.
- Staff encourage and praise children for specific, positive, and appropriate behaviours.
- Children are given positive alternatives rather than just being told "no"
- Children are supported in preventing, managing, and resolving conflict. Examples:
 - creating conditions that minimise conflict between children (providing enough popular equipment and materials).
 - acting to prevent potential conflicts and encouraging the children to resolve conflict if it exists.
 - responding promptly to children who are giving signals or cues expressing or indicating needs.

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- encouraging children to negotiate and resolve conflicts peacefully, with adult intervention and guidance when necessary.
- actively supporting children in solving their differences and problems without being "told" or "ordered" what to do; and
- prompting and supporting children to remove themselves from situations where they are experiencing frustration, anger, or fear.
- Children with on-going challenging behaviour are supported and helped to control their emotions and distress. Examples:
 - reviewing the child's programme of care to ensure it meets the child's care, learning and developmental needs.
 - reviewing the approaches taken to address a child's on-going challenging behaviour, so that every opportunity is taken to make sure the behaviour improves.
 - engaging with the child's parents or guardians to work with them on addressing the issues relating to the child's behaviour (developing a behaviour management plan, assessing the need for help from external experts or professionals; and
 - developing a risk assessment to manage the risks associated with the behaviours to the child and to the other children and staff.

We will NEVER inflict corporal punishment on a child.

General Procedures for Promoting and Nurturing Positive Behaviour:

- During the induction period, all new staff are introduced to the behaviour policy and are asked to sign the policy to say they have read it and agree to implement the policy.
- Staff will adopt a reciprocal and positive relationship with the child.
- Staff will act as role models and adopt a confident approach to encourage and support positive behaviour.
- Staff will work in a respectful manner and in partnership with other practitioners, children, and parents/guardians.
- Staff are role models for the children and should treat one another with respect, use appropriate tone of voice and body language to one another and the children.

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- Observation and recording will be used to inform and support staff to decide on appropriate methods and strategies for dealing with behaviour problems.
- The Manager is the person designated as the resource person for staff support on behaviour management issues.
- At an age-appropriate level, children will be encouraged and supported in resolving their own disputes.
- Each child should be positively supported and recognised as an individual.
- Staff will practically engage children in resolving their conflicts using age-appropriate methods. In doing this, children can explore their feelings and conflicts in a safe controlled way. Staff will positively support children in doing this.
- Training will be provided for staff where necessary.

Rewarding Positive Behaviour:

- Staff will acknowledge and praise positive behaviour as it occurs.
- Children are not rewarded with food, sweets or treats and all staff understand how to support positive behaviour, and how to encourage and facilitate it effectively.
- Positive language will be used rather than negative, and statements made.
- While encouraging positive behaviour, the child's self-esteem should not be negatively impacted. The child should not be labelled through the use of certain words, for example bold, naughty.

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Mild Behaviour Issues:

In anticipating occasional inappropriate behaviour, we follow these guidelines:

- Staff will provide a calm, safe and stimulating environment which is age appropriate and of interest to all children present within the group.
- Children are involved where appropriate in the planning of activities.
- A routine and rhythm which is practical and beneficial to the age range of children should be developed and sustained.
- Staff will ensure rules are applied consistently to all children within the setting and are aware of expectations regarding the children's behaviour.
- Children have regular daily access to the outdoor play area.
- Children are kept informed of what is happening and what is expected of them.
- We ensure there are enough suitable age appropriate and activities and equipment for children.

Implementing Positive Steps to Supporting Positive Behaviour:

- Children should be made aware of the expectations and their responsibility.
 - *No hurting bodies.*
 - *No hurting feelings*
- Positive behaviour should be supported and encouraged by all children consistently throughout the day by all staff.
- Incidents should be dealt with immediately by the staff who witness them.
- Staff should not speak about the child, or their behaviour in front of other parents/guardians, children, or the child.
- The child should not be labelled by staff.
- Positive behaviour should be consistently encouraged in **all children**.
- Correct Child: Adult ratios should be implemented at all times.
- Positive behaviour should be implemented within the curriculum throughout various themes. Age-appropriate activities prompts, and materials should be provided to children to explore their feelings and emotions throughout the year.

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- The staff, where possible, should have a quiet area where children can retreat if they are experiencing negative feelings, for example a quiet corner.
- At an age and developmentally appropriate level, when the child is calm, the staff should explore the behaviour with the child using prompts for example I noticed you got [feeling] when you were at the [area].... What could you do the next time you feel.... Do you know what I do when I am [emotion]...

Procedures for Supporting Positive Behaviour:

ABCD: Action Behaviour Choice Decision

Minor Behaviour Problems:

In these types of situations, the child may have caused no issue all day and suddenly their behaviour changes. Minor behaviour problems are behaviours in line with the child's age and stage of their development (See Appendix C: Children and Behaviour).

Staff should positively support the child's well-being and identity throughout the process of supporting positive behaviour. The child should always feel valued, respected, empowered, cared for, and included.

Staff will assess each situation and use their best judgement in dealing with the matter. Situations may arise where the staff may allow the children 'resolve their own battles' or ignore minor incidents.

A sensible approach is recommended in dealing with minor behaviour problems. It is not always evident to staff what the cause of an incident has been.

School Aged	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approach calmly 2. Stop any hurtful actions. 3. Acknowledge children's feelings. 4. Gather information. 5. Restate the problem. 6. Ask for ideas for solutions and decide on an outcome the child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temper tantrums • Possessive of toys • Fussy feeder • Use of bad language • Whiny • Verbally hits out. • May be bossy
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If a child has a temper tantrum, the age of the child is taken into consideration. A child **under** three years is more likely to have tantrum out of frustration. A child **over** three

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years is more likely to be linked to defiance. Staff will take a gentler approach with the younger child and a firmer approach with the older child. Staff will explain to the older child in a calm clear way using simple words why they cannot have what they want. If the tantrum continues and other children get upset or hit the child will be moved to another area in the room until they calm down.

The staff member should act in a calm and fair manner and allow the child to re-join the activity when they have calmed down as if nothing has happened.

At this stage, boundaries should be highlighted to the child. The expectations **must** be clear and reasonable to the age of the child and their developmental level.

Where it is evident that a child is about to misbehave, for example taking a toy from another child, then the staff member should comment on the behaviour. *'Mary, you know we take turns and share. Angela will let you have that toy [name toy or doll] to play with when she is finished. Will we ask Angela to let you have that toy when she is finished?'* This provides the child with an opportunity to change their behaviour and not take the toy from the other child. If the child continues a second reminder should be given and what the consequences will be if they continue.

Managing Moderate Behaviour Problems:

ABCD; Action Behaviour Choice Decision

Moderate behaviour problems tend to happen more frequently than the 'once off' type behaviours and have a greater impact on the child themselves and other children in the room.

Staff should positively support the child's well-being and identity throughout the process of supporting positive behaviour. The child should always feel valued, respected, empowered, cared for, and included.

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School Aged	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions.2. Acknowledge children's feelings.3. Gather information.4. Restate the problem.5. Ask for ideas for solutions and6. Choose a decision together.7. Be prepared to give follow-up supports for Supporting Positive Behaviour8. Observe the child
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Staff will ask the child what is wrong or bothering them. Emotion picture cards may be used with younger children to support how they may be feeling.

Observations will be used to assist in making an assessment as to what may cause the behaviour. Observations will be used to capture when the child's behaviour is more positive and when behaviour is more challenging children are regularly corrected. Constant correction can have a negative impact on the child's self-esteem. Staff will use the observation of 'positive' behaviours to give plenty of encouragement and praise which should help to develop self-esteem.

This approach can be shared with parents/guardians and used at home and in the service. Observations should be looking for:

- When the child is at their best behaviour and when they 'act out'.
- Consideration will be given to whether the child likes the activity or not, is there a particular child they don't get on with, are they tired, hungry, or perhaps ill?
- If the group of children is becoming disruptive, review the activities. The staff will review activities to ensure children do not become bored or sit for too long.

Staff will consider changing the layout of the room regularly, and perhaps changing the daily routine to ensure that there is variety and children do not become bored.

Staff will consider liaising with the designated person responsible for behaviour management for support when they have used strategies that have not seen an improvement in behaviour.

Managing Severe and Challenging Behaviour:

ABCD: Action Behaviour Choice Decision

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Severe and challenging behaviours are frequent and repeated actions by a child that impact significantly on other children and the child themselves. The child may also find it difficult to engage in the activities being undertaken. In this type of situation, behaviour has not improved using the usual behaviour management strategies and may often require more intensive one-to-one support from the child. Staff understand that it is important to recognise in managing severe/challenging behaviour that there is a problem.

Staff will discuss the behaviour problem with the designated person who has overall responsibility for managing children's behaviour problems to put an action plan together.

Approach:	Examples of behaviour:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions.</i> 2. <i>Make eye contact with the child.</i> 3. <i>Acknowledge children's feelings.</i> 4. <i>Gather information.</i> 5. <i>Restate the problem and ensure the child understands.</i> 6. <i>Suggest solutions and choose one together.</i> 7. <i>Be prepared to give follow-up supports for supporting Positive Behaviour</i> 8. <i>Observe the child</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● kicking, ● hitting, ● bad language, ● prolonged screaming, breath holding, ● head banging, ● on-going biting, <p>Other behaviours may be present such as the child refusing to engage, being overanxious, avoiding contact with others and unusual behaviours.</p>

Staff will ensure that instructions or corrections are given in simple words and kept short and that similar phrases are used by all staff and the child's parents/guardians so that the information given to the child is consistent.

Where a child is receiving professional support, the service will work with the parents/guardians and the professionals to implement the programme or approaches recommended.

A behaviour management strategy plan will be drawn up based on observations and professional support guidance where possible. All staff will adopt the same approach to what to do when the child shows signs that the challenging behaviour is about to be presented, how best to manage that behaviour when it happens, how to limit the negative

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impact on other children or activities and strategies that can be taught to the child to help them control their own behaviour.

The service will engage and work with the parents/guardians to work towards the same approach at home and in the service to behaviour management.

Procedures Which Are Unacceptable for Supporting Positive Behaviour:

- Physical punishment (corporal punishment).
- Sending children out of the room.
- Isolating children from the group e.g., time out.
- Shouting or raising of a voice.
- The use of or threat of any practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitative, intimidating, isolating, emotionally and/or physically harmful to the child or neglectful of the child.
- Bullying in any form.
- Physical restraint, for example holding will not be used unless it is required to prevent injury to a child, other children, adults, or property. Staff must ensure that no physical pain is inflicted upon the child(ren). In cases where it is required to hold a child in such manner, it **must** be recorded in the accident and incident report. Parents/guardians **must** be informed of the incident.
- It is not the Service's policy to use any kind of restraint in managing behaviour. If restraint is considered a last resort option the Service will seek professional advice and staff will attend specialised training on evidence -based methods to ensure it is used appropriately, safely and with respect so that the child's dignity is not undermined. Staff who feel under pressure due to a child's difficult behaviour should seek support from management so a plan can be devised. No staff member is permitted to use physical restraint routinely.
- Speaking negatively about the child to other staff *or* in front of the child/other children.
- The child should not be labelled.
- Staff should not expect unrealistic behaviour from a child in accordance with their age and stage of development.

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- Once the incident is over, the staff member should not place emphasis or keep reminding the child of their behaviour.
- The child should not be humiliated.
- Withholding food or drinks.
- Showing favoritism.
- Failing to reassure or comfort a child.

Partnership with Parent(s)/Guardians:

- It is our policy to work in close collaboration with parents/guardians. We recognise and value the role of parent(s)/ guardians in their child's life in supporting positive behaviour, working in partnership with parent(s)/ guardians is important. It is our policy to inform parent(s)/ guardians at the enrolment stage, of the policies and procedures in relation to behaviour. The supporting positive behaviour policy will be explained, and in doing this, a consistent approach can be adopted.
- Parent(s)/guardians are encouraged to share any difficulties/concerns which they may be experiencing regarding the child's behaviour, for example bereavement, illness, a new baby etc.
- Where a child's behaviour is causing concern, it is our policy to do this in a consultative manner, and staff will endeavor to work in partnership with the parent(s)/ guardian to develop a strategy for dealing with the situation.
- Discussing the child's behaviour in front of the child/ other children/parents/guardians will be avoided.

Where a significant incident occurs regarding a child's behaviour, the following should be documented.

- The child's full name
- Time and location of the incident
- Events leading up to the incident.
- What happened
- Others involved.
- Witnesses
- How the situation was handled (**ABCD**)

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- Follow up with the children.

Anti-bullying:

Children are afforded a right to their own time and space. Depending on the child's age and stage of development, it may not be appropriate to expect children to share. However, we feel it is important to acknowledge both children's feelings, and to support them in understanding how the other child may be feeling.

Diversity and equality are important for children to understand, and we endeavor to create a positive and supportive environment for all children. Staff will encourage all children to acknowledge and celebrate differences. Consequently, children will recognize from an early age, bullying, fighting, hurting and racial comments are not acceptable behaviour.

Identifying Bullying:

Bullying can take many forms. It can be physical, verbal, or emotional, but it is always repeated behaviour which makes other people feel uncomfortable or threatened. Any form of bullying is **unacceptable** and will be dealt with immediately. At our service, staff follow the guidelines below to ensure children do not experience bullying.

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Definition

Bullying consists of repeated inappropriate behaviour whether by words, by physical action or otherwise, directly, or indirectly applied, by one or more persons against another person or persons which undermines the individual person's right to personal dignity.

Cyber Bullying or E-Bullying

Cyber bullying or E-Bullying is the use of emails, text messages, instant messages, or web pages to spread rumors, make threats or harass. It can include written messages, photographs, videos, or voice messages.

- This may involve individuals set up as 'groups' in an online social network. These 'groups' may be used to jeer at or target someone in a cruel way. Those who are organising this may remain anonymous.

Someone may make a light-hearted joke or post online, and it could develop into a bullying situation if others add cruel remarks or comments.

Technology can be used to bully and say things online or by text that individuals would never say face to face. Everyone needs to know that they are responsible for their words and actions in cyberspace as well as in the real world. If it comes down to it, the source of the abuse, the computer or phone being used, can be identified by the Gardaí.

This type of bullying is just as harmful and upsetting as face-to-face bullying.

- Where cases of serious incidents of bullying are reported to the Gardaí the source of the messaging e.g., a computer or phone can be traced to identify the perpetrator of such bullying messages.

Where the Service becomes aware of cyber-bullying (e-bullying) by children in the service:

Where it is brought to the attention of the Service by a staff member, parent/guardian, or child, that a child or children in the Service are cyber-bullying (e-bullying) another child or children in the services the following initial and immediate steps will be taken to prevent and endeavor to stop such cyber bullying (e-bullying):

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1. Explain to the child or children responsible for such bullying that what they are doing is wrong and explain that it is bullying.
2. Explain to the child how serious what they are doing is.
3. Explain the serious consequences for everyone involved.
4. Explain that bullying over the internet is just as serious as face-to-face bullying.

Note: Please also see below the Service's procedure for reporting incidents of bullying and how they are dealt with by the Service.

Note: This is not to be confused with good-natured banter that goes on as part of the normal social interchange between pupils or normal professional classroom management by staff

Bullying Preventative Measures

- Staff ensure all children feel safe, happy, and secure within the setting.
- Staff develop positive relationships with all children and encourage children to speak about their feelings.
- Staff are encouraged to recognise that active physical aggression in the early years is a part of children's development and recognise positive opportunities should be in place for children to channel this positively.
- Children are learning about their feelings, staff will support children in identifying their feelings and actions, for example happy, sad, and angry.
- At an age and stage appropriate level, children will be encouraged to resolve their problems and take responsibility for their actions.
- Staff are encouraged to adopt a policy of intervention when they think a child is not being treated in a fair or appropriate manner.
- Staff are aware when play becomes 'aggressive' and will initiate an appropriate activity with the children.
- Any instance of bullying will be discussed fully with the parents/guardians of all involved to look for a consistent resolution to the behaviour.

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- If a parent(s)/ guardian has a concern regarding their child's behaviour, the staff member or Manager will be available to speak to the parent. It is through partnership with parent(s)/ guardians which we can ensure a child will feel confident and secure in their environment, at home and in the setting.

What causes children to be aggressive?

Sometimes, aggression takes the form of instigating fights, sometimes the child may provoke other children to fight, or may antagonise or threaten other children. Other children do not like this behaviour and will often feel intimidated and insecure in their environment.

Children who display aggressive behaviours will often have low self-confidence, poor social skills and may have difficulties with their speech. However, any child regardless of their age or stage of development may experience aggression at some stage. Aggression brings power, and often children who are aggressive will seek the control and position which comes with it among their peers.

How can we support positive behaviour?

- Aggressive behaviour should never be ignored.
- Staff should not get into a power struggle with the child.
- Be firm but gentle in your approach. The child should not be given mixed messages at this stage.
- The child should always feel valued, respected, cared for, and included.
- One-to-one work should be initiated with the child, and a plan should be devised. For example, when I get angry, I will go to the ... [area].
- Provide opportunity for the child to display positive behaviour, acknowledge and praise this behaviour.
- Provide the child with opportunities which demonstrate leadership and communication in a positive manner.
- The **ABCD** model should be used with the child, where age and stage appropriate, the child should make the choice, and also take responsibility for their actions.

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- The staff members should be fair in their expectations, and should be consistent, patient and understand change will take time.

Rough and Tumble Play/ Fantasy Aggression:

Young children often engage in plays which have aggressive themes- such as superhero and weapon play. This may take over some children's play. This is an interest of that particular child, and *it is not a precursor for bullying*. We will ensure the behaviour does not become inconsiderate or hurtful and will address it if we feel necessary.

- We recognise rough and tumble play is part of children's development, and it is acceptable within limits. We view this type of play as role play, and not as problematic or aggressive.
- We will offer opportunities for children to explore this type of play in a safe and secure environment.
- Children will be aware of the boundaries within this form of play and will be aware when this behaviour is not acceptable.
- We recognise fantasy play may contain violent dramatic strategies- blowing up, shooting etc. We will use these opportunities to explore lateral thinking and conflict resolution. These themes often refer to 'goodies and baddies', we will use such opportunities to explore concepts of right and wrong, and alternatives to dramatic strategies.

Bullying Procedure for School Aged Service

It is always best to work towards bullying prevention as outlined above. However, sometimes serious bullying may take place. Every person in the service is entitled to respect and to be free of any type of bullying.

We will work proactively, as far as it can, to ensure that bullying does not take place. Reporting incidents of bullying is responsible behaviour and not telling tales.

A record will be kept of any genuine incidents of bullying.

The matter will be dealt with seriously.

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Appropriate action will be taken to ensure that it does not continue.

Types of behaviour deemed to be inappropriate.

- Humiliation; including name-calling, reference to academic ability etc.
- Intimidation; including aggressive use of body language.
- Verbal abuse, anonymous or otherwise.
- Physical abuse or threatened abuse.
- Aggressive or obscene language.
- Offensive jokes; whether spoken or by email, Facebook, text messaging etc.
- Victimisation; including very personal remarks.
- Exclusion and isolation.
- Intrusion through interfering with personal possessions or locker.
- Repeated unreasonable deadlines or tasks.
- Threats, including demands for money.
- An attack by rumour, gossip, innuendo, or ridicule on any individual's reputation.

