



Learning to be a wonderful me

**Policy for Safeguarding
and Child Protection**



September 2018



In Dunclug Nursery School we are committed to providing a happy, safe and stimulating environment to support young children’s learning and development.

We recognise that the children in our care have individual interests, characteristics and needs and aim to enable each child to develop positive attitudes about themselves and towards their learning by –

- providing experiences that extend learning and challenge thinking
- maintaining positive relationships as a staff team, with our children, their parents, the community, the Board of Governors and other relevant agencies
- promoting the health and wellbeing of our staff, children and their families
- inspiring and developing all members of our school community

The United Kingdom agrees to be bound by the UN Convention on the rights of the child (1991) wherein it is stated (Article 19) that children have,

“the right to be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse by those looking after them.”

Article 3 states that,

“when organisations make decisions which affect children, the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration.”

The Governors and Staff team in Dunclug Nursery School are committed to providing a caring, nurturing and safe environment for all children in our care and the ‘*paramountcy of the child*’ principle, as detailed in Article 3, underpins our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures.

In accordance with guidance from DENI’s ‘Pastoral Care in Schools : Child Protection (1999)’ **all adults** who are working with children in Dunclug Nursery School will follow the procedures, as detailed in this policy, in order to safeguard the children in their care, including taking appropriate action where the abuse or neglect of a child is suspected.



AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all adults working with the children in our school are clear about the procedures in place to safeguard the children in our care. In putting our policy into practice, we aim to –

- provide a safe, caring and nurturing environment to support young children's learning and development
- set out and implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse
- maintain effective communication among all staff when dealing with issues around safeguarding the children in our care
- practise safe recruitment in accessing appropriate checks to verify the suitability of staff, students and volunteers to work with children
- teach children about their emotions and equip them with skills they can use to keep themselves safe
- develop adults' knowledge and understanding of how to identify and report possible cases of abuse
- work in partnership with relevant agencies to support pupils who have been abused in accordance with their Child Protection Plan

The overriding concern of all caring adults associated with Dunclug Nursery School must be the care, welfare and safety of the children in our care.



Safeguarding Team

Designated Teacher for Child Protection :	Mrs. Pamela Muir
Deputy Designated Teacher for Child Protection :	Mrs. Dionne Bishop
Designated Governor for Child Protection :	Mr. Dominic McLernon



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors

Ultimate responsibility for ensuring that appropriate child protection measures are in place rests with the Board of Governors, to ensure –

- a safeguarding ethos is maintained within our Nursery School environment
- a current Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is in place and that it is implemented appropriately
- any complaints or allegations against the Principal are dealt with in line with the Nursery School's Complaints Procedure
- staff recruited are vetted appropriately

The Governors are updated termly on Safeguarding and Child Protection issues. Governors avail of Child Protection and Recruitment and Selection training from the Education Authority.

Principal

In the event of an allegation, suspicion or instance of child abuse, the Principal will –

- consider the report received from the Designated / Deputy Designated Teacher
- ensure that appropriate procedures are implemented
- decide on the need for a referral to Social Services(SS), Education Authority (EA) Child Protection Services or other agencies
- inform parents, as appropriate, following guidance from the EA or SS
- initiate vetting procedures for new staff or volunteers
- respond to issues under the Nursery School's Complaints Procedure

Designated Teacher / Deputy Designated Teacher

The Designated / Deputy Designated Teachers are responsible for –

- receiving concerns and reports from staff on possible or actual instances of child abuse
- collating details of such reports or concerns
- informing the Principal
- reviewing the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy annually
- disseminating information / providing staff training
- liaising with other agencies
- promoting an ethos of safeguarding in the Nursery School

Staff, Students and Volunteers

All adults working with children in Dunclug Nursery School have a duty to –

- be alert for signs of actual / suspected abuse or neglect
- act upon any concern in line with the Nursery School's procedures, by keeping brief records and reporting concerns to the Designated / Deputy Designated Teacher
- adopt safeguarding principles and guidelines, as detailed in this Policy and in the Code of Conduct for all adults working with children in our Nursery School
- ensure all health and safety procedures are adhered to
- take part in any Safeguarding / Child Protection training offered to them
- familiarise themselves with Appendix 1 of this Policy, which relates to categories of abuse and their indicators.