Procedures for Reporting Incidents of Bullying

School aged children should discuss any incident of bullying with a staff member or another trusted adult within the service; this is responsible behaviour rather than 'telling tales.

Parents/guardians should contact the manager regarding incidents of bullying behaviour which they might suspect or that have come to their attention through their children or other parents.

Incidents of bullying behaviour, no matter how trivial, which are drawn to the attention of a staff member, will be dealt with in the following manner.

Appropriate personnel will interview all the pupils involved in bullying incidents. The alleged victim and alleged perpetrators of the incident will be spoken to and encouraged to solve the problem.

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All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all children involved.

Records will be kept of all incidents and of the procedures that were followed.

The Manager will monitor the progress of pupils involved in a bullying incident by liaising with the staff members and children involved (separately) at follow-up meetings.

Where the incident is deemed to be minor, a verbal warning will be given to the bully to stop the inappropriate behaviour, pointing out how he/she is in breach of the normal standards of behaviour at service and trying to get him/her to see the situation from the victim's point of view. If deemed appropriate, parents may be contacted. The incident will no longer be considered if there is no recurrence within the term.

If the behaviour persists, the parents/guardians of the victims and bullies will be informed. Thus, they will be given the opportunity of discussing the matter and are able to help and support their children before a crisis occurs. Appropriate sanctions will be imposed. The incident will no longer be considered if there is no recurrence within that year.

If there is a serious incident, perhaps repeated verbal assault or coercion, management and parents will be involved, and appropriate sanctions applied.

Where the incident is deemed to be more serious (e.g., gross misbehaviour or physical assault), management should be informed immediately.

Offenders and victims of bullying may be referred to counselling with parental agreement.

Sanctions may include:

- A contract of good behaviour

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- Withdrawal of privileges

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- Other sanctions may be deemed appropriate.
- Withdrawal from the service

Note that asking a parent to withdraw their child is the last resort and will not happen without exploring other strategies.

In the case of a complaint regarding a staff member, this should be referred immediately to management who will invoke the HR Policies if deemed necessary.

Advice to staff if investigating Incidents of Bullying

Staff are best advised to take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour reported by children, staff, or parents/guardians. Such incidents are best investigated outside the classroom situation to avoid the public humiliation of the victim, or the pupil engaged in bullying involved, in an attempt to get both sides of the story. All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all children concerned. children who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way.

When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.

If a gang is involved, each member should be interviewed individually and then the gang should be met as a group. Each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone is clear about what everyone else has said.

If it is concluded that a child has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the accepted standards of behaviour expected and try to get him/her to see the situation from the victim's point of view.

Each member of the gang should be helped to handle the possible pressures that often face them from the other members after interview by the staff.

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Staff who are investigating cases of bullying behaviour should keep a written record of their discussion with those involved. It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their accounts of the incident.

In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, consult with management who may decide to meet with the parents or guardians of the parties involved. If so, he will explain the actions being taken and the reasons for them, referring them to the policy. He would also discuss ways parents/guardians can reinforce or support the actions taken by the school.

management may then arrange follow-up meetings with the parties involved separately, with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the victim is ready and agreeable. (This can have a therapeutic effect).

Physically Intervening to Prevent Injury:

The purpose of physical intervention is to take immediate control of a dangerous situation, in order to end or significantly reduce the risk of harm to the person and others around them. Physical Intervention involves some form of physical contact to guide, restrict or prevent movement.

Physical restraint is not used within our service except in circumstances where we have to intervene to prevent injury to the child or others and to prevent significant damage to equipment or property.

- It is only used as a last resort and in the best interest of the child. Staff must make a considered judgement balancing the risks involved, thus allowing informed decisions to be made.
- It ensures no pain is inflicted on the child.
- It will be reasonable, supportive, and necessary.
- It will be for the shortest possible time.
- The incident will be recorded.
- It will be part of an agreed written plan with parents and parents/guardians will be advised immediately if used.

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- Only staff who have attended certified training are permitted to physically intervene and will have been trained and certified in the method used. Staff must be expressly authorised to utilise restraint where necessary. Using it without training or expressed authorisation may be a disciplinary matter.
- Methods of intervention will be evidence based such as Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI)
- Individually tailored positive handling plans will be developed in conjunction with parents, following training and risk assessment

Where a Child Leaves the Service Unaccompanied and without Authorisation:

If a child attempts to and/or leaves the Service unaccompanied and without authorisation staff will:

1. Stay calm. Reason with the child. Contact the manager.
2. Reason with the child and ask them how they can be supported to make the correct choice/return. Staff will discuss the situation and try to help them to resolve it.
3. Offer to phone parents to let them discuss it with them.
4. If a child still insists on going, staff will keep trying to contact parents. Allow the child to speak to the parent/guardian if phone contact can be made with them.
5. Stand at the exit door. If child leaves the Service a staff member will follow if available.
6. The Service should continue to try to contact parents.
7. The two staff will walk if possible and try to keep the child calm by speaking to them.
8. If parents or guardians cannot be contacted the other emergency number given by parents can be phoned.
9. If parents cannot be contacted and staff are concerned for the child's safety, Tusla and/or a Garda Síochána will be contacted.
10. When the child comes back to school a detailed investigation will be carried out. The school Code of Behaviour will be adhered to. A support plan will be put in place and reviewed within the required timeframes.
11. Written records of the incident will be kept.
12. Once a child voluntarily leaves the school, the school is no longer responsible for the child.

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Please also see the Service's Outings and Missing Child Policies and Dropping off and Collection of Children Policy

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Name:

Person responsible for approving the Policy.

APPENDIX C: CHILDREN AND BEHAVIOUR

Where children cannot verbally communicate, children often use behaviour as a form of communication. Children will often use behaviour as a medium to express their feelings, fears, and emotions.

Physical behaviour: children's physical behaviour can often be a result of tiredness, illness, or medication. Night-time sleep problems (interrupted night sleep) have been found to be a common cause of behaviour problems causing chronic fatigue and a cranky, irritable child with poor coping skills.

Developmental: behaviour will often reflect the age and stage of development of the child for example temper tantrums. Developmental delay in children's speech, mobility or other areas can lead to a child feeling frustrated and may present in challenging behaviours. *Management should be informed by parents/guardians of all concerns regarding developmental delay, as it is through this the child's needs can be fully supported within the setting.*

Emotional: learning about feelings and emotions is a process. Often when children's emotions are in disarray, it will primarily affect their behaviour. Such examples include bereavement, a new baby, a house move etc. We ask parents/guardians to inform the early year's practitioner of any changes or difficulties which may be occurring for the child- no matter how small. Through this, the child can be supported positively, and feel valued, cared for and respected.

Environmental: an environment which supports the individual child's interests, age and stage of development, gender and background should be provided. The environment must be stimulating and offer a variety of opportunities for each child within the room.

Intellectual: where a child's interests, abilities or background is not evident within a room, the child may not be stimulated. It is the responsibility of the early year practitioner of that room, to ensure age and stage appropriate materials, opportunities and areas are present within the room for each child to utilize.

APPENDIX D: METHODS TO SUPPORT POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

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Supporting and encouraging positive behaviour requires documenting, planning, and implementation. However, it is based on staff becoming reflective in their practice. It is our policy to create, and sustain a setting where children are confident and competent learners in a secure, stimulating and age-appropriate environment.

- Children will be offered a choice.
- Children will have input to the curriculum.
- Children will be included in areas which affect them.
- Staff will implement fair and consistent expectations regarding behaviour.
- Staff will speak to children:
 - Clearly, using language/ a medium which the child understands
 - Appropriate tone
 - Positive body language
- Staff will offer praise and encouragement to all the children.
- Children will feel valued, empowered, included and confident in the environment.
- Follow the behaviour policy (**ABCD**).
- Children will not be labelled or spoke about in front of the child/other children/ other staff.
- Sanctions are fair and linked to behaviour, for example picking up litter for dropping it.
- We do not use physical (corporal) punishment **of any kind**.
- We do not use a bold chair/step/corner or any other means to isolate or humiliate the child.

6. INFECTION CONTROL

Document Title:	Infection Control
Unique Reference Number:	006
Document Author:	Happy Feet Childcare, CB
Document Approved:	Ashling Horan
Person(s) responsible for developing, distributing, and reviewing Policy	Ashling Horan
Person responsible for approving Policy	Anita Flynn
Method of communication of policies to staff (email / hard copy / induction training)	Email
Method of communication of policies to parents/guardians (full policies via email, hard copy)	Email and hard copy available in Service
Method of communication of policies to children (full policies via email, hard copy)	A copy of this policy is available to children in the service
Date the Document is Effective From:	August 2023
Scheduled Review Date:	August 2024
Number of Pages:	17

This policy is developed in accordance with the Child Care Act 1991 [Early Years Services] [Registration of School Age Services] Regulations 2018.

This policy is available and communicated to parents, staff, and relevant stakeholders.

It is also available in child friendly format to school age children in the Service.

Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to this policy. Relevant staff have received training on this policy.

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Statement of Intent:

It is our aim to minimise the spread of infection for staff and children through the implementation of controls which reduce the transmission and spread of germs. We aim to promote and maintain the health of children and staff through the control of infectious illnesses.

(With references from: Health Protection Surveillance Centre, Preschool and Child Care Facility Subcommittee, Management of Infectious Disease in Child Care Facilities and Other Child Care Settings)

Policy and Procedure:

It is the policy of the Service to:

- Protect school age children attending the service from the transmission of any kind of infection.
- Protect persons working in the Service from the transmission of any kind of infection.
- To build infection control into the Service's programme of activities.
- To use signage such as hand washing signs and nose blowing signs which are beneficial to adults and child friendly.

In the event of an outbreak of any infectious disease, all parents will be verbally informed. A dated notice informing all parents of any infectious disease outbreak will be displayed on the notice board / on the front door.

Reporting/Recording of illness:

A contingency plan is in place should an outbreak of an infectious disease occur. All staff roles and responsibilities regarding reporting procedures are clearly defined. Staff will report any infectious illness to the Manager.

The Manager will report an outbreak of any infectious disease to the HSE Environmental Health Officer and the Public Health Department.

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The Manager will record all details of illness reported to them by staff or reported by parents of a child attending the Service. These details will include the name, symptoms, dates, and duration of illness.

Exclusion:

Exclusion guidelines as recommended apply in the case of all suspected infectious conditions. These guidelines are contained in our policies and procedures and displayed in the service.

- Parents/guardians will be informed should staff, children or visitors to the service report the presence of any contagious condition to the Manager. Unwell children and staff will be excluded from the service until the appropriate exclusion period for that illness is finished.
- Arrangements are in place to provide relief cover while staff are on sick leave.

Any child or adult with symptoms of an infectious illness will be asked not to attend the service until they are no longer infectious. The management of the service will ensure all areas of the premises are thoroughly disinfected, including play areas, toilets, toys, and all equipment.

Infectious illness can cause significant ill health among young children and can be transmitted by direct or indirect contact including:

- Contact with infected people or animals.
- By infecting oneself with the body's own germs.
- By hand to mouth transmission.
- By the air / by insects, pests, animals.
- Indirect transmission e.g., toys, door handles, toilets, floors, table tops etc.
- By direct – person to person.

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Reporting/Recording of Illness:

- Staff and parents/guardians must report any infectious illness, or similar, to the Manager.
- Manager (or nominated person) will record the outbreak on an Incident Form and report an outbreak to TUSLA/ Environmental Health Officer and the Public Health Department.
- The manager will record all details of illness reported to them by staff or reported by parents/guardians of a child attending the service. These details will include the name, symptoms, dates, and duration of illness.

Exclusion from the Service:

- We advise parents that sick children or adults should not attend.
- Children and staff will be excluded from the service based on the time frames outlined in the exclusion table [APPENDIX E]
- A doctor's certificate may be required for certain conditions to ensure they are no longer contagious before children or staff return to the service.
- In the event of an outbreak of any infectious disease, all parents/guardians will be verbally informed. A dated notice informing all parents/guardians of any infectious disease outbreak will be displayed on the notice board.

To ensure the safety and health of all our children and staff those who have any of the following conditions will be excluded from the service:

- Acute symptoms of food poisoning/gastro-enteritis.
- An oral temperature over 38 degrees cannot be reduced.
- A deep, hacking cough.
- Severe congestion.
- Difficulty breathing or untreated wheezing.
- An unexplained rash (see exclusion list also).
- Vomiting (48 hours from last episode).
- Diarrhoea (48 hours from last episode).

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- Lice or nits – [see Head Lice Policy in Infection Control Policy]
- An infectious /contagious condition.
- A child that complains of a stiff neck and headache with one or more of the above symptoms.

Immunisations:

- Staff in the service will be immunised against infectious diseases.
- Where Staff working in the Service are not immunised the Service requires such staff members to complete a disclaimer in the form set out in Appendix G
- All children must provide an up-to-date record of immunisations (Appendix F: Immunisations). This should contain dates of immunisations. Where dates are not available all attempts to get these should be recorded.
- Where children attending the Service are not immunised the Service requires the parents/guardians to complete a disclaimer in the form set out in Appendix H

Hand Hygiene:

Hand Washing is the single most effective way of preventing the spread of infection; its purpose is to remove or destroy germs that are picked up on the hands.

Staff must wash their hands:

Before:

- The start of the work shift.
- Eating, smoking, handling/preparing food or assisting/feeding a child.
- Preparing meals, snacks, and drinks
- Personal care.

After:

- Using the toilet or helping a child to use the toilet.

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- Playing with or handling items in the playground – e.g., toys, sand, water.
- Handling secretions e.g., from a child's nose or mouth, from sores or cuts.
- Cleaning up vomit or faeces.
- Handling or dealing with waste.
- Removing disposable gloves and/or aprons.
- Handling pets/pet litter, animals/cages/animal soil, etc.
- Cleaning the service
- Washing/Handling of soiled clothes
- Coughing and sneezing
- When hands are dirty

Children should hand wash and be supervised doing so:

Before:

- Eating

After:

- Using the toilet
- Playing with or handling items in the playground
- Handling secretions
- Handling or dealing with waste.
- Handling pets/pet litter, animals/cages/animal soil, etc. [if applicable]
- Coughing and sneezing
- When hands are dirty

Hand washing should be performed as follows:

- Wet hands under warm running water to wrist level.
- Apply liquid soap. Later it evenly covers all areas of the hands for at least 10 seconds. Include the thumbs, fingertips, palms and in between the fingers, rubbing backwards and forwards at every stroke (see hand washing technique).
- Rinse hands off thoroughly under warm running water.
- Dry with a paper towel using a patting motion to reduce friction, taking special care between the fingers.

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- Use disposable paper towel that has been used to dry the hands to turn off taps.
- Dispose of the disposable paper towel in a waste bin using the foot pedal to avoid contaminating hands that have just been washed.



Facilities for Hand Washing:

We provide the following:

- Wash hand basins with hot and cold running water. The hot water is controlled at a maximum of 43 degrees C.
- Paper hand towels and liquid soap.

Alcohol-based Hand Rub/Gels:

When soap and running water are not readily available, for example on a field trip or excursion, an alcohol-based hand rub/gel may be used (the alcohol content should be at least 60%). The alcohol-based hand rub must be applied vigorously over all hand surfaces. Alcohol based hand rubs are only effective if hands are not visibly dirty, if hands are visibly dirty then liquid soap and water should be used. It is safe to let children use alcohol-based hand rubs/gels, but it is important to let children know that it should not be swallowed. Supervision is vital. It is also important to store it safely so children cannot get access to it without an adult. The alcohol content of the product generally evaporates in 15 seconds so after the alcohol evaporates it is safe for children to touch their mouth or

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eyes. Water is not required when using an alcohol rub/gel. **Alcohol based hand rubs/gels are not a substitute for hand washing with soap and running water.**

Respiratory Hygiene and Cough Etiquette:

Everyone should cover their mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing to prevent germs spreading. In addition:

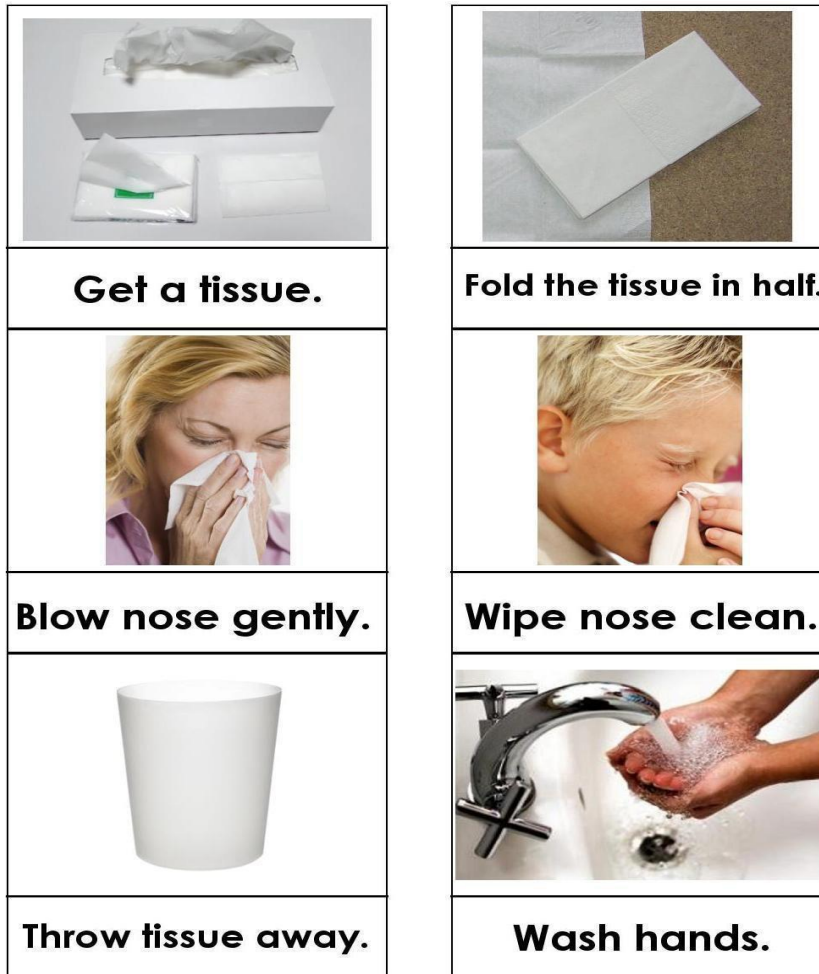
- A plentiful supply of disposable paper tissues should be readily available for nose wiping.
- Foot operated pedal bins that are lined with a plastic bag should be provided for disposal of used/soiled tissues.
- Cloth handkerchiefs should not be used.
- A different tissue should be used on each child, and staff must wash their hands after nose wiping.
- Children and staff should be taught to cover their mouth when they cough or sneeze and to wash their hands afterwards.
- Everyone (staff and children) should put their used tissues in a bin and wash their hands after contact with respiratory secretions.
- Outdoor activities should be encouraged when the weather permits.

Nose Blowing Procedure:

Tissues are available always and children will be taught the following etiquette for nose blowing.

1. Get a tissue.
2. Fold it in half.
3. Blow nose gently
4. Wipe nose clean
5. Throw tissue away in bin.
6. Wash hands
7. Staff supporting children to clean their nose must wash their hands before and after helping them.

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Cleanliness and Hygiene:

- Toys and other play materials are not allowed in the toilet area.
- Individual combs, hairbrushes, toothbrushes are clearly labelled with the child's name and not shared.
- The premises will be maintained in a clean, hygienic state throughout the day and a cleaning record is kept.
- Staff are responsible for the materials and equipment used and ensure they are clean, hygienic, and safe at all times.
- Children will be encouraged to care for their environment.
- Cleaning routines and procedures are in place and are closely monitored and recorded.
- Disposable cloths will be used for all cleaning purposes and discarded regularly.

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Toilets:

- Toilet areas are cleaned frequently during the day in accordance with the cleaning schedule and immediately if soiled. Attention paid to toilet seats, toilet handles, door handles and wash hand basins, especially taps.
- Separate cloths are used for cleaning the toilet and wash hand basin to reduce the risk of spreading germs from the toilet to the wash hand basin.

Spillages of Body Fluids: (e.g., urine, faeces, or vomit)

- Put on disposable plastic apron and gloves.
- Use absorbent disposable paper towels or kitchen towel roll to soak up the spillage.
- Clean the area using warm water and a general-purpose neutral detergent, use a disposable cloth.
- Apply a disinfectant to the affected surface.
- Dry the surface thoroughly using disposable paper towels.
- Dispose of soiled/sodden paper towels, gloves, apron, and cloths in a manner that prevents any other person coming in contact with these items e.g., bag separately prior to disposal into a general domestic waste bag.
- Wash and dry hands thoroughly.
- Change clothing that is soiled immediately.

Blood Spillages:

- Put on disposable plastic apron and gloves.
- Use absorbent disposable paper towels or kitchen towel roll to soak up the spillage.
- Apply a disinfectant to the affected surface. It should be left in contact with the surface for at least two minutes (check the manufacturer's instructions).
- Wash the area thoroughly with warm water and a general-purpose neutral detergent and dry using disposable paper towels.
- Dispose of soiled/sodden paper towels, gloves, apron, and cloth in a manner that prevents any other person coming in contact with these items e.g., bag separately prior to disposal into a general domestic waste bag.
- Wash and dry hands thoroughly.

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- Change clothing that is soiled immediately.

Dealing with Cuts and Nose Bleeds:

When dealing with cuts and nose bleeds, staff should follow the service's first aid procedure. They should:

- Put on disposable gloves and apron.
- Stop the bleeding by applying pressure to the wound with a dry clean absorbent dressing.
- Place a clean dressing on the wound and refer the child for medical treatment if needed, e.g., stitches required or bleeding that cannot be controlled.
- Once bleeding has stopped, dispose of the gloves and apron safely immediately in a manner that prevents another person coming in contact with the blood, i.e., bag separately prior to disposing into general domestic waste bag.
- Wash and dry hands.

Children who are known to be HIV positive or Hepatitis B positive should not be treated any differently from those who are not known to be positive. Intact skin provides a good barrier to infection, and staff should always wear waterproof dressings on any fresh cuts or abrasions on their hands. Staff should always wash their hands after dealing with other people's blood even if they have worn gloves or they cannot see any blood on their hands.

Gloves:

Wear disposable gloves when dealing with blood, body fluids, broken/grazed skin, and mucous membranes (e.g., eyes, nose, mouth). This includes activities such as:

- Cleaning up blood – e.g., after a fall or a nosebleed.
- General cleaning.
- Handling waste.

Gloves should be single use and well fitting.

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Change gloves:

- After caring for each child.
- After doing different care activities on the same child.
- Wash hands after gloves are removed.

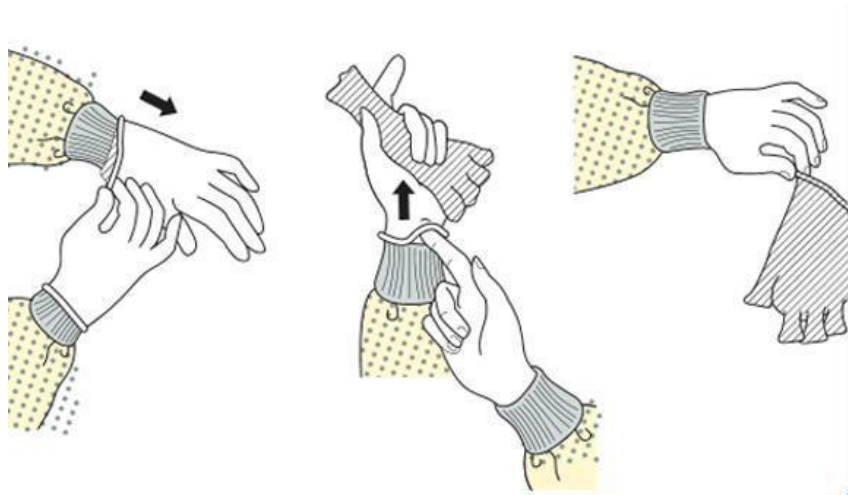
Remember gloves are not a substitute for hand washing.

Types of Gloves:

- Disposable non-powdered latex or nitrile gloves are recommended. Synthetic vinyl gloves may also be used but users should be aware that gloves made of natural rubber latex or nitrile have better barrier properties and are more suitable for dealing with spillages of blood or body fluids.
- Gloves should conform with the European Community Standard (CE marked).
- Polythene gloves are not recommended as these gloves tear easily and do not have good barrier properties.
- Latex free gloves should be provided for staff or children who have latex allergies.

How to Remove Gloves:

- Peel the first glove back from the wrist.
- Turn the glove inside out as it is being removed. Remove the glove completely and hold in the opposite hand.
- Remove the second glove by placing a finger inside the glove and peeling it back. Pull the glove off over the first glove.
- The outside surface of the glove should not be touched.
- Hand washing should be performed following glove removal.



Source: US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Aprons:

Wear a disposable apron if there is a risk of blood or body fluids splashing onto your skin or clothing, for example during activities such as cleaning up spillages of body fluids (e.g., blood, vomit, urine) or dealing with nose bleeds. Change aprons after caring for individual children. Wash hands after removing the apron. Aprons should be disposable, single use and water repellent. The apron should cover the front of the body from below the neckline to the knees. Clothes, aprons, or gowns are not recommended. Remove the apron by breaking the neck ties first, then break the ties at the back and roll up the apron without touching the outer (contaminated) surface. If gloves and an apron are worn remove the gloves first followed by hand washing.

Food and Kitchen Hygiene:

Germs can be spread in many ways while working with food in the kitchen. In order to prepare food hygienically, it is important to ensure that a high standard of personal hygiene is maintained in conjunction with effective cleaning of food preparation areas and

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equipment. This is necessary in addition to careful handling, preparation, cooling etc. of food.

Note: Do not leave perishable food at room temperature for more than two hours. Perishable food brought from home, including sandwiches, should be kept in a fridge or cool place below 5°C.

Cleaning:

Cleaning is essential in the prevention of infection. Thorough cleaning followed by drying will remove large numbers of germs but does not necessarily destroy germs. Deposits of dust, soil and microbes on environmental surfaces have been implicated in the transmission of infection. Routine cleaning with household detergents and warm water is considered to be sufficient to reduce the number of germs in the environment to a safe level. **A “clean as you go” policy is currently in place:**

- Play surfaces are cleaned, rinsed, and dried before use or when visibly soiled.
- Routine cleaning is accomplished using warm water and a general-purpose neutral pH detergent.
- Manufacturer’s instructions are always followed when using detergents and disinfectants with regard to the use of personal protective clothing and dilution recommendations.
- We do not guess measurements and always use a measure. Extra measures will not kill more bacteria or clean better – it will damage work surfaces, make floors slippery and give off unpleasant odours.
- Water is changed frequently as dirty water is ineffective for cleaning.
- Disinfecting surfaces are then rinsed.
- Toilets, sinks, wash hand basins and surrounding areas are cleaned when required at least twice daily.

Laundry

Any laundry such as blankets in ‘chill out’ area or soft toys are washed regularly and immediately if soiled.

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Cleaning Cloths:

- Cleaning cloths used in the playrooms, kitchen and sanitary accommodation are washed separately.

Toys and Equipment:

In order to reduce the risk of cross infection, all toys are cleaned on a regular basis (i.e., as part of a routine cleaning schedule) and toys that are shared are cleaned between users by different children.

Cleaning Programme

The service is cleaned every day.

Children's Rooms:

- Checklists are posted on the wall of the room and must be checked daily. All staff will also receive their own personal weekly rota, to be signed off.
- Staff are responsible for keeping their rooms clean and tidy.
- All room environments must be clean always. Toys, games, and work equipment must be placed on the shelves in an orderly fashion at all times.
- During the day the room should be ventilated regularly.

If A Child Becomes Ill When Attending the Service:

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- Parents/guardians will be informed of our concerns and procedures we are taking and will be asked to collect their sick child. We may need to call a GP or use emergency services.
- If a parent cannot be reached the next named on the emergency list will be contacted.
- If a child's temperature is raised it will be monitored, recorded and medication administered, if required.
- We advise that sick children must be kept at home.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Name:

Person responsible for approving the Policy.

APPENDIX E: EXCLUSIONS

This is a minimum exclusion period as recommended by the HSE. The service may impose longer periods if it has a concern.

Chickenpox:	Until scabs are dry; this is usually 5-7 days after the appearance of the rash.
Conjunctivitis:	Exclusion of affected children until they recover, or until they have had antibiotics for 48 hours.
Diarrhoea:	48 hours from last episode.
Diphtheria:	Very specific exclusion criteria apply and will be advised on by the Department of Public Health.
Food poisoning:	Until authorised by GP.
Glandular Fever:	Exclusion is not necessary.
Haemophilus Influenzae Type B: (Hib)	Children with the disease will be too ill to attend the service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.
Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease:	While the child is unwell, he/she should be kept away from service. If evidence exists of transmission within the day centre exclusion of children until the spots have gone from their hands may be necessary.
Head Lice:	Exclusion is not necessary [if treated]
Hepatitis A: (Yellow Jaundice, Infectious Hepatitis):	Recommended while the child feels unwell, or until 7 days after onset of jaundice, whichever is later.
Hepatitis B: (Serum Hepatitis)	Children will be too ill to attend the service and families will be given specific advice about when their child is well enough to return.
Impetigo:	Until lesions are crusted and healed, or 24 hours after commencing antibiotics.
Influenza and Influenza-like Illness: (Flu and ILI)	Remain at home for 7 days from when their symptoms began. Children should not re-attend the service until they are feeling better, and their temperature has returned to normal.
Living with HIV/AIDS:	Exclusion is not necessary.
Measles:	Exclude the child while infectious i.e., up to 4 days after the rash appears.
Meningitis:	Children with the disease will be too ill to attend the service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.
Meningococcal Disease:	Children with the disease will be too ill to attend the service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.
Molluscum Contagiosum:	Exclusion is not necessary.
MRSA: (Meticillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus)	Children/infants known to carry staphylococcus aureus (including MRSA) on the skin or in the nose do not need to be excluded from the Child Care setting. Children who have draining wounds or skin sores producing pus will only need to be excluded from a Child Care setting if the wounds cannot be covered or contained by a dressing and/or the dressing cannot be kept dry and intact.

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Mumps:	The child should be excluded for 5 days after the onset of swelling.
Pediculosis (lice):	Until appropriate treatment has been given
Pharyngitis/Tonsillitis:	If the disease is known to be caused by a streptococcal (bacterial) infection the child or member of staff should be kept away from the service until 24 hours after the start of treatment. Otherwise, a child or member of staff should stay at home while they feel unwell.
Polio:	Very specific exclusion criteria apply and will be advised on by the Department of Public Health.
Poliomyelitis:	Until declared free from infection by GP
Pneumococcus:	Children with the disease will be too ill to attend the service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.
Respiratory Syncytial Virus:	Children who have RSV should be excluded until they have no symptoms, and their temperature has returned to normal. Contacts do not need to be excluded.
Ringworm:	Children need not be excluded from service once they commence treatment.
Rubella: (German Measles)	For 7 days after onset of the rash, and whilst unwell.
Scabies:	Not necessarily once treatment has commenced.
Scarlet fever:	Once a patient has been on antibiotic treatment for 24 hours they can return to the service, provided they feel well enough.
Shingles:	Until scabs are dry.
Slapped Cheek Syndrome:	An affected child need not be excluded because he/she is no longer infectious by the time the rash occurs.
Temperature:	Over 38 degrees
Tetanus: (Lockjaw)	Children with the disease will be too ill to attend the service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.
Tuberculosis (TB):	Recommendations on exclusion depend on the particulars of each case, e.g., whether the case is “infectious” or not. The Department of Public Health will advise on each individual case.

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Typhoid and Paratyphoid:	Very specific exclusion criteria apply; your local Department of Public Health will advise.
Viral Meningitis:	Children with the disease will usually be too ill to attend the service. Contacts do not need to be exclude.
Vomiting:	48 hours from last episode of vomiting
Whooping Cough: (Pertussis)	The child is likely to be too ill to attend the service and should stay at home until he/she has had 5 days of antibiotic treatment or for 21 days from onset of illness if no antibiotic treatment.
Worms:	Exclusion is not necessary.
Verrucae:	Exclusion is not necessary.

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APPENDIX F: VACCINATION SCHEDULE:

Immunisation schedule for children born since July 2008

Age to Vaccinate:	Type of Vaccination:
At birth (Note: BCG no longer given since October 2016)	BCG tuberculosis vaccine (given in maternity hospitals or an HSE clinic)
At 2 months Free from your GP	6 in 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diphtheria ● Tetanus ● Whooping cough (Pertussis) ● Hib (Haemophilus influenzae B) ● Polio (Inactivated poliomyelitis) ● Hepatitis B PCV (Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine)
At 4 months Free from your GP	6 in 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diphtheria ● Tetanus ● Whooping cough (Pertussis) ● Hib (Haemophilus influenzae B) ● Polio (Inactivated poliomyelitis) ● Hepatitis B Men C (Meningococcal C)
At 6 months Free from your GP	6 in 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diphtheria ● Tetanus ● Whooping cough (Pertussis) ● Hib (Haemophilus influenzae B) ● Polio (Inactivated poliomyelitis) ● Hepatitis B Men C (Meningococcal C) PCV (Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine)
At 12 months Free from your GP	MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) PCV (Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine)
At 13 months Free from your GP	Men C (Meningococcal C) Hib (Haemophilus influenzae B)
At 4 - 5 years Free in school or from your GP	4 in 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diphtheria ● Tetanus ● Whooping cough (Pertussis) ● Polio (Inactivated poliomyelitis) MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
At 11 - 14 years Free in school	Td <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diphtheria ● Tetanus
At 12 years (1st year second level school) Girls only Free in school	HPV (Human Papillomavirus)

APPENDIX G: DISCLAIMER TO BE SIGNED BY A STAFF MEMBER WHO IS NOT VACCINATED

NAME OF STAFF MEMBER: _____

I have decided not to be vaccinated according to the HSE recommended schedule.

I understand that in a group childcare setting the consequences may include:

- Contracting the illness that the vaccine is designed to prevent.
- Transmitting the disease to others
- I understand that if there is a disease breakout this may necessitate my staying at home. This will only be done with advice from a medical practitioner and in the best interest of all children **AND OTHER STAFF MEMBERS**

Signed: _____

Name of Staff Member

APPENDIX H: DISCLAIMER TO BE SIGNED BY PARENTS WHERE CHILDREN ARE NOT VACCINATED

NAME OF CHILD: _____

CHILD'S DOB: _____

I have decided that my child will not be vaccinated according to the HSE recommended schedule.

I understand that in a group childcare setting the consequences may include:

- Contracting the illness that the vaccine is designed to prevent.
- Transmitting the disease to others
- I understand that if there is a disease breakout this may necessitate my child staying at home. This will only be done with advice from a medical practitioner and in the best interest of all children.

All information regarding your child remains confidential.

Signed: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

APPENDIX I: SPECIFIC DISEASES

Meningitis and Meningococcal:

Both these diseases are most common in children, there are over 150 cases reported per year in this age group in Ireland (Meningitis Trust). Although relatively rare, the speed at which children become ill, and the dramatic and sometimes devastating course of events make it a terrifying disease. Having a good knowledge and understanding of meningitis and being able to recognise the signs and symptoms early as well as getting medical attention quickly, may save lives. Although cases can occur throughout the year, the majority of cases occur during the winter months. Meningitis is an inflammation of the membranes that surround and protect the brain and spinal cord. The most common germs that cause meningitis are viruses and bacteria:

Viral Meningitis is rarely life threatening, although it can make people very unwell. Most people make a full recovery, but sufferers can be left with aftereffects such as headaches, tiredness, and memory loss.

Bacterial Meningitis can be life threatening and needs urgent medical attention. Most people who suffer from bacterial meningitis recover but many can be left with a variety of aftereffects and one in ten will die.

Signs and Symptoms:

Meningitis and septicaemia (blood poisoning) are not always easy to recognise, and symptoms can appear in any order. Some may not appear at all. In the early stages, the signs and symptoms can be similar to many other more common illnesses, for example flu. Trust your instincts. If you suspect meningitis or septicaemia, get medical help immediately. Early symptoms can include fever, headache, nausea (feeling sick), vomiting (being sick), and muscle pain, with cold hands and feet. A rash that does not fade under pressure (see 'The Glass (tumbler) Test' below) is a sign of meningococcal septicaemia. This rash may begin as a few small spots anywhere on the body and can spread quickly to look like fresh bruises.

The spots or rashes are caused by blood leaking into the tissues under the skin. They are more difficult to see on darker skin, so look on paler areas of the skin and under the eyelids. The spots or rash may fade at first, so keep checking.

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However, if someone is ill or is obviously getting worse, do not wait for spots or a rash to appear. They may appear late or may not appear at all.