RECOGNISING SIGNS OF ABUSE

The nature of daily contact with the children in our care means that adults working with children in Schools and Nursery Schools are well placed to observe changes in behaviour, appearance and demeanour that *may* be due to some form of abuse.

Appendix 1 contains details on the categories of abuse and their related indicators. It is the responsibility of all adults working with children in our Nursery School to familiarise themselves with these and keep them safe for future reference.

All concerns regarding the possibility of abuse should *never* go unreported, however it is important to remember that any such indicators may be due to another reason, e.g. medical condition etc.

It is imperative that any concerns are discussed with the Designated / Deputy Designated Teacher and in their absence, a member of the Safeguarding Team.



RECEIVING AND RESPONDING TO A CONCERN OR A REPORT FROM A CHILD –

An adult, in talking to a child who has disclosed information or who is a victim of abuse, should follow the following procedures –

- Listen and accept information calmly. Avoid any over-reaction or responses which may compound a child's feeling of guilt
- Respond positively to the disclosure, avoid attributing blame or criticising anyone. Check your understanding of what has happened.
- Do NOT interrogate. Only ask questions for purposes of clarification. Avoid leading questions which may give *your* ideas of what might have happened.
- Do NOT attempt an investigation by interviewing at any length. The responsibility for investigating lies with the Social Services and Police Service.
- Write brief notes, if feasible, and retain. (Original notes written at the time are more important than an improved version written later.)

Record -

the vocabulary used by the child

any mention of time, date, place, persons as well as signs of injury

- Do NOT give a guarantee that you will keep what has been said confidential or secret, but reassure the child that you will only tell the people who really need to know about it.
- Inform the Designated / Deputy Designated Teacher as soon as possible. Discuss whether immediate steps need to be taken to protect the person who disclosed the information, or any others.



PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN RESPONDING TO A CONCERN OR A REPORT

Figure 1 (overleaf) summarises the procedure to be followed when a school has concerns or has received a report about possible abuse or neglect **by anyone other than a member of the school's staff**. The person receiving the report must act promptly.

Figure 2 summarises the procedure to be followed when a complaint is made about possible abuse or neglect **by a member of school staff**. Prompt action must also be taken in this case.