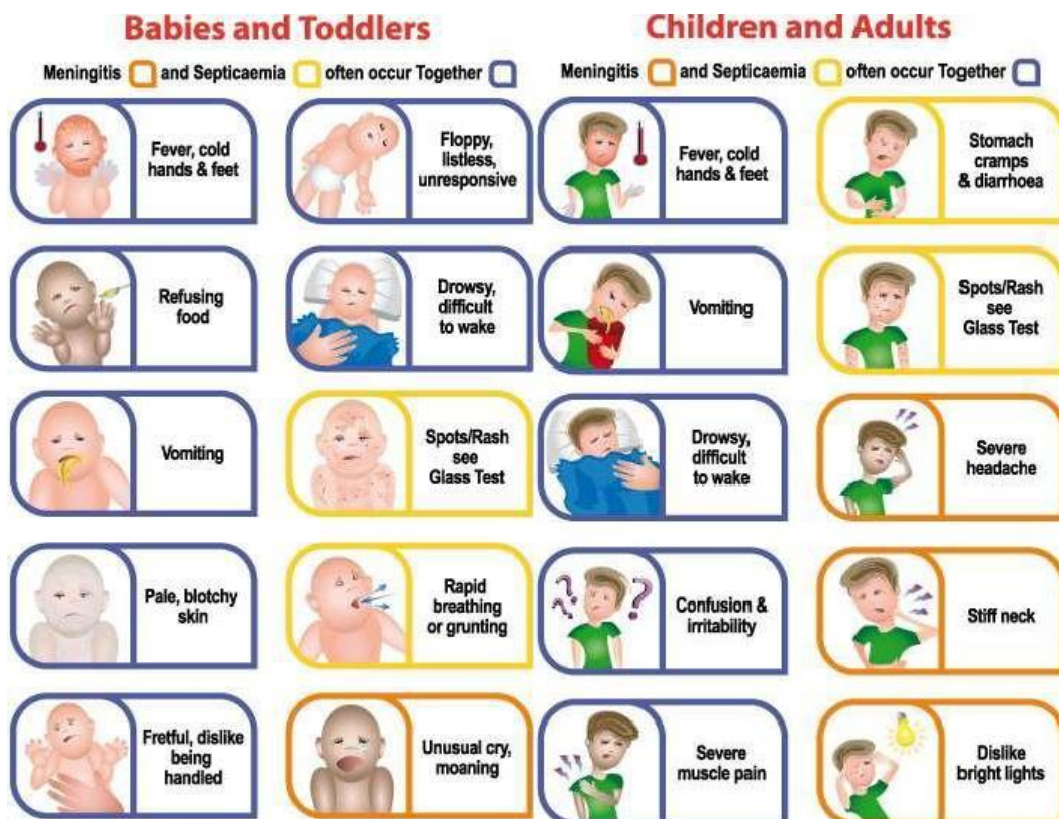
Spots or a rash will still be seen when the side of a clear drinking glass is pressed firmly against the skin.

A fever, together with spots or a rash that do not fade under pressure, is a medical emergency.

Trust your instincts. If you suspect meningitis or septicaemia, get medical help immediately.

Procedure for Managing a Suspected Case of Meningitis:

- If a member of staff suspects that a child is displaying the signs and symptoms of meningitis the child's doctor or our doctor on call will be contacted immediately, and the child's parents/guardians called.
- If a GP is not available, the child will be taken straight to the nearest A and E department. A member of staff will escort the child to hospital if the parent is unavailable.





Procedure when a case of Meningococcal Disease (Meningitis and /or Septicaemia)

Occurs:

- The public health team will usually issue a letter to other parents/guardians to inform them of the situation. The aim of this letter is to give information about, reduce anxiety and prevent uninformed rumours.
- Meningitis literature (outlining signs and symptoms) will be provided for parents/guardians by the public health team. The Meningitis Trust can provide further information and support free of charge.
- Antibiotics will be offered to persons considered to be 'close contacts. These are usually immediate family members or 'household' contacts. Antibiotics are given to kill off the bacteria that may be carried in the back of the nose and throat: this reduces the risk of passing the bacteria on to others. In certain situations, a vaccine may also be offered. These actions are coordinated by the public health team.
- There is **no reason** to close the Child Care service.
- There is **no need** to disinfect or destroy any equipment or toys that the child has touched.

The likelihood of a second case of meningococcal disease is extremely small. However, if two or more suspected cases occur within four weeks in the same Child Care facility, then antibiotics may be offered to all children and staff, on the advice from the public health doctor. During this time staff and parents should remain vigilant. Parents/guardians are advised to contact their GP if they are concerned or worried about that.

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their child is unwell. **For more information, www.meningitis-trust.ie or 24-hour helpline 1800 523196**

Hand, Foot, and Mouth:

Hand, Foot, and Mouth (HFMD) is a viral illness that causes fever, painful blisters in the throat and mouth, and sometimes on the hands, feet, and bottom. HFMD is often confused with foot-and-mouth (also called hoof-and-mouth) disease, a disease of cattle, sheep, and swine; however, the two diseases are not related—they are caused by different viruses. Humans do not get animal disease, and animals do not get human disease.

The viruses that cause it are called Coxsackie viruses that live in the human digestive tract. Several types of this family of viruses can cause Hand, Foot, and Mouth so unfortunately you can get it more than once. These viruses are usually passed from person to person through unwashed hands and via surfaces which have viruses on them. They can also be spread by coughing. It is more common to catch them from someone when they are in the early stages of their illness. Although anyone is at risk of becoming infected, children are generally more susceptible. HFMD is more common in summer and autumn and there is no immunisation.

Symptoms:

- The disease usually begins with a fever, poor appetite, malaise (feeling vaguely unwell), and often with a sore throat.
- One or 2 days after fever onset, painful sores usually develop in the mouth. They begin as small red spots that blister and then often become ulcers. The sores are usually located on the tongue, gums, and inside of the cheeks.
- A non-itchy skin rash develops over 1–2 days. The rash has flat or raised red spots, sometimes with blisters. The rash is usually located on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet; it may also appear on the buttocks and/or genitalia.
- A person with HFMD may have only a rash or only mouth sores.

How Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease Is Spread:

- Infection is spread from person to person by direct contact with infectious viruses. Infectious viruses are found in the nose and throat secretions, saliva, blister fluid, and stool of infected persons. The virus is most often spread by persons with unwashed, virus- contaminated hands and by contact with virus-contaminated surfaces.

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- Infected people are most contagious during the first week of the illness.
- The viruses that cause HFMD can remain in the body for weeks after a patient's symptoms have gone away. This means that the infected person can still pass the infection to other people even though he/she appears well. Also, some persons who are infected and excreting the virus, including most adults, may have no symptoms.
- HFMD is not transmitted to or from pets or other animals.

Treatment of HFMD:

There is no specific treatment and antibiotics are not effective as it is a viral infection. Most children with HFMD recover completely after a few days resting at home. Plenty of fluids help. Any fever or discomfort can be helped with a children's pain relief such as Calpol.

Prevention of HFMD:

A specific preventive for HFMD is not available, but the risk of infection can be lowered by following good hygiene practices.

- Hand washing is the mainstay of prevention of transmission and control of outbreaks. Children and carers should wash their hands before eating or preparing food, after using the toilet, after contact with an ill child, after contact with animals and whenever hands are visibly soiled. (See Infection Control Policy)
- Cleaning dirty surfaces and soiled items, including toys, first with soap and water and then disinfecting them by cleansing with a solution of chlorine bleach (made by adding 1 part of bleach to 4 parts water)
- Avoiding close contact (kissing, hugging, sharing eating utensils or cups, etc.) with persons with HFMD
- **Children should be kept away from the service whilst unwell. If evidence exists of transmission within the service, exclusion of children until the spots have gone from their hands may be necessary.**

Note: HFMD is communicable immediately before and during the acute stage of the illness, and perhaps longer as the virus may be present in the faeces for weeks.

The incubation period is 3 to 6 days, and the condition may last from 7 to 10 days.

APPENDIX J: CLEANING ROUTINES

Cleaning Routines for Toys:

Toys may be implicated in the transmission of potentially harmful germs and the development of infection in young children. Steps must be taken to ensure the toys are maintained in a safe and usable state by regular inspection, scheduled cleaning, and appropriate storage.

Soft Toys: should be kept to a minimum because they are porous, support microbial growth and can be difficult to clean. Soft toys must be subject to machine washing (Monthly or more often as necessary) and thorough air drying/tumble drying (according to manufacturer's instructions). Repeated decontamination of soft toys can compromise the integrity of the fabric and create a choking hazard, therefore ensuring thorough checking takes place before and after use.

Hard Surface Toys: should be washed at least monthly or sooner if visibly soiled. Toys with moving parts or openings can harbour dirt and germs in the crevices and must be washed and scrubbed using soap and warm water/detergent wipes before thorough rinsing and drying.

Mechanical/Electrical Toys: should be surface wiped monthly or more often as necessary, using a damp cloth that has been rinsed in hot, soapy water or detergent wipes followed by thorough drying.

Books: should be inspected weekly and the surfaces wiped using a disposable cloth that has been rinsed in hot, soapy water/ detergent wipes followed by thorough drying. Books with signs of dampness or mildew must be discarded.

Dressing up Clothes: All clothes must be washable and washed at a temperature of 60 degrees for 10 minutes. Clothes must be laundered weekly or more often as necessary. The storage box or rail must also be cleaned regularly.

Sand Pit: To keep free of toxic or harmful materials, rake the sandpit every morning and afternoon, keep the sandpit securely covered when it is not being used. Sieve the sand.

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weekly and wash the sand, play with toys weekly and allow them to dry. Replace sand every 2 or 3 months or more often as necessary. Sand play areas are separated from landing areas for slides or other equipment.

Toilets:

Toilets are checked regularly and cleaned appropriately as necessary.

Bins and Recycling:

The room should have two bins: one for green bin recycling and one for everything else. Children will be encouraged to use the appropriate bins. Staff should ensure that bins are never allowed to overflow. If it is fully empty, it. The bins should be emptied and rinsed out at the end of every day. If a bin has a lid, the lid must be closed at all times.

Staff Hygiene:

It is imperative to wash hands after handling bins, cleaning up vomit or urine, cleaning children's noses, before handling food, after handling food etc. This will help in the battle against infections.

Hand Sanitizers:

As most common germs are transmitted through hand contact, we have placed hand sanitizers inside the front door for all visitors to use to help reduce the risk of spreading infection.

Spillages and Hazards: The Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 applies.

Spillages:

In the interests of health and safety the following procedures must be used when cleaning up spillages:

- Disposable gloves are provided by the service and must be used by staff to clean up any body spillages or faeces.
- Warning notices should be displayed where appropriate.
- Any vomit or blood should be dealt with immediately by wearing disposable gloves and applying Milton directly on to the spillage, before cleaning up.

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Hazards:

If you discover anything which may be a potential hazard to you, the children, other staff, or members of the public who may be using the service, you must take immediate remedial action. Report the hazard to the Manager who will record the hazard and take the appropriate action to rectify the hazard.

SAMPLE DAILY CLEANING ROUTINE:

- Wipe down all shelves in warm soapy water.
- Wash all tabletops and wipe down table legs with a mild disinfectant.
- Wash down sink and surrounding counter area.
- Clean fridge as required, check dates on food, and remove if necessary.
- The fridge should be wiped out inside with antibacterial spray.
- The outside of the fridge is to be cleaned with a mild disinfectant.
- Wipe down windowsills in warm soapy water. Clean windows with warm soapy water if necessary.
- Wipe all exposed woodwork with a mild disinfectant.
- Wash all skirting boards with warm soapy water.
- Empty bin and replace bag.
- Replace paper towels and hand washing liquid as required.
- Clean toilet and disinfect toilet seat and base.
- Wash sink and disinfect taps.
- Empty bins and replace new bags, paper towels and toilet paper.
- Sweep/vacuum and wash floors with warm soapy water.

7. OUTINGS

Document Title:	Outings
Unique Reference Number:	007
Document Author:	Happy Feet Childcare, CB
Document Approved:	Ashling Horan
Person(s) responsible for developing, distributing, and reviewing Policy	Ashling Horan
Person responsible for approving Policy	Anita Flynn
Method of communication of policies to staff (email / hard copy / induction training)	Email
Method of communication of policies to parents/guardians (full policies via email, hard copy)	Email and hard copy available in Service
Date the Document is Effective From:	August 2023
Scheduled Review Date:	August 2024
Number of Pages:	8

This policy is available and communicated to parents, staff, and relevant stakeholders.

It is also available in child friendly format to school age children in the Service.

Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to this policy. Relevant staff have received training on this policy.

Statement of Intent:

We are committed to planning and undertaking appropriate supervised outings.

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Policy and Procedure:

- The location for the outing should be familiar to staff and a risk assessment should be carried out prior to the visit with the children. Risk assessment forms should be completed and kept for inspection. We go to farms and zoos.
- A consent form must be completed and signed by a parent/guardian for trips or outings and retained in the child's file for inspection.

The consent form must include:

- The child's name.
 - The reason for the outing
 - The date and the expected time of departure and return
 - A description of the proposed destination
 - The method of transport that will be used.
 - The proposed activities
 - The anticipated number of children likely to be going on the outing.
 - The adult: child ratio on the outing
 - Any adults other than staff members will accompany and supervise the children on the outing.
 - Information about the risk assessment that has been carried out is available at the service.
-
- Suitable insurance is in place to cover outings and trips.
 - The ratio of children to adults will be in compliance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) [Registration of School Aged Services] Regulations 2018 and the Insurance Policy.
-
- **First Aid**: A designated trained first aid person and first aid box will accompany the children on each outing.
 - **Clothing** Children will wear clothing suitable for the outing and for the weather conditions. Parents will be advised, in advance, of what type of clothing children should wear.

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- **Food and drink:** we will ensure that children have access to suitable food and drink, depending on the length of the trip. Food hygiene and safety guidelines will be followed, and children will be supervised with hand washing.
- A safety briefing will be given to all adults involved in the outing.
- Staff must be responsible for checking the numbers of children, doing a head count, and recording the names of children (roll call), before leaving the premises, and several times while out on the outing, before returning and on return to the service.
- A charged mobile phone will be taken on all outings.
- Contact details for all parents will be taken on outings.
- Staff are familiar with the critical incident plan.
- A copy of the Critical Incident Plan and a record of the children attending the outing will be brought to the outing.
- Individual care plans will be brought on the outing if appropriate.

Please see Appendix K: Outings Check List

Transport on Outings:

When transport is needed for any outing, the staff member in charge of the outing must ensure that:

- Car seats are provided and are appropriate to the age and height of each child being transported, in line with S.I. No. 240 of 2006, European Communities.
- Drivers are appropriately vetted by the National Vetting Bureau of a Garda Síochána where applicable.
- There is safe supervision of children during transport and getting in and out of vehicles.
- Children are never left alone inside a vehicle, even when the engine is turned off.
- Car keys are never left in the ignition when getting out of the car and car keys are kept in a safe place, out of reach of children.
- Where required, a vehicle is equipped with a ramp or hydraulic lift to allow entry and exit.

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- Records are kept of the vehicles used to transport children, with named drivers and appropriate insurance cover in accordance with data protection requirements.

Infection Control

Infection control procedures will be in place during outings, the same as when children are in the setting. Staff will carry tissues, gloves, aprons, hand gels and will ensure children adhere to good handwashing and nose blowing etiquette.

Managing medicines on trips and outings:

- Medication for a child is taken in a sealed plastic box clearly labelled with the child's name and the name of the medication. Inside the box is a copy of the consent form and a card to record when it has been given, with the details as given above together with the child's individual care plan.
- On returning to the setting the card is stapled to the medicine record book and the parent signs it.
- If a child on medication has to be taken to hospital, the child's medication is taken in a sealed plastic box clearly labelled with the child's name and the name of the medication. Inside the box is a copy of the consent form signed by the parents.

In the Event of a Child going missing on an outing (Critical Incident):

Parents/guardians usually attend outings and are responsible for their own child.

The following procedures are to be followed.

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, staff on the outing ask children to stand with their designated person/parent and carry out a headcount to ensure that no other child has gone astray.
- One staff member searches the immediate vicinity but does not search beyond that.
- The person in charge contacts the local Garda station and reports the child as missing. Then follow their instructions.

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- The person in charge contacts the parent, who makes their way to the setting or outing venue as agreed if they are not already with the group.
- Staff take the remaining children back to the setting if applicable.
- In an indoor venue, the Staff contact the venue's security who will handle the search and contact the local Garda Station if the child is not found.
- A full and thorough review of procedures and practices will take place to determine how the incident occurred and changes will be made if appropriate.
- An accident/incident form will be completed and appropriately signed.

Other critical incidents may include a child becoming ill. A parent or next of kin will be called immediately to collect the child or emergency services will be called.

With all critical incidents the 'person in charge' takes responsibility for making calls and dealing with the direct incident. Other staff will take care of other children and call the service or emergency contact to come to provide additional help.

Accidents, incidents, or injuries

If there is an accident involving a child, a member of staff, or an accompanying adult or a child goes missing on the outing or is left behind, the staff member in charge of the outing must make sure that:

- The previously agreed search procedure is followed if necessary.
- The pre-assigned members of staff take the other children back to the service.
- A member of staff with up to date First Aid training administers First Aid if necessary.
- They take charge of all necessary communications with emergency services and with the parents/guardians of the child/children concerned.
- The registered provider or service manager is contacted immediately.
- On return the occurrence is recorded as an incident on the Incident Report Form.

Unwanted Attention on Outings

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Should a member of the public show unwanted attention to the children and/or staff while the Service is on an outing the staff shall:

- a) Where unwanted attention is being received from an employee(s) of a facility which the Service is visiting, immediately inform the Management of the facility with a request that the attention immediately desists.
- b) Where the unwanted attention is being received by a member(s) of the public, such a person will be asked to immediately desist.

In the event that a person(s) does not immediately cease the unwanted attention staff will phone the Gardaí.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
Name: _____

Person responsible for approving the Policy.

APPENDIX K: OUTINGS CHECKLIST

✓ **Risk Assessment**

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The location for the outing should be familiar to staff and a risk assessment should be carried out prior to the visit with the children. Risk assessment forms should be completed and kept for inspection.

✓ **Consent form signed by parents/guardians**

A consent form must be given to and signed by a parent/guardian for trips or outings and retained in the child's file for inspection.

✓ **Contact numbers for each child — parents/guardians**

All contact numbers should be stored in the phone.

✓ **Mobile phone**

Ensure it is charged properly and if credit is needed that there is plenty of credit in the phone. The mobile phone is password protected.

✓ **Food/snacks and plenty of fresh water**

Especially if it is a hot day these should be chilled before leaving.

✓ **Sun cream and sun hats or rainwear**

Depending on the weather.

✓ **Balls, rings, skipping ropes etc.**

For the children to play games if appropriate.

✓ **A watch with the correct time**

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Before leaving the staff should say what time they will be returning and if the time runs late, they should ring the Manager to inform them of this.

✓ **Always bring a good supply of tissues or wipes**

✓ **First Aid Kit and First Aider**

Always bring a small travel first aid kit. A qualified first aider should always accompany the children. Don't forget any medication for children with identified conditions.

8. MISSING CHILD

Document Title:	Missing Child
Unique Reference Number:	008
Document Author:	Happy Feet Childcare, CB
Document Approved:	Ashling Horan
Person(s) responsible for developing, distributing, and reviewing Policy	Ashling Horan
Person responsible for approving Policy	Anita Flynn
Method of communication of policies to staff (email / hard copy / induction training)	Email
Method of communication of policies to parents/guardians (full policies via email, hard copy)	Email and hard copy available in Service
Date the Document is Effective From:	August 2023
Scheduled Review Date:	August 2024
Number of Pages:	3

If a child goes missing parents/guardians and A Garda Síochána must be informed with immediate effect. Tusla, the Child and family Agency must be informed within 3 days.

This policy is available and communicated to parents, staff, and relevant stakeholders.

Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to this policy. Relevant staff have received training on this policy.

Statement of intent:

It is our intention to keep children safe at all times and to avoid a situation whereby a child is missing.

Procedure:

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- Children are welcomed into the setting by a designated member of staff, who marks their presence in the daily register.
- A member of staff remains on duty by the door throughout the arrival and departure period of the Service and until all parents/guardians have left the premises.
- The main door is kept secure at all times when a member of staff is not on duty at the entrance.
- Children's times of arrival and departure are noted on the register, and a note is made in the register if a child is to leave early or with another adult.
- The outdoor area is supervised when children are outside and securely fenced and walled and the gate secure at all times.
- Staff are deployed throughout the setting during the session, ensuring that no child is left alone for any period without an adult being aware of their location.
- The rooms in which the children play is never left unsupervised/out of vision of staff.
- Staff remain on duty within the main room at all times, unless all the children and staff are in the outdoor area together.
- If all Staff and children are outside and a child needs to come inside, a member of staff will accompany them inside.

In the event of Staff not being able to locate a child on the premises:

- The premises will be searched thoroughly and immediately.
- The register will be called to determine which child(ren) are missing.
- The grounds surrounding the service will be searched.
- Staff will call the local Garda.
- Staff will inform the parents/guardians.
- A full and thorough review of procedures and practices will take place to determine how the incident occurred and changes will be made if appropriate.
- An accident/incident form will be completed and appropriately signed.

Please see the Outings Policy for procedure to follow if a child goes missing on an outing.

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Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
Name:

Person responsible for approving the Policy.

9. CHILD AND ADULT PROTECTION POLICY

Document Title:	Child and Adult Protection Policy
Unique Reference Number:	09
Document Author:	Happy Feet Childcare, CB
Document Approved:	Ashling Horan
Person(s) responsible for developing, distributing, and reviewing Policy	Ashling Horan
Person responsible for approving Policy	Anita Flynn
Method of communication of policies to staff (email / hard copy / induction training)	Email
Method of communication of policies to parents/guardians (full policies via email, hard copy)	Email and hard copy available in Service
Date the Document is Effective From:	August 2023
Scheduled Review Date:	August 2024
Number of Pages:	29

This policy is available and communicated to parents, staff, and relevant stakeholders.

Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to this policy. Relevant staff have received training on this policy.

The purpose of this service is to provide an After-School service facility for children aged 4-13 years. We open 50 weeks per year and daily from Monday to Friday. We have the capacity to cater for 48 children at any one time and our ratios are listed in the table. We also provide an out-of-term service for all children. This happens during midterm breaks, and school holidays.

This service is privately owned by Anita Flynn.

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Our Service is located at Tarmon National School, Tarmon, Castlerea, Co Roscommon.

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The Service caters for 48 children.

The Service has 4 mandated staff.

The Service provides the following service and activities for the children:

Arts and crafts, board games, gym, Astro pitch, running track, baking.

Statement of Intent:

The welfare of the child is paramount to us. Therefore, we want to make sure that the children in the service are protected and kept safe from harm while they are in our care.

We do this by:

- Making sure that our staff and students are carefully selected, trained, and supervised.
- Having procedures to recognise, respond to and report concerns about children's protection and welfare.
- Making sure all staff are Garda vetted prior to engagement.
- Having clear codes of behaviour for management, staff, and students.
- Having a procedure to respond to accidents and incidents.
- Giving parents/guardians, children, and staff information about what we do and what to expect from us.
- Let parents/guardians and children know how to voice their concerns or complain if there is anything they are not happy about. Having a procedure to respond to these complaints.
- Having a clear reporting procedure to be followed should a staff member have a concern about a child with regard to *Children First (2017) and The Children First Act 2015*.
- Having a procedure to respond to allegations of abuse and neglect against staff members.
- Having a system where the policy and safeguarding statement is reviewed annually by the Management.

Policy:

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Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children published by the Department of Child and Youth Affairs in 2017 and *Our Duty to Care* form the basis of our services Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

<https://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/publications/20171002ChildrenFirst2017.pdf>

https://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/publications/ODTC_Full_Eng.pdf

See also the Child protection and Welfare Practice Handbook available at http://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/CF_WelfarePracticehandbook.pdf

- This policy is applicable at all times when children are in the care of the service, including outings.
- For the purpose of this policy, a “child” means anyone who is under 18 years of age who is not or has not been married.
- All staff and people who work within the service must read and understand this policy and procedures and the Child Safeguarding Statement and it will be part of a new staff member’s induction training. Clarification on any point may be sought from the Designated Liaison Person or Manager.

Our Statutory Obligations

One of the main objectives of the Children First Act 2015 is to ensure that our service keeps children safe from harm while availing our service. We will prevent, as far as practicable, deliberate harm or abuse to the children availing of our services. While it is not possible to remove all risk from our service, we have put in place policies and procedures to manage and reduce risk to the greatest possible extent.

The Act places specific obligations on us including the requirement to:

- Keep children **safe from harm** while they are using our service.
- Carry out a **risk assessment** to identify whether a child or young person could be harmed while receiving our services.
- Develop a **Child Safeguarding Statement** that outlines the policies and procedures which are in place to manage the risks that have been identified. See *Child Safeguarding Statement*

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- Appoint a **relevant person** to be the first point of contact in respect of our Child Safeguarding Statement. See *APPENDIX 7*

As part of the policy, our service will:

- Appoint both a Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for dealing with child protection concerns and a Deputy Liaison Person. **DLP is Ashling Horan and Deputy LP is Edwina Lennon**
- Provide induction training on the Child and Adult Protection Policy to all staff and students and ensure that they understand their obligations as a 'Mandated Person' under the Children First Act 2015.
- Maintain a list of persons in the service who are Mandated Persons under the Children First Act 2015. See *APPENDIX 8*
- Ensure that all staff attend child protection training as appropriate.
- Provide supervision and support for staff and students in contact with children.
- Share information about the Child and Adult Protection Policy with families.
- Ensure this policy will be shared with parents/guardians on enrolment to our service.
- Work and co-operate with the relevant statutory agencies as required.

The Designated Liaison Person:

We will at all times have an appointed Designated Liaison Person and a Deputy Liaison Person in the event of the Designated Liaison Person being unavailable. We will endeavour to send the Designated Liaison Person(s) on any necessary or new training courses available.

We have appointed a Designated Liaison Officer and a Deputy Designated Liaison Officer. Their details and contact details are displayed on the parents/guardians' board. DLP is Ashling Horan and Deputy LP is Edwina Lennon

The Role of the Designated Liaison Persons is to:

- Establish contact with the Duty Social Worker responsible for child protection in the organisations catchment area and ensure that the organisation's Child Protection

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Policy and procedures are followed where **Criteria for Reporting: Definitions and Thresholds are reached, or Reasonable Grounds for Concern** exist about individual children.

- Be accessible to all staff.
- Ensure that they are knowledgeable about child protection and welfare and that they undertake any training considered necessary to keep updated on new developments.
- Ensure the Child and Adult Protection Policy and Procedures of the service are followed.
- Be responsible, as a Mandated Person, for reporting concerns about the protection and welfare of children to TUSLA – Child and Family Agency or an Garda Síochána.
- Ensure the appropriate information is included in the report to the Child and Family Agency and that the report is submitted in writing (under confidential cover) using the Standard Reporting Form *See Appendix 1*.
- To liaise with Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, an Garda Síochána and other agencies as appropriate [the Mandated Person who has a concern and makes a report also has a responsibility to liaise with the agencies as required]
- To provide information and advice on child protection and training within the organisation.
- Keep relevant people within the organisation informed of relevant issues, whilst maintaining confidentiality.
- Ensure that an individual case record is maintained of the action taken by the service, the liaison with other agencies and the outcome.
- Maintain a central log or record of all child protection and welfare concerns in the service.
- Ensure appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing, under confidential cover.

Mandated Persons

Children First 2017: Chapter 3 and Appendix 2 refers.

All childcare staff are ‘Mandated Persons’ under The Children First Act 2015.

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The Children First Act 2015 places a legal obligation on certain people to report child protection concerns at or above a defined threshold to Tusla - Child and Family Agency. These Mandated Persons must also assist Tusla, on request, in its assessment of child protection concerns about children who have been the subject of a mandated report.

Mandated Persons are people who have contact with children and/or families and who, because of their qualifications, training and/or employment role, are in a key position to help protect children from harm. Mandated Persons include professionals working with children in afterschool settings.

Mandated Persons have two main legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015.

These are:

1. To report the harm of children above a defined threshold to Tusla.
2. To assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report.

See APPENDIX 5 Mandated Persons Responsibilities (Children First Act 2015)

See APPENDIX 8 List of Mandated Persons in Our Service

IMPORTANT NOTE

It is important to note that the statutory obligation of Mandated Persons to report under the Children First Act 2015 must be discharged by the Mandated Person and cannot be discharged by the Designated Liaison Person on their behalf. Within our setting the DLP's will also fulfil the role of Mandated Persons. This means that if, as a Designated Liaison Person, you are made aware of a concern about a child that meets or exceeds the thresholds of harm for mandated reporting, you have a statutory obligation to make a report to Tusla arising from your position as a Mandated Person.

While Mandated Persons have statutory obligations to report mandated concerns, they may make a report jointly with another person, whether the other person is a Mandated Person or not. In effect, this means that a Mandated Person can make a joint report with a Designated Liaison Person.

Criteria for Reporting: Definitions and Thresholds

Chapter 3 Page 20 Children First – National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017).

Mandated Persons within our setting are required to report any knowledge, belief, or reasonable suspicion that a child has been harmed, is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed. The Act defines harm as assault, ill-treatment, neglect, or sexual abuse, and covers single and multiple instances. The four types of abuse are described in *APPENDIX. 2*. The threshold of harm for each category of abuse at which Mandated Persons have a **legal** obligation to report concerns is outlined below.

NEGLECT: Neglect is defined as ‘to deprive a child of adequate food, warmth, clothing, hygiene, supervision, safety or medical care’. The threshold of harm, at which you must report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015, is reached when you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child’s needs have been neglected, are being neglected, or are at risk of being neglected to the point where **the child’s health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.**

EMOTIONAL ABUSE/ILL-TREATMENT: Ill-treatment is defined as ‘to abandon or cruelly treat the child, or to cause or procure or allow the child to be abandoned or cruelly treated’. Emotional abuse is covered in the definition of ill-treatment used in the Children First Act 2015. The threshold of harm, at which you must report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015, is reached when you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being ill-treated to the point where **the child’s health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.**

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PHYSICAL ABUSE: Physical abuse is covered in the references to assault in the Children First Act 2015. The threshold of harm, at which you must report to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015, is reached when you know, believe, or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being.

assaulted and that as a result **the child's health, development or welfare have been or are being seriously affected or are likely to be seriously affected.**

SEXUAL ABUSE: If, as a Mandated Person, you know, believe or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being sexually abused, then you must report this to Tusla under the Children First Act 2015. Sexual abuse to be reported under the Children First Act 2015 [as amended by section 55 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017] is defined as an offence against the child, as listed in Schedule 3 of the Children First Act 2015. A full list of relevant offences against the child which are considered sexual abuse is set out in **Appendix 3 of Children First (2017).**

As all sexual abuse falls within the category of **seriously affecting a child's health, welfare, or development**, you must submit all concerns about sexual abuse as a mandated report to Tusla. There is one exception, which deals with certain consensual sexual activity between teenagers, which is outlined on **page 23 Children First (2017).**

The service endorses that the **Children First (2017) Guidelines** advise that the ability to recognise child abuse depends as much on a person's willingness to accept the possibility of its existence as it does on knowledge and information. It is important to note that child abuse is not always readily visible.

Reasonable Grounds for Concern

Chapter 2, Page 06 Children First (2017)

The DLPs or Mandated Persons should always inform Tusla when you have **reasonable grounds for concern** that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. We understand that if this is neglected or ignored, it could result in on-going harm to the child. We understand that it is not necessary for us to prove that abuse has occurred to report a concern to Tusla. All that is required of us is that we have **reasonable grounds for concern**. It is Tulsa's role to assess concerns that are reported to it.

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Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern include:

- Evidence, for example an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way.
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse.
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused.
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed.
- An account from a person who saw the child being abused.

The guiding principles on reporting child abuse or neglect may be summarised as follows:

1. The safety and well-being of the child must take priority over concerns about adults against whom an allegation may be made.
2. Reports of concerns should be made without delay to Tusla.

Recognising Concerns:

Staff and students may at times be concerned about the general welfare and development of the children they work with, and they can discuss any concerns with their manager and/ Designated Liaison Person at any time. All staff and students should be familiar with the definitions of abuse and the signs and symptoms of abuse as outlined in *Children's First* (2017)

see *APPENDIX 2: TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE AND HOW THEY MAY BE RECOGNISED*

Disclosures of Abuse from a Child

If a Mandated Person, within our setting receives a disclosure of harm from a child, which is above the thresholds set out in **Criteria for Reporting: Definitions and Thresholds** they must make a mandated report of the concern to Tusla. **They are not required to judge the truth of the claims or the credibility of the child.** If the concern does not meet the threshold to be reported as a mandated concern, you should report it to Tusla as a *reasonable concern*.

It is our duty within this setting to report any disclosure even if there is a reluctance to do so for a number of reasons, for example the child may say that they do not want the

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disclosure to be reported. However, we inform Tusla of all risks to children above the threshold, as the removal of a risk to one child does not necessarily mean that there are no other children at risk. The information contained in the disclosure may be critical to Tusla's assessment of risk to another child either now or in the future.

Professionals within our setting will deal with disclosures of abuse sensitively and professionally. The following approach is suggested as best practice for dealing with these disclosures.

- React calmly.
- Listen carefully and attentively.
- Take the child seriously.
- Reassure the child that they have taken the right action in talking to you.
- Do not promise to keep anything secret.
- Ask questions for clarification only. Do not ask leading questions.
- Check back with the child that what you have heard is correct and understood.
- Do not express any opinions about the alleged abuser.
- Ensure that the child understands the procedures that will follow.
- Make a written record of the conversation as soon as possible, in as much detail as possible.
- Treat the information confidentially, subject to the requirements of Children First (2017) and legislation.

On-going Support:

Following a disclosure by a child, it is important that staff continue in a supportive relationship with the child. Disclosure is a huge step for many children.

Staff should continue to offer support, particularly through:

- Maintaining a positive relationship with the child.
- Keeping lines of communication open by listening carefully to the child.
- Continue to include the child in the usual activities.

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- Any further disclosure should be treated as a first disclosure and responded to as in Reporting Procedures in this policy.

Procedure when a referral is not made to the Child and Family Agency:

A suspicion which is not identified by **Criteria for Reporting: Definitions and Thresholds or Reasonable Grounds for Concern.**

- In this case, the concern and any informal consultation will be documented and kept confidentially and securely.
- The DLP will inform the member of staff or student who raised the concern that it is not being referred in writing, indicating the reasons. The DLP will advise the individual that they may make a report themselves **see Mandated Persons and Making a Mandated Report.** The provision of the *Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998* will apply.
- Persons reporting suspected child abuse or neglect should not interview the child or the child's parents/guardians in any detail about the alleged abuse. This may be more appropriately carried out by the TUSLA Duty Social Worker or an Garda Síochána.
- If staff, students, or volunteers have any concerns these should be discussed immediately with the Designated Liaison Person.

Making a Mandated Report

Chapter 3, Page 24 Children First (2017)

Section 14 of the Children First Act 2015 requires Mandated Persons to report a mandated concern to Tusla 'as soon as practicable'.

Mandated Persons will:

- Submit a report of a mandated concern to Tusla using the required report form, on which you should indicate that you are a Mandated Person and that your report is about a mandated concern.
- Include as much relevant information as possible in the report as this will aid effective and early intervention for the child and may reduce the likelihood of Tusla needing to

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contact you for further information. The report form and contact details on the Tusla website (www.tusla.ie). See also *APPENDICES 1 and 4*

- Post or submit electronically the mandated report form to Tusla.
- Not report the same concern more than once. However, if the Mandated Person becomes aware of any additional information, a further report should be made to Tusla. In addition, Mandated Persons are not required to make a report where the sole basis for your knowledge, belief or suspicion of harm is as a result of becoming aware that another Mandated Person has made a report to Tusla about the child.

NOTE

If the concern may require urgent intervention to make the child safe, section 14(7) of the Children First Act 2015 allows the Mandated Person to alert Tusla of the concern in advance of submitting a written report. The Mandated Person must then submit a mandated report to Tusla on the report form within three days.

A Mandated Person who makes a report to an authorised person is protected from civil liability under the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998.

Details on how Tusla deals with concerns received can be found in *Chapter 5 of Children First (2017)*

Under no circumstances should a child be left in a situation that exposes him or her to harm or risk of harm pending intervention by Tusla. If you think the child is in immediate danger and you cannot contact Tusla, you should contact the Gardaí.

Informing the Family That a Report is Being Made

Chapter 3, Page 25 Children First (2017)

The Children First Act 2015 does not require you to inform the family that a report under the legislation is being made to Tusla. However, it is good practice to tell the family that a report is being made and the reasons for the decision.

It is not necessary to inform the family that a report is being made if by doing so the child will be placed at further risk or where the family's knowledge of the report could impair Tusla's ability to carry out a risk assessment. Also, the family do not need to be informed if by doing so it may place staff in the service at risk of harm from the family.

Consequences of Non-reporting

Chapter 3, Page 2 Children First (2017)

The Children First Act 2015 does not impose criminal sanctions on Mandated Persons who fail to make a report to Tusla. However, all staff should be aware that there are possible consequences for a failure to report. There are a number of administrative actions that Tusla could take if, after an investigation, it emerges that Mandated Persons did not make a mandated report and a child was subsequently left at risk or harmed.

The Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences Against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 requires that any person who has information about a serious offence against a child, which may result in charges or prosecution, must report this to an Garda Síochána. Failure to report under the Act is a criminal offence under that legislation. This obligation is **in addition to** any obligations under the Children First Act 2015.

NOTE

Failure to report a child protection concern may invoke the Disciplinary Policy of this service.

A concern could come to attention in a number of ways:

- A child tells you or indicates that he/ she is being abused. This is called a disclosure.
- An admission or indication from alleged abuser.
- A concern about a potential risk to children posed by a specific person, even if the children are unidentifiable.
- Information from someone who saw a child being abused.
- Evidence of an injury or behaviour that is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused in any other way.
- Consistent indication over a period of time that a child is suffering from physical or emotional neglect.
- An injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse, but an innocent explanation is given.
- Concern about the behaviour or practice of a colleague.

NOTE

All personnel are expected to consult *Children First 2017 [Chapter 2, Page 07 Children First (2017)]* and the *Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook* for detailed information on the signs and symptoms of abuse. See **APPENDIX 2: TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE AND HOW THEY MAY BE RECOGNISED**

The Reporting Procedure:

Any member of staff who has a concern about a child in the service currently being abused, abused in the past, or likely to be at risk of abuse, is obliged to verbally relay their concern to the Designated Liaison Person as a matter of urgency. **See Criteria for Reporting: Definitions and Thresholds.**

1. Mandated staff who have a concern should record in writing what the child has said, including as far as possible, the exact words utilised by the child.
2. The mandated staff must inform the Designated Liaison Person.
3. Details must be recorded by mandated staff on the TUSLA Standard Reporting Form, which is in the Forms Folder in the Office, which must then be signed by the person making the report. See *Appendix 1: Standard Reporting Form* or <http://www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/publications-and-forms>**See Making a Mandated Report**
4. Unless it puts the child at further risk of doing so, the **Designated Liaison Person or Manager** will make every effort to contact the parents/guardians to discuss the concerns made by the child. A written record will be kept of this meeting with the parents/guardians.
5. The Designated Liaison Person will examine the **Criteria for Reporting: Definitions and Thresholds** or determine if **Reasonable Grounds for Concern** are present. ***Remember Mandated Persons should be aware that the legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015 to report mandated concerns rest with the Mandated Person and not with the designated liaison person.***
6. Immediate action must be taken to protect the child in question and indeed any other children who may be considered at 'risk'.

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7. A child will never be interviewed regarding the concern by any staff. However, all comments made by the child will be noted.
8. Allegations against staff will be dealt with separately and the disciplinary procedure will be followed as necessary.
9. In cases of emergency, where a child is deemed to be at immediate and serious risk and a Duty Social worker is unavailable, an Garda Síochána should be contacted.
Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending TUSLA intervention.
10. The service will take care to ensure that actions taken by them do not undermine or frustrate any investigations being conducted by TUSLA or an Garda Síochána. Close liaisons will be maintained with these authorities to achieve this.
11. Where there are reasonable grounds, a report should be made to TUSLA **See Making a Mandated Report**. Each area has a social worker on duty for a certain number of hours each day. The duty social worker is available to meet with, or talk on the telephone, to persons wishing to report child protection concerns. The Duty Social Worker will assess the information available. *See APPENDIX 4: Contact Details*.
12. Once a report is submitted, the duty social worker may need to speak with the person who had the initial concern.
13. In the event that the Designated Liaison Person makes a decision not to report to TUSLA, full details of the decision must be recorded including the reasons for not reporting plus any action taken. This report should be stored as confidential by the Designated Liaison Person in the child's records and kept by the service in a secure place. ***Remember as a Mandated Person, you should be aware that the legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015 to report mandated concerns rest with the Mandated Person and not with the Designated Liaison Person.***
14. Allegations or concerns should not be investigated by the Designated Liaison Person or a staff member but passed on to TUSLA /Garda to follow through.

Dealing with a Retrospective Disclosure by an Adult of Abuse as a Child:

Chapter 3, Page 23 Children First (2017)

Some adults may disclose abuse that took place during their childhood. Such disclosures may come to light when an adult attends counselling or is being treated for a psychiatric or health problem.

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The reporting requirements under the Children First Act 2015 apply only to information that Mandated Persons, who received or became aware of since the Act came into force, whether the harm occurred before or after that point. However, if they have a reasonable concern about past abuse, where information came to their attention before the Act and there is a possible continuing risk to children, they should report it to Tusla under ***Children First (2017) Guidance***.

The Data Protection Acts of 1988- 2018, do not prevent the sharing of information on a reasonable and proportionate basis for the purposes of child protection. Tusla has the authority to share information concerning a child who is the subject of a risk assessment with a Mandated Person who has been asked to provide assistance. Tusla must only share what is necessary and proportionate in the circumstances of each individual case. Information that Tusla shares with the Mandated Person, if assisting it to carry out an assessment, must not be shared with a third party, unless Tusla considers it appropriate and authorises in writing that the information may be shared.

Section 17 of the Children First Act 2015 makes it an offence to disclose information to a third party which has been shared by Tusla during the course of an assessment, unless Tusla has given written authorisation to do so. Failure to comply with this section may result in liability of a fine or imprisonment for up to six months or both. This offence can also be applied to an organisation. *Chapter 3, Page 27 Children First (2017)*

Within our setting:

- Confidentiality is of the utmost importance and extends to all areas of our service. Confidentiality is about treating sensitive information that arises in a trusting relationship and doing so in a manner that is respectful, professional, and purposeful.
- It is our policy to keep all personal information about our children, families, and staff private. Confidential and personal information about our children/parents/guardians will only be shared by the Manager and Designated Liaison Person in relation to child safety, in line with this Child Protection Policy. Any breach of confidentiality by any member of staff will lead to disciplinary action. (For further information see our Confidentiality Policy).

Allegations Against Staff:

As the Manager is not the DLOA the Manager will deal with the child's family. The Tusla the HR investigation will be outsourced externally as it is required to separate these issues and manage them independently.

Policy and Procedure on Response to Allegations of Abuse against Employees, Volunteers and Students:

Child Protection is about promoting the welfare of children who attend a Child Care service/school. To this end it also encompasses the monitoring of professional practice within an organisation.

An organisation has a legal and moral responsibility to respond to any allegation of abuse, whether verbal or physical of a child by a member of staff, student, or volunteer.

This procedure is in line with the guidance given in *Children First (2017)*

Response to allegations of abuse against employees, volunteers, students

Allegations of abuse may be made against adults working with children, employees, volunteers, students, and childminders. The following guidelines should be followed in the event of such an allegation of abuse against an employee during the execution of that employee's duties or where information about an employee in relation to a situation outside of the work context is reported.

Our first duty of care in this situation is to the child and our first priority is to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk.

- If an allegation is made against an employee or other person working within the service to another employee or other person, they must inform the Designated Liaison Persons verbally and simultaneously record what they have been told or what they

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may have observed. Action taken in reporting an allegation of child abuse against an employee should be based on an opinion formed reasonably and in good faith.

- The details of this concern must be recorded on the Standard Reporting Form, which is in the Forms Folder in the Office, which must then be signed by the person making the report and they will be reminded of the need for confidentiality in this matter.
- The Manager will inform the members of staff that an allegation has been made against them. The disciplinary procedure for staff will be followed in this instance.

The Manager must privately inform the employee, about whom the allegation is made, of the following:

- The fact that an allegation has been made against him/her.
- The nature of the allegation
- The employee should be afforded an opportunity to respond. The Manager should note the response and pass on this information when making a formal report to TUSLA.
- The employees should also be informed of their right to an adjournment of the meeting until such time as they can seek appropriate representation. The action will be guided by the agreed procedures (Disciplinary Procedure), the applicable employment contract and the rules of natural justice. While adhering to the principle of natural justice enshrined within our constitution in relation to the rights of the accused, the vulnerability of the alleged victim must be foremost in our mind, therefore any postponement must be afforded within a reasonable time frame that is 24 hours.
- The parents/guardians of the alleged victim must be informed immediately by the Designated Liaison Person.
- The name or any identifying information of the reporting adult would generally be given to the staff member or worker against whom the allegation has been made by the Manager. There may be exceptional circumstances pending TUSLA advice or consultation, where this may not be the case.
- When an allegation is received it will be assessed promptly and carefully.
- The Manager may then ask the member of staff who the allegation has been made against to leave the premises immediately and they will be suspended on full pay until the matter has been fully investigated.

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- However, all allegations may not require a worker to be sent home i.e., allegations of poor practice where increased levels of supervision may be sufficient until the matter is sorted out. Poor practice will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure as necessary.
- At this point in the process, it will be necessary to decide whether a formal report should be made to TUSLA – this decision should be based on ***reasonable grounds for concern***.
- If it is felt that there are grounds for concern all matters relating to the allegations, it should be reported to the Duty Social Worker.
- At this point the Disciplinary Procedure will be invoked. This will be a separate process and will be overseen by the Manager, who may outsource this function, not the Designated Liaison Person.
- Should a staff member, following the investigation, be re-instated with no disciplinary action this should be taken as evidence that no blame/fault/suspicion attaches to them.
- Where the complaint is not upheld, management should ensure that the reputation and career prospects of the staff member concerned are not adversely affected by reasons of the complaint having been brought against him/her. The staff member (who had the allegation made against them) should be offered counselling and any other support necessary to restore his/her confidence and morale.
- The staff member who made the complaint should be reassured that management appreciates that the complaint was made in good faith. If required management will ensure that the staff member receives support e.g., external counselling, if requested or warranted.

Parents/Guardians and Allegations of Abuse or Neglect against Employees:

- Parents/guardians have the right to contact the Tusla to report an allegation of abuse or neglect about the employee or service.

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- Parents/guardians of children who are named in an allegation of abuse or neglect will be kept informed of actions planned and taken, having regard to the rights of others concerned.
- If there is any concern that a child may have been harmed, their parents/guardians will be informed immediately.

Record Keeping:

- The service will conform to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 plus any future amendments.
- Parents/guardians may have access to the files and records of their own children on request but may not have access to information about any other child.
- Only employees involved with a particular child should have access to confidential files and will be used to inform staff on how best to meet the needs of the child.
- Where there are child protection or welfare concerns, observations/ records will be kept on an on-going basis and information shared with Tusla as appropriate.
- These will be stored securely.
- Procedures are in place for archiving records.
- All records are managed in line with our Data Protection Policy.
- We aim to ensure that all records are factual and written impartially.
- The service will only share information with other professionals or agencies, with consent from parents/guardians or without their consent in terms of legal responsibility in relation to a Child Protection issue.
- Records or reports should not be altered or adjusted, if there are new developments then a new record of this information should be completed.

(For further information see our policies on Observations, Record Keeping and Data Protection)

Code of Behaviour for Staff:

For the protection of staff, volunteers, and children this code of behaviour has been introduced provide clarity on what is expected and what is not accepted, with respect to

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their behaviour as recommended in *Our Duty to Care*. Our code of behaviour is kept to regular review.

- We recognise that children have an equal right to our service provision in line with the *Equal Status Act* and the *National Disability Strategy*.
- Staff should be sensitive to the risks involved in participating in contact sports or other activities.
- While physical contact is a valid way of comforting, reassuring, and showing concern for children, it should only take place when it is acceptable to all the people concerned.
- Staff should never physically punish or be in any way verbally abusive to a child, nor should they even tell jokes of a sexual nature in the presence of children.
- Staff should be sensitive to the possibility of developing favouritism or becoming over involved or spending a lot of time with any one child.
- Children should be encouraged to report cases of bullying to either a designated person, or a worker of their choice. Complaints must be brought to the attention of management.
- It is recommended that Child Care services develop a positive attitude amongst workers and children that respects the personal space, safety, and privacy of individuals.
- It is not recommended that staff give lifts in their cars to individual children, especially for long journeys.

(This code has been adapted from Our Duty to Care Fact sheet 1)

Visitors/Students:

All Visitors to the Service must check in by signing the Visitor's book.

Visitors - including inspectors, contractors, students etc. - should never be left alone with the children. If they are going to address the children, it is incumbent upon the Management to check their credentials and to ensure that the content of the address is appropriate.

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All students will be carefully supervised and monitored by the Manager. Secondary school pupils who come to the service for 'work experience' will also be carefully supervised and monitored and must not be left alone with the children.

We are committed to:

- Valuing and respecting all children as individuals.
- Listening to children.
- Involving children in decision making is appropriate.
- Encouraging children to express themselves.
- Working in partnership with parents/guardians.
- Promoting Positive Behaviour.
- Valuing differences.
- Implementing and adhering to all relevant policies to keep children safe.

Working in a safe environment – Protection of Adults and Children

Management will ensure a safe environment exists for staff and children by monitoring that all staff:

- Are listened to and any concerns expressed about unacceptable practice or behaviour of colleagues are followed up by management.
- Are supported when dealing with challenging behaviour of children and staff understand and follow positive behaviour management strategies. *(For further information see Managing Behaviour Policy).*

Staff Ratios:

- For School Aged Children ensuring ratios are kept within the requirement of the Child Care Act 1991 (Registration of School Aged Services) Regulations 2018

SERVICE TYPE	AGE RANGE	ADULT: CHILD RATIO
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Afterschool Service	4 years to 13 years	1: 12
At least 2 adults are on the premises at all times.		

The Code of Behaviour is given to all staff, students, and volunteers at induction, and it is expected that all staff, students, and volunteers will be familiar with the code, and they will raise any questions arising with the Manager.

All employees have a duty to adhere to the Code of Behaviour and to bring breaches of the code to the attention of the Manager. Breaches of the Code of Behaviour are dealt with through disciplinary procedure.

Recruitment and Selection Procedure:

The service carries out a comprehensive and detailed recruitment procedure in order to protect our children attending the service.

All applicants should be made aware and reminded throughout the recruitment period that their application and the follow-up process of recruitment will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence. The information supplied by the applicant and any other information supplied on their behalf should only be seen by people directly involved in the recruitment procedure.

Applicants will receive a clear job description and information on the organisation. Additional information, including a copy of the service's Child Protection Policy should also be supplied to each applicant. *(For further information see our Recruitment Policy)*

Personnel File:

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An up to date and accurate personnel file is kept for each member of staff that includes the following records:

- Proof of identity and that the person is over 18 years of age.
- Proof of satisfactory Garda Vetting.
- Two validated references, including a reference from the most recent place of employment.
- If a staff member has been employed in the service for five years or more and does not have a previous employer, this service will supply a reference).
- Verification of qualifications.
- Investigation of any gaps in employment.

Induction:

- As part of the induction process, all new management, staff, volunteers, and students will be briefed on all the elements of the Child Protection and Welfare Policy including the ethos of the service, child centred practice and the Code of Behaviour, within the first week of employment.
- All management, staff, volunteers, and students will be required to commit to and abide by the Child and Adult Protection Policy. They are required to confirm that they have read and understand the Child and Adult Protection Policy with their signature and a record will be kept on file.
- The Code of Behaviour is given to all management staff, students, and volunteers at induction, and it is expected that all staff, students, and volunteers will be familiar with the code, and they will raise any questions arising with the Manager.

Staff Supervision and Support:

- Regular supervision and support are available to staff and volunteers, through one-to-one meetings or group meetings.
- Staff will be supported while dealing with a child protection concern and outside support will be sought where necessary, the costs of this will be borne by the service.

Garda Vetting:

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Our policy is that Garda vetting will be completed **prior to starting work at the service for employees** working directly with children. Repeat Garda vetting may be completed at any time during a contract of employment and will be completed at three-year intervals and records will be held for 5 years. *(See the Garda Vetting Policy for further information).*

Partnership with Parents/Guardians:

The service recognises the importance of working with parents/guardians. It has an “open door” policy where families are always welcome but where the needs of all of the children in our care are always the first priority. Parents/guardians will be made to feel welcome and regular exchange of information with parents/guardians and staff will enable a two-way process of support.

Parents/guardians will be made aware of any observations, records and notes kept by us about their children including patterns of behaviour, conversations and any injuries/bruising they may have upon arrival at the service.

All records will be made available upon request and are kept confidentially and securely.

All parents/guardians will be made aware of our policies and procedures. *(For further information see our Partnership with Parents/Guardians Policy)*

Complaints:

- Our children/staff/parents/guardians have the right to voice their opinions and concerns. It is our policy to welcome all suggestions, comments, and complaints in relation to our service. Any comments or suggestions can be made to any member of staff. We will give careful attention and prompt and courteous response to any suggestions, comments, or complaints. *(For further information see our Complaints Policy).*
- If a complaint involves a child protection concern, the reporting procedure will be followed in line with this Child Protection Policy.

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Management of Day Trips/Outings:

The service aims to provide children with a varied and wide experience and from time to time may organise day trips/outings. It is our policy to ensure the safety and well-being of children during these activities through planning, risk assessment, management, and supervision of the activity. In managing and planning these activities we:

- Inform parents/guardians of the proposed outing, method of travel and supervision.
- Seek written consent from the parents/guardians – children will not be able to participate in the activity unless this has been obtained.
- Ensure an adequate number of personnel are present and that the children are supervised at all times.
- Ensure that the person in charge has access to a mobile in case of an emergency.
- A risk assessment of the venue or facility will be carried out and reviewed annually.
- Ensure that adequate insurance is in place for the outing.
- Ensure staff are familiar with emergency procedures.
- Ensure that the method of transport complies with relevant safety requirements and insurance.
- We will ensure that the appropriate staff/child ratios are maintained in line with the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Registration of School Age Services) Regulations 2018 and the risk assessment.
- Where appropriate, parents/guardians may be invited to accompany their children on the outing.
- Emergency contact details for all children will be brought on the trip.
- Safety measures such as: frequent head counts/ roll calls and name tags will be used.
- A first aid box will be brought and a qualified first aider will be present.
- The service does its utmost to minimise risk and ensure safety at all times. However, it is important that staff are prepared for any emergencies that may arise.

Accidents and Incidents:

It is our policy to promote the health, wellbeing, and personal safety of all our children and staff. Through developing and regularly reviewing accident prevention procedures and

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fire safety. Although we adhere to all safety precautions and follow TUSLA guidelines, accidents can occur.

Social Media, Social Networking and Blogging:

- Personal blogs should have clear disclaimers that the views expressed by the author in the blog are the author's alone and do not represent the views of the service. Be clear and write in first person. Make your writing clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the service.
- Information published on your blog(s) should comply with our confidentiality policy. This also applies to comments posted on other blogs, forums, and social networking sites.
- Be respectful to the service, management, other employees, customers, partners, and competitors.
- Staff may not use social networking sites to befriend parents/guardians whose children attend the service or to exchange any information about the service or children attending the service.
- Social media activities should not interfere with work commitments. *Refer to Internet and Email Usage Policy.*
- Your online presence may reflect the service.
- Do not publish any information regarding any child, family, or colleague.
- Respect copyright laws, and reference or cite sources appropriately. Plagiarism applies online as well.
- Company logos and trademarks may not be used.

Note: Social Networking websites include a range of websites such as - Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter etc.

Under no circumstances should a child be left in a situation that exposes him or her to harm or risk of harm pending intervention by Tusla. If you think the child is in immediate danger and you cannot contact Tusla, you should contact the Gardaí. Any breach of this policy may invoke the disciplinary policy.

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This Child and Adult Protection Policy may be updated from time to time either from within or in line with legislation.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY APPENDICES:

APPENDIX 1: STANDARD REPORTING FORM

APPENDIX 2: TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE AND HOW THEY MAY BE RECOGNISED

APPENDIX 3: THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (1989)

APPENDIX 4: DUTY SOCIAL WORKER AND LOCAL GARDA CONTACT INFORMATION


APPENDIX 5: MANDATED PERSONS RESPONSIBILITIES

APPENDIX 6: REASONABLE GROUNDS FOR CONCERN

APPENDIX 7: REPORTING PROCEDURES

APPENDIX 8: LIST OF MANDATED PERSONS IN OUR SERVICE

APPENDIX 1: STANDARD REPORTING FORM



An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

*MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)*

Is this a Mandated Report made under Sec 14, Children First Act 2015?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mandated Person's Type				

7. Details of Other Persons Where a Joint Report is Being Made

First Name		Surname	
Address if reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

First Name		Surname	
Address if reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

8. Parents Aware of Report

Are the child's parents/carers aware that this concern is being reported to Tusla?* If the parent/carer does not know, please indicate reasons:	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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9. Relationships

Details of Mother

First Name		Surname	
Address		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
		Email Address	
Eircode			

Is the Mother a Legal Guardian?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Details of Father

First Name		Surname	
Address		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
		Email Address	
Eircode			



Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

Is the Father a Legal Guardian?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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10. Household Composition

First Name	Surname	Relationship	Date of Birth	Estimated Age	Additional Information e.g. school, occupation, other

11. Details of Person(s) Allegedly Causing Harm

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address		Date of Birth	
		Estimated Age	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	
Occupation		Organisation	
Position Held			

Relationship to Child	
Address at time of alleged incident	
If name unknown please indicate reason	

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address		Date of Birth	
		Estimated Age	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	
Occupation		Organisation	
Position Held			

Relationship to Child	
Address at time of alleged incident	
If name unknown please indicate reason	



Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

12. Name and Address of Other Organisations, Personnel or Agencies Known to be Involved Currently or Previously with the Family

Profession	First Name	Surname	Address	Contact Number	Recent Contact e.g. 3/6/9 months ago
Social Worker					
Public Health Nurse					
GP					
Hospital					
School					
Gardaí					
Pre-school/ crèche					
Other					

13. Any Other Relevant Information, Including any Previous Contact with the Child or Family

Please ensure you have indicated if this is a mandated report in section 6.

Thank you for completing the report form.

In completing this report form you are providing details on yourself and on others. Details such as name, address and date of birth fall under the definition of 'Personal Data' in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003. Tusla has a responsibility under these Acts in its capacity as a Data Controller to, amongst other things, obtain and process this data fairly; keep it safe and secure; and to keep it for a specified lawful purpose. That purpose is to fulfil our statutory responsibility under the Child Care Act 1991 to promote the protection and welfare of children. Tusla may, during the course of the assessment of this report disclose such Personal Data to other agencies including An Garda Síochána. Further details about Tusla's responsibilities as a Data Controller and your rights as a Data Subject can be found on our website, www.tusla.ie. As you are providing Personal Data on others, you are a Data Processor. We ask that you only provide those details that are necessary for the report and that you keep this report and the Personal Data contained in it secure from unauthorised access, disclosure, destruction or accidental loss.

14. For Completion by Tusla Authorised Person on Receipt of Report

Report Received by			
First Name		Surname	Date

Mandated Report Acknowledgement by



Child Protection and Welfare Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

First Name		Surname		Date Sent	
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Authorised Person Signature*	
Date*	

Child Previously Known	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allocated Case No				

APPENDIX 2:

TYPES OF CHILD ABUSE AND HOW THEY MAY BE RECOGNISED

Chapter 2, Page 07 Children First (2017)

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse, and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community or in an institutional setting. The abuser may be someone known to the child or a stranger and can be an adult or another child. In a situation where abuse is alleged to have been carried out by another child, you should consider it a child welfare and protection issue for both children, and you should follow child protection procedures for both the victim and the alleged abuser.

The important factor in deciding whether the behaviour is abuse or neglect is the impact of that behaviour on the child rather than the intention of the parent/carer.

The definitions of neglect and abuse presented in this section are not legal definitions. They are intended to describe ways in which a child might experience abuse and how this abuse may be recognised.

Neglect

Child neglect is the most frequently reported category of abuse, both in Ireland and internationally. Ongoing chronic neglect is recognised as being extremely harmful to the development and well-being of the child and may have serious long-term negative consequences. Neglect occurs when a child does not receive adequate care or supervision to the extent that the child is harmed physically or developmentally. It is generally defined in terms of an omission of care, where a child's health, development or welfare is impaired by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, medical care, intellectual stimulation or supervision and safety. Emotional neglect may also lead to the child having attachment difficulties. The extent of the damage to the child's health, development or welfare is influenced by a range of factors. These factors include the extent, if any, of positive influence in the child's life as well as the age of the child and the frequency and consistency of neglect. Neglect is associated with poverty but not necessarily caused by it. It is strongly linked to parental substance misuse, domestic violence, and parental mental illness and disability. A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when neglect becomes typical of the relationship between the children.

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and the parent or carer. This may become apparent where you see the child over a period of time, or the effects of neglect may be obvious based on having seen the child once.

The following are features of child neglect:

- Children being left alone without adequate care and supervision.
- Malnourishment, lack of food, unsuitable food, or erratic feeding.
- Non-organic failure to thrive, i.e., a child not gaining weight due not only to malnutrition but also emotional deprivation.
- Failure to provide adequate care for the child's medical and developmental needs, including intellectual stimulation.
- Inadequate living conditions – unhygienic conditions, environmental issues, including lack of adequate heating and furniture.
- Lack of adequate clothing.
- Inattention to basic hygiene.
- Lack of protection and exposure to danger, including moral danger, or lack of supervision appropriate to the child's age.
- Persistent failure to attend school.
- Abandonment or desertion.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the systematic emotional or psychological ill-treatment of a child as part of the overall relationship between a caregiver and a child. Once-off and occasional difficulties between a parent/carer and child are not considered emotional abuse. Abuse occurs when a child's basic need for attention, affection, approval, consistency, and security are not met, due to incapacity or indifference from their parent or caregiver. Emotional abuse can also occur when adults responsible for taking care of children are unaware of and unable (for a range of reasons) to meet their children's emotional and developmental needs. Emotional abuse is not easy to recognise because the effects are not easily seen. A reasonable concern for the child's welfare would exist when the behaviour becomes typical of the relationship between the child and the parent or carer.

Emotional abuse may be seen in some of the following ways:

- Rejection.

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- Lack of comfort and love.
- Lack of attachment.
- Lack of proper stimulation (e.g., fun and play).
- Lack of continuity of care (e.g., frequent moves, particularly unplanned).
- Continuous lack of praise and encouragement.
- Persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming of the child.
- Bullying.
- Conditional parenting in which care or affection of a child depends on his or her behaviours or actions.
- Extreme over-protectiveness.
- Inappropriate non-physical punishment (e.g., locking child in bedroom).
- On-going family conflicts and family violence.
- Seriously inappropriate expectations of a child relative to his/her age and stage of development.

There may be no physical signs of emotional abuse unless it occurs with another type of abuse. A child may show signs of emotional abuse through their actions or emotions in several ways. These include insecure attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement, risk taking and aggressive behaviour. It should be noted that no one indicator is conclusive evidence of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse is more likely to impact negatively on a child where it is persistent over time and where there is a lack of other protective factors.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is when someone deliberately hurts a child physically or puts them at risk of being physically hurt. It may occur as a single incident or as a pattern of incidents. A reasonable concern exists where the child's health and/or development is, maybe, or has been damaged as a result of suspected physical abuse.

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Physical abuse can include the following:

- Physical punishment.
- Beating, slapping, hitting, or kicking.
- Pushing, shaking, or throwing.
- Pinching, biting, choking, or hair-pulling.
- Use of excessive force in handling.
- Deliberate poisoning.
- Suffocation.
- Fabricated/induced illness.
- Female genital mutilation.

The Children First Act 2015 includes a provision that abolishes the common law defence of reasonable chastisement in court proceedings. This defence could previously be invoked by a parent or other person in authority who physically disciplined a child. The change in the legislation now means that in prosecutions relating to assault or physical cruelty, a person who administers such punishment to a child cannot rely on the defence of reasonable chastisement in the legal proceedings. The result of this is that the protections in law relating to assault now apply to a child in the same way as they do to an adult.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or arousal, or for that of others. It includes the child being involved in sexual acts (masturbation, fondling, oral or penetrative sex) or exposing the child to sexual activity directly or through pornography. Child sexual abuse may cover a wide spectrum of abusive activities. It rarely involves just a single incident and, in some instances, occurs over a number of years. Child sexual abuse most commonly happens within the family, including older siblings and extended family members. Cases of sexual abuse mainly come to light through disclosure by the child or his or her siblings/friends, from the suspicions of an adult, and/or by physical symptoms.

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Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

- Any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child.
- An invitation to sexual touching or intentional touching or molesting of a child's body whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification.
- Masturbation in the presence of a child or the involvement of a child in an act of masturbation.
- Sexual intercourse with a child, whether oral, vaginal, or anal.
- Sexual exploitation of a child, which includes:
 - Inviting, inducing, or coercing a child to engage in prostitution or the production of child pornography [for example, exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification, or sexual act, including its recording (on film, videotape, or other media) or the manipulation, for those purposes, of an image by computer or other means].
 - Inviting, coercing, or inducing a child to participate in, or to observe, any sexual, indecent, or obscene act.
 - Showing sexually explicit material to children, which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse.
- Exposing a child to inappropriate or abusive material through information and communication technology.
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an underage person.

An Garda Síochána will deal with any criminal aspects of a sexual abuse case under the relevant criminal justice legislation. The prosecution of a sexual offence against a child will be considered within the wider objective of child welfare and protection. The safety of the child is paramount and at no stage should a child's safety be compromised because of concern for the integrity of a criminal investigation. In relation to child sexual abuse, it should be noted that in criminal law the age of consent to sexual intercourse is 17 years for both boys and girls. Any sexual relationship where one or both parties are under the age of 17 is illegal. However, it may not necessarily be regarded as child sexual abuse. Details on exemptions for mandated reporting of certain cases of underage consensual sexual activity can be found in ***Chapter 3 of Children First (2017)***.

APPENDIX 3: THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (1989)

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The Convention stipulates the following general principles:

- States shall ensure each child enjoys full rights without discrimination or distinctions of any kind.
- The child's best interests shall be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social institutions, courts, administrative authorities, or legislative bodies.
- Every child has the right to life and states shall ensure, to the maximum extent possible, child survival and development.
- Children have the right to be heard.

The Convention stipulates the following substantive provisions:

Civil Rights and Freedom:

- The right to a name and a nationality.
- The right to a sense of identity.
- The right to freedom of expression.
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion.
- The right to freedom of association.
- The right to privacy.
- No child shall be subjected to torture, or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

Family Environment and Parental Guidance:

- States must respect the responsibilities of parents/guardians and extended family members to provide guidance for children.
- The Convention gives parents/guardians a joint and primary responsibility for raising their children.
- Children should not be separated from their parents/guardians unless this is deemed to be in the child's best interests.

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- Children and their parents/guardians have the right to leave any country and to enter their own for purposes of reunion.
- Children have the right to an adequate standard of living.
- The Convention obliges the state to provide special protection for children deprived of a family environment.
- The state has the obligation to prevent and remedy the kidnapping or retention of children abroad by a parent or third party.
- To protect children from all forms of abuse or neglect.
- It is the responsibility of the state to ensure – in cases of children victims of armed conflict, torture, neglect, maltreatment, or exploitation – that they receive appropriate rehabilitative care and treatment to facilitate their recovery and social integration into society.
- A child placed by the state for reasons of care, protection or treatment is entitled to have that placement regularly evaluated.

Basic Health and Welfare of Children:

- Every child has the right to life.
- Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent the survival and development of the child.
- The child has the right to the highest attainable standard of health.
- Disabled children have the right to special treatment, education, and care.
- Children have the right to benefit from social security.
- Every child has the right to a standard of living adequate for the child's mental, physical, spiritual, value systems and social development.

Education, Leisure, and Recreation:

- Children have the right to education.
- The aims of education are geared towards developing children's personalities as well as their mental and physical abilities to the fullest extent.
- Children have a right to enjoy leisure, recreation, and cultural activities.

SPECIAL PROTECTION MEASURES:

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(a) Situations of armed conflict:

- State parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that children under 15 years of age take no part in hostilities and that no child below 15 is recruited into the armed forces.
- State parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by armed conflict.
- Children have the right to appropriate treatment for their recovery and social reintegration.
- Special protection shall be given to refugee children or to a child seeking refugee status.

(b) In situations where children are in conflict with the law:

- Regarding the administration of juvenile justice, children who come in conflict with the law have the right to treatment that promotes their dignity and self-worth, and also takes into account the child's age and aims at his/her integration into society.
- Children are entitled to basic guarantees as well as legal or other assistance for their defence and judicial proceedings and institutional placements shall be provided wherever possible.
- Any child deprived of liberty shall not be kept apart from adults unless it is in the child's best interests to do so.
- A child who is detained shall have legal and other assistance as well as contact with his/her family.

(c) In situations of exploitation:

- Children have the right to be protected from economic exploitation and from work that threatens their health.
- Children have the right to protection from the use of narcotic and psychotropic drugs as well as from being involved in their production and distribution.
- Children have the right to protection from sexual exploitation, and abuse, including prostitution and pornography.
- It is the States obligation to make every effort to prevent the sale, trafficking, and abduction of children.

(d) In situations of children belonging to a minority or indigenous group:

- Children of minority communities and indigenous populations have the right to enjoy their own culture and to practice their own religion and language.

APPENDIX 4: DUTY SOCIAL WORKER AND LOCAL GARDA CONTACT INFORMATION

Child Protection Social Work Services:

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Child And Family Agency, Riverside House, Main Street, Castlerea, Co Roscommon. 090 6637851

Details may also be found at this link

<http://www.tusla.ie/get-in-touch/duty-social-work-teams>

If the Duty Social Worker is not available at the time of contact the caller should give sufficient details to the secretary to enable the Duty Social Worker to prioritise a response.

Local Garda Station:

Knockroe, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon Ph: 094- 962 1630

Details may also be found at this link

<http://www.garda.ie/stations/default.aspx>

APPENDIX 5: MANDATED PERSONS RESPONSIBILITIES

(Children First Act 2015)

Section 14(1) of the Children First Act 2015 states:

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‘...where a Mandated Person knows, believes, or has reasonable grounds to suspect, on the basis of information that he or she has received, acquired, or becomes aware of in the course of his or her employment or profession as such a Mandated Person, that a child–

- (a) has been harmed,*
- (b) is being harmed, or*
- (c) is at risk of being harmed,*

he or she shall, as soon as practicable, report that knowledge, belief, or suspicion, as the case may be, to the Agency.’

Section 14(2) of the Children First Act 2015 also places obligations on Mandated Persons to report any disclosures made by a child:

‘Where a child believes that he or she–

- (a) has been harmed,*
- (b) is being harmed, or*
- (c) is at risk of being harmed,*

and discloses this belief to a Mandated Person in the course of a Mandated Person’s employment or profession as such a person, the Mandated Person shall, ... as soon as practicable, report that disclosure to the Agency.’

Section 2 of the Children First Act 2015 defines harm as follows:

‘Harm means in relation to a child–

- (a) assault, ill-treatment, or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects, or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development, or welfare, or,*
- (b) sexual abuse of the child.’*

APPENDIX 6: REASONABLE GROUNDS CONCERN

Chapter 2, Page 06 Children First (2017)

You should always inform Tusla when you have **reasonable grounds for concern** that a child may have been, is being, or is at risk of being abused or neglected. If you ignore

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what may be symptoms of abuse, it could result ongoing harm to the child. It is not necessary for you to prove that abuse has occurred to report a concern to Tusla. All that is required is that you have ***reasonable grounds for concern***. It is Tusla's role to assess concerns that are reported to it. If you report a concern, you can be assured that your information will be carefully considered with any other information available, and a child protection assessment will be carried out where sufficient risk is identified.

Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern include:

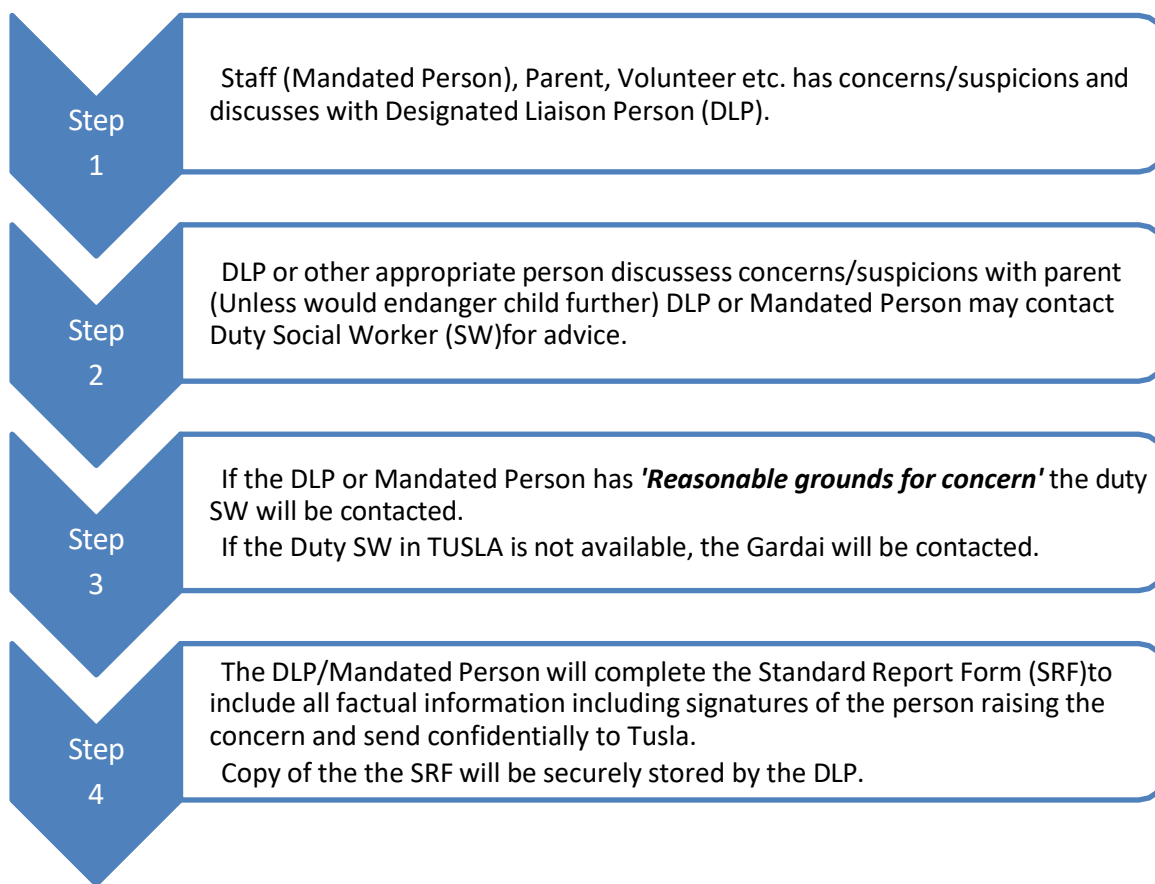
- Evidence, for example an injury or behaviour, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way.
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse.
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused.
- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed.
- An account from a person who saw the child being abused.

The guiding principles on reporting child abuse or neglect may be summarised as follows:

1. The safety and well-being of the child must take priority over concerns about adults against whom an allegation may be made.
2. Reports of concerns should be made without delay to Tusla.

If you think a child is in immediate danger and you cannot contact Tusla, you should contact the Gardaí without delay.

APPENDIX 7: Child Protection Reporting Procedure Steps 1 – 4



NOTE: In the case where the Designated Liaison Person or Mandated Person reaches the conclusion that reasonable grounds do not exist that they will not report the concern of the employee, student or volunteer to the relevant TUSLA Social Work Department or An Garda Síochána, the individual employee, student or volunteer who raised the concern should be given a clear written statement of the reasons why the DLP is not taking action. The employee, student or volunteer should be advised that, if they remain concerned about the situation, they are free to consult with, or report to, the TUSLA Social Work Department or an Garda Síochána.

As a Mandated Person, you should be aware that the legal obligations under the Children First Act 2015 to report mandated concerns rest with you and not with the Designated Liaison Person.

Designated Liaison Persons	Duty Social Worker	Local Garda
Name Ashling Horan Edwina Lennon	Child and Family Agency, Riverside House, Main Street, Castlerea, Co Roscommon Ph 090 6637851	Knockroe, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon Ph. 094- 962 1630

APPENDIX 8: LIST OF MANDATED PERSONS IN OUR SERVICE

NAME	POSITION	QUALIFICATIONS
Ashling Horan	Deputy Manager	Level 8
Edwina Lennon	Early Years Educator	Level 6
Marie Connaughton	Early Years Educator	Level 5
Caroline Grogan	Afterschool Assistant	N/A
Aisling Manning	Early Years Educator	Level 8

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Name:

Person responsible for approving the Policy.

10. CHILD SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Document Title:	Child Safeguarding Statement
Unique Reference Number:	010
Document Author:	Happy Feet Childcare, CB
Document Approved:	Ashling Horan
Person(s) responsible for developing, distributing, and reviewing Policy	Ashling Horan
Person responsible for approving Policy	Anita Flynn
Method of communication of policies to staff (email / hard copy / induction training)	Email
Method of communication of policies to parents/guardians (full policies via email, hard copy)	Email and hard copy available in Service
Date the Document is Effective From:	August 2023
Scheduled Review Date:	August 2024
Number of Pages:	13

This policy is available and communicated to parents, staff, and relevant stakeholders.

Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to this policy. Relevant staff have received training on this policy.

1. Type of Service: Insert Happy Feet Childcare is an After-School facility in accordance with the Child Care Act 1991 (Registration of School Aged Childcare) Regulations 2018

The purpose of this Service is to provide an After-School facility for children aged 4-13 years.

This Service is privately owned by Anita Flynn

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KEY INFORMATION:

Opening Hours:	2:00 p.m. to -6:00 p.m. – Term Time 08.00am – 6.00pm – Non term time
No of Weeks per year opened:	50
No. of Children attending the Service	48
Capacity:	48
Age Range:	4-13 years
Ratios:	1:12
Curriculum:	Arts and crafts, board games, gym, Astro pitch, running. track, baking
Address:	Tarmon National School, Tarmon, Castlerea, Co Roscommon
Phone Number:	085 868 0678
Email:	ladybirdroomtarmon@gmail.com

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Key Personnel: In-House

Manager (Person in charge):	Ashling Horan
Deputy in the absence of Manager:	Ashling Horan
Health and Safety Officer:	Ashling Horan
Fire Officer:	Ashling Horan
First Aid Co-Ordinator:	Ashling Horan
Relevant Person for the Purpose of this Statement:	Anita Flynn
Designated Liaison Officer:	Ashling Horan
Deputy Designated Liaison Officer:	Edwina Lennon
Data Controller:	Anita Flynn

Key Personnel: External

TUSLA Early Years Inspection Team:	Early Years Inspector, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon. 090 66378667
TUSLA Social Work Department:	Child and Family Agency, Riverside House, Main Street, Castlerea, Co Roscommon. 090 6637851
Garda:	Knockroe, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon Ph: 094 962 1630
Hospital:	Roscommon University Hospital 090 6626200
Garda Vetting:	Early Childhood Ireland

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2. Principles

Protecting children and young people is everyone's responsibility. The welfare of the child is paramount to us. Therefore, we want to make sure that the children in the Service are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with the staff and the students in this Service by:

- Making sure that our staff and students are carefully selected, trained, and supervised.
- Having procedures to recognise, respond to and report concerns about children's protection and welfare.
- Making sure all staff are Garda vetted prior to engagement.
- Having clear codes of behaviour for management, staff, and students.
- Having a procedure to respond to accidents and incidents.
- Giving parents/guardians, children, and workers information about what we do and what to expect from us.
- Let parents/guardians and children know how to voice their concerns or complain if there is anything they are not happy about. Having a procedure to respond to these complaints.
- We have a clear reporting procedure to be followed should a staff member have a concern about a child with regard to *Children First (2017)* and *The Children First Act 2015*
- Having a procedure to respond to allegations of abuse and neglect against staff members.
- The Child and Adult Protection policy will be reviewed annually by the Management.

3. Risk Assessment

All potential risks have a relevant procedure to manage the risks as outlined below.

RISK IDENTIFIED	PROCEDURES IN PLACE TO MANAGE RISK	Responsibility
Risk of harm of bullying a child by a member of staff/volunteer/peer	<p>Procedures in place</p> <p>Anti-bullying policy</p> <p>Staff Training</p> <p>Supervision</p> <p>Discipline Procedure</p> <p>School-Aged children have access to complaints policy in child-friendly format</p>	Management, staff
Risk of harm of sexual abuse (as defined in the Children First Act 2015) of a child by a member of staff/ Child Abused within setting	<p>Procedures in place</p> <p>Vetting in place to include Garda vetting, police checks, validated references.</p> <p>No unsupervised access by unauthorised personnel. Staff aware of mandated requirement to report abuse.</p> <p>Staff trained in child protection</p> <p>DLPs appointed.</p> <p>Mandated persons named and listed.</p> <p>Visitors or persons unknown to staff will not have unsupervised access and visiting times will, if possible, be arranged when children are not present as they are unvetted</p>	Management, Staff, DLP

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	School-Aged children have access to complaints policy in child-friendly format	
Risk of harm or physical / psychological/ emotional harm (as defined by the Children First Act 2015) of a child by a member of staff	<p>Procedures in place</p> <p>Vetting in place to include Garda vetting, police checks, validated references.</p> <p>No unsupervised access by unauthorised personnel. Staff aware of mandated requirement to report abuse.</p> <p>Staff trained in child protection</p> <p>DLPs appointed.</p> <p>Mandated persons named and listed.</p> <p>Visitors or people unknown to staff will not have unsupervised access and visiting times will, if possible, be arranged when children are not present as they are unvetted.</p> <p>School-Aged children have access to complaints policy in child-friendly format</p>	Management, Staff, DLP
Lost child	<p>Procedures in place</p> <p>Missing Child Policy in place and followed.</p> <p>Outing Policy in place and followed.</p> <p>Risk Assessments carried out.</p> <p>Critical Incident Plan in place.</p>	Management, Staff

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	Only authorised Persons allowed. access to the service	
Accidents Caused by Neglect	Procedures in place Safety Statement in place Risk Assessments carried out following an accident and corrective action taken Accident and Incident Policy in place and followed	Management, Staff
Medical Neglect	Procedures in place Medicines Policy in place and followed. Parental Consent Forms signed. Individual Child Care/Emergency Plans in place	Management, staff
Child not collected/ Unauthorised collection and Access Rights Persons unfit to collect	Procedures in place Collections Policy in place and followed. Emergency Collectors available, Parental Agreements & Permissions in place Child Registration Form completed with emergency contacts and authorisations. Children are not released to unauthorised persons. Where there is a dispute between parents, we will seek legal clarification regarding access and may require copies of a court order. If we have never met a parent and a parent is not listed on the	Management, staff

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	<p>registration form, we may seek clarification of identity before engaging with the parent</p> <p>Children will not be released to parents/guardians who are in an unfit state. Procedure in place</p> <p>School aged children have access to child-friendly policy</p>	
<p>Unvetted Staff or students that may lead to children being harmed</p>	<p>Procedures in place</p> <p>Recruitment and Selection Policy in place</p> <p>Garda Vetting Policy in place</p> <p>Relevant validated References available for all staff</p> <p>Child and Adult Protection Policy in place</p> <p>Risk Assessment of Disclosures on Garda Vetting forms completed if required</p>	<p>Management, Staff</p>
<p>Poor behaviour strategies where the dignity of the child is undermined</p>	<p>Procedures in place</p> <p>Managing Behaviour Policy in place and followed</p> <p>Positive strategies only used</p> <p>No Corporal punishment</p> <p>No isolation</p> <p>Professional assistance sought for very challenging behaviour</p> <p>Staff trained in evidence-based behaviour management strategies</p> <p>Management support provided to staff in relation to very challenging behaviour</p>	<p>Management, staff</p>

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<p>Risk of harm of abuse when on outings</p>	<p>Procedures in place</p> <p>Outings policy in place</p> <p>All Outings/excursions risk assessed.</p> <p>Risk checklist used.</p> <p>Vetting in place to include Garda vetting, police checks, validated references.</p> <p>No unsupervised access by unauthorised personnel.</p> <p>Staff aware of mandated requirement to report abuse.</p> <p>Staff trained in child protection</p> <p>DLPs appointed.</p> <p>Mandated persons named and listed.</p> <p>Visitors or persons unknown to staff will not have unsupervised access and visiting times will, if possible, be arranged when children are not present as they are unvetted</p>	<p>Management, Staff, DLP</p>
<p>Access to inappropriate online resources. Unauthorised sharing of images and information about a child</p>	<p>Procedures in place</p> <p>Internet and Photographic and Recording Devices Policy</p> <p>Parental Consent Forms completed.</p> <p>No images of children published externally or on social media (children's faces are not shown)</p> <p>Parents are aware of Internet and Photographic and Recording</p>	<p>Management, staff</p>

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	<p>Devices Policy and their responsibilities</p> <p>School-Aged children are aware of the policy regarding phones, tablets and other devices and the Service has devised a child friendly policy for school age children in the Service.</p> <p>No mobile phones allowed in classrooms</p>	
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Responsibility

The DLP is responsible for ensuring the above risks are managed.

4. Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, *Children First: National Guidance* and Tusla's *Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice*. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children while they are availing of our service:

- Procedures to manage any risk identified.
- Procedure for reporting harm or abuse or allegations of these to Tusla by the as provider Happy Feet Childcare or member of staff (whether mandated or not)
- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child while attending our service.
- Procedure for selection or recruitment of any person as a member of staff of the provider with regards to that person's suitability to work with children

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- Procedure for the provision of information and, where necessary, instruction and training to members of staff in relation to the occurrence of harm
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the service who are mandated persons.
- Procedure for the appointment of a relevant person for the purposes of this statement who is **Anita Flynn**.

5. Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an on-going process. Our Service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing themselves of our service. This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed every *twenty-four months* or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed:(Provider)Date.....

Name.....Tel.....

Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015

Name.....Tel.....

For further information on this Statement please contact the Relevant Person, Anita Flynn 0830652378

11. COMPLAINTS (Policy and Procedure)

Document Title:	Complaints
Unique Reference Number:	011
Document Author:	Happy Feet Childcare, CB
Document Approved:	Ashling Horan
Person(s) responsible for developing, distributing, and reviewing Policy	Ashling Horan
Person responsible for approving Policy	Anita Flynn
Method of communication of policies to staff (email / hard copy / induction training)	Email
Method of communication of policies to parents/guardians (full policies via email, hard copy)	Email and hard copy available in Service
Method of communication of policies to Children in the Service	A Child Friendly Version of this policy is available in the Service
Date the Document is Effective From:	August 2023
Scheduled Review Date:	August 2024
Number of Pages:	6

This policy is developed in accordance with the Child Care Act 1991 [Early Years Services] [Registration of School Age Services] Regulations 2018.

This policy is available and communicated to parents, guardians, staff, and relevant stakeholders.

It is also available in child friendly format to school age children in the Service.

Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to this policy. Relevant staff have received training on this policy.

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Statement of Intent:

We are committed to giving careful attention and a courteous, timely response to suggestions, comments, or complaints so that we can learn from them and continuously improve our Service. All complaints are dealt with in a confidential manner without fear, favour, or prejudice.

The Service has a consistent and unbiased approach used to manage all complaints within the Service.

All complaints are investigated promptly, taken seriously, and handled appropriately and sensitively. Complaints are managed and reported in line with the Service's Complaints policies and procedures.

The written record of a complaint is available on the premises for inspection by the Early Years Inspectorate.

Where a Child in the Service Makes a Complaint or Expresses a Concern to his/her parent or guardian:

Where a parent notifies the Service that a child has made a complaint to them or expressed a concern about the Service or a staff member, contractor, unpaid worker, student, or volunteer at the Service it is the policy of this Service to treat such notification by a parent/guardian as a complaint and the complaints procedure contained in this policy will immediately come into force.

Where a Child Makes a Complaint or Expresses a Concern to a Staff Member, Contractor, Unpaid Worker, Student or Volunteer at the Service

Where a child makes a complaint or expresses a concern to a staff member, contractor, unpaid worker, student or volunteer at the Service about a staff member, contractor, unpaid worker, student or volunteer at the Service, the person to whom the complaint or concern is made must immediately report the matter to the Manager who will contact a child's parents/guardian to arrange to meet with them at the earliest possible opportunity and the Service's complaints procedure will immediately come into force.

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Where a Child is Overheard Making a Complaint or Expressing a Concern to a Peer in the Service:

Where a child is overheard making a complaint or expressing a concern to a peer in the Service the person hearing the conversation shall immediately report the matter to the Manager, Ashling Horan.

The Manager should immediately contact the child's parents/guardian and to arrange to speak with the child in compliance with the Service's Child Safeguarding Statement

- All complaints must be made to the Manager, Ashling Horan
- Where the complaint is made about the Manager and if the complainant feels they cannot refer to the Manager or it is inappropriate to do so the complaint should be referred to the owner Anita Flynn or an outside agency such as Tusla, Pobal or An Garda Síochána depending on the nature of the complaint.
- Complaints will be dealt with in an open and impartial manner.
- The complaint [made verbally] will be documented and remain confidential.
- The complaint will be investigated to assess if the Service has breached our policy and procedures.
- This investigation may be carried out by an independent third party if deemed necessary and appropriate.
- Staff may be consulted during the investigation process and are expected to participate in any investigation of a complaint.
- If a complaint is made against a staff member the HR policies may be invoked, including the discipline policy.
- Every attempt will be made to resolve the matter as quickly and amicably as possible, and to the parents/guardians' satisfaction.
- If agreement cannot be reached informally, the complainant must make a formal complaint in writing to the Manager or other person as noted in this policy above.
- The complainant will be sent an acknowledgement that the complaint has been received and told how it will be dealt with, by whom and within a timeframe specified by the Manager or other person and agreed by the complainant. If the complaint is made about the Manager or other person, the Manager or other person can.

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acknowledge receipt of the complaint but may defer to a third party to manage the process.

- The Manager or other person/s to whom the complaint has been referred will keep dated records summarising what was said and by whom.
- In the case of a complaint made against a member of staff, the staff members involved will be informed that a formal complaint has been made and given full details.
- The Manager will arrange to meet with the staff members and discuss the lodged complaint.
- The Manager will record and keep an accurate and detailed account of what was discussed.
- The Manager will review the complaint and consider all the relevant information as discussed and a decision will be made and recommendations if necessary.
- If a complaint involves a child protection concern (child abuse, neglect) this is passed to the Designated Liaison Person in the service and a separate reporting procedure will be followed in line with our Child Protection Policy and Children First 2017.
- The Manager will inform all parties involved of the outcome of the complaint made. The Manager reserves the right to extend the timeframe of the investigation and resolution in complex cases. The complainant will be kept informed regarding the progress of their complaint hearing and will never be left more than one week without communication regarding the complaint.

Appeals:

- If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint or a satisfactory resolution is not found within 28 days of the Manager's investigation and report, Management will offer (a) the opportunity to appeal the complaint to an external consultant with experience in dealing with complaints or (b) offer mediation.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the above interventions, they will be advised that the service is closing off the complaint and if appropriate will refer the complainant elsewhere.

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- The agency to which a complaint may be referred may include such organisations as Tusla, HSE, DCYA, HSA depending on the nature of the complaint. We will cooperate fully in any investigation carried out by these agencies.
- Upon closure of a complaint, the outcome is recorded with details of any recommendations and any changes to practice, policy is recorded.
- Complaints will be kept on file for 2 years.

Child Version of Complaints Policy

We have a Child-friendly version of the Complaints Policy to help support children if they have a complaint or concern. This policy will be discussed in an age-appropriate way with children when they start in our service. Staff will support children if they wish to make a complaint and together with their parents, if appropriate, will be facilitated through the process.

Management of Unsolicited Information to Tusla:

The Early Years Inspectorate (EYI) may receive information volunteered by parents, staff, or members of the public about our Service. This is known as unsolicited information, and it can include comments, complaints, or concerns.

- We will cooperate fully if a complaint is referred to another agency and follow our policy in investigating the complaint ourselves.
- Unsolicited information which is deemed to fall under the remit of the Regulations is then risk rated by the inspectorate to determine if there is a risk to the health, safety, and welfare of a child in the service. Again, we will fully cooperate with any review/risk assessment carried out by Tusla.
- If the risk to children is assessed as low by Tusla it may not be investigated but our Service will be required to investigate the matter in line with this complaints policy.
- When investigating the complaint, we may need to refer to other policies and procedures or follow our employment/staffing policies and procedures.

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- If there is an unsolicited complaint, we will act promptly to resolve the issue as quickly as possible.
- Like all other complaints we will log unsolicited information and retain for inspection for 2 years
- We will keep all parties informed of the progress of a complaint.
- We will record each step of the process and keep detailed notes.
- We will give the complainant a full explanation in writing of the outcome and the rationale for the decision.
- We will always give the option of appealing the decision as outlined in this policy.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Name:

Person responsible for approving the Policy.

12. INSURANCE

Document Title:	Insurance
Unique Reference Number:	012
Document Author:	Happy Feet Childcare, CB
Document Approved:	Ashling Horan
Person(s) responsible for developing, distributing, and reviewing Policy	Ashling Horan
Person responsible for approving Policy	Anita Flynn
Method of communication of policies to staff (email / hard copy / induction training)	Email
Method of communication of policies to parents/guardians (full policies via email, hard copy)	Email and hard copy available in Service
Date the Document is Effective From:	August 2023
Scheduled Review Date:	August 2024
Number of Pages:	2

This policy is available and communicated to parents, staff, and relevant stakeholders.

Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to this policy. Relevant staff have received training on this policy.

Statement of Intent:

It is the policy of this Service to retain adequate insurance, evidenced by a current certificate of insurance relevant to the type of service being operated.

Insurance Cover

The Service's insurance includes the following where appropriate:

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- public liability insurance.
- insurance against fire and theft.
- buildings insurance.
- insurance for outings undertaken as part of the service provision.
- motor insurance cover for vehicles used by the service to transport children.
- any other insurance requirements depending on the services provided as identified by the registered provider or the inspectorate.

Insurance Certificate

- The insurance certificate for the Service is available and in date on inspection.
- The information provided on the relevant insurance certificate includes:
 - the contact details for the insurance provider.
 - the name and address of the Service insured.
 - the categories of insurance cover for the Service.
 - the number of children covered by insurance within the Service.
 - the start date and end date of current insurance cover.
- The number of children in the Service at any time does not exceed the number for which the insurance is provided.
- Any vehicle used to transport children is appropriately insured for the purpose.
- Details of all relevant vehicle insurance policies and certificates are kept by the Service.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Name:

Person responsible for approving the Policy.

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