Figure 1

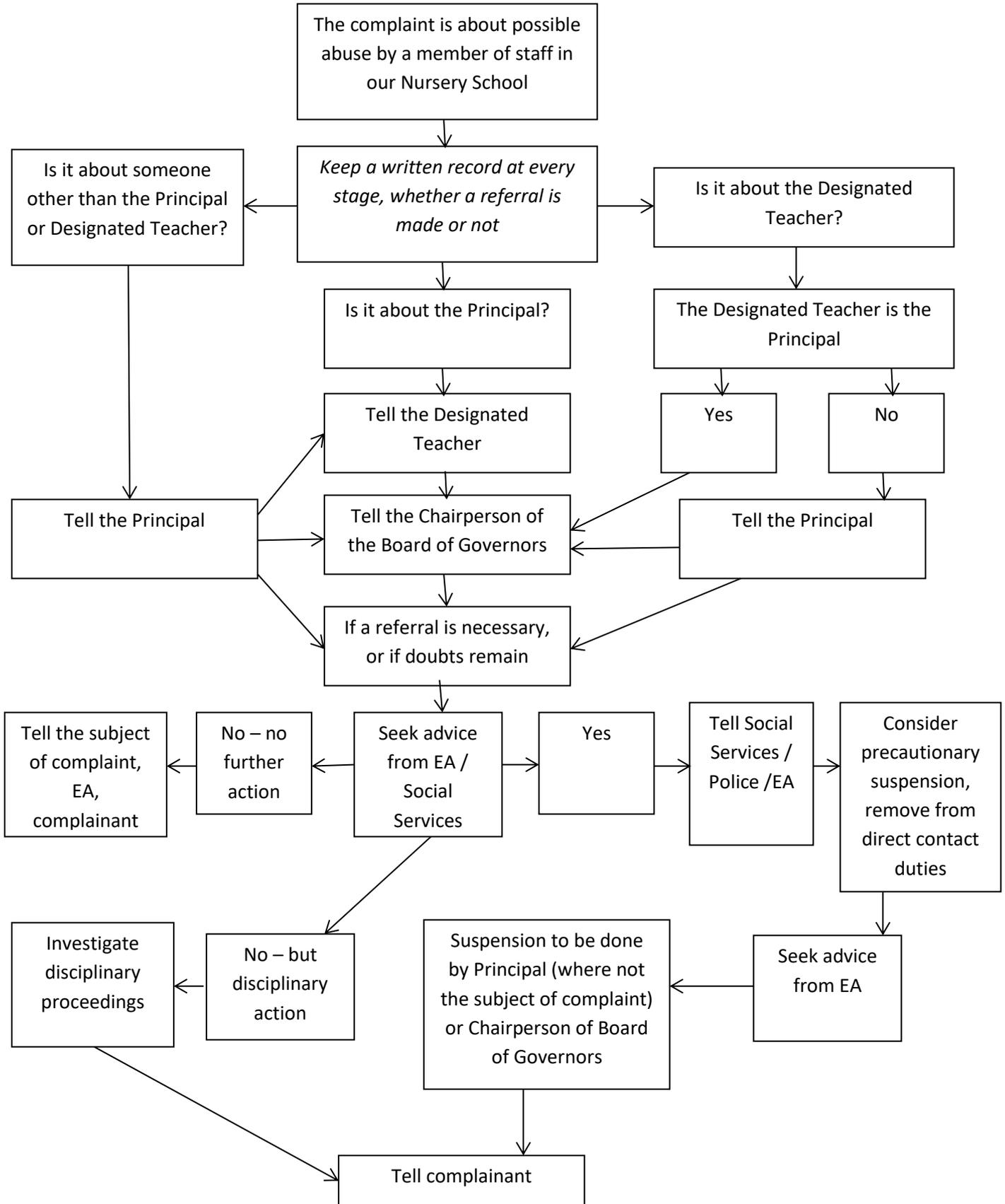
Procedure to follow when the Nursery has concerns, or has been given information, about possible abuse by someone other than a member of Nursery Staff.





Figure 2

Procedure to follow when a complaint has been made about possible abuse by a member of Nursery Staff.





PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN DEALING WITH A CONCERN / SUSPICION OR REPORT BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF STAFF

1. The person receiving the complaint or report should follow recommended guidelines when listening and talking to a child who is disclosing information, as set out in 'Receiving and responding to a concern or a report from a child.'
2. Details should be reported to the Designated / Deputy Designated Teacher as soon as possible.
3. The need for immediate safeguarding of the child or others at risk will be considered.
4. Ensure records of details are kept.
5. Designated / Deputy Designated Teacher will inform the Principal.
6. Principal and Designated / Deputy Designated Teacher will decide if additional information is required. If so, the child's class teacher/EA Designated Officer/Social Services may be consulted. Parents will be consulted as soon as possible, unless the parent is implicated in the potential abuse or neglect.
7. Principal will decide -
 - **EITHER – a referral is necessary, in which case she will –**
 - Inform Social Services or Police
 - Inform the EA Designated Officer
 - Inform parents/guardians (unless implicated)
 - **OR – no referral is necessary**
 - Inform person making complaint or providing information
 - Inform parents or guardians (unless implicated)
 - Record details, including reasons for not referring, in 'Actions' section of Safeguarding Record of Concern Form, to be filed in Safeguarding Records.
8. Ensure that a detailed record is retained in Nursery School (until after the child's 23rd birthday, or 30th birthday if a referral is made to Social Services.)



PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN DEALING WITH A CONCERN / SUSPICION OR REPORT OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT BY A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL STAFF

1. Person making or receiving details of complaint should refer it directly to the Principal.
2. Principal will ask Designated / Deputy Designated Teacher to initiate a Safeguarding Record of Concern, consult with EA Designated Officer and the Chairperson of the Board of Governors.
3. Principal will consider evidence and advice received and decide, in consultation with the Board of Governors, that the evidence is such that :
 - the accusation is unsubstantiated and there is no case to answer **OR**
 - an immediate referral to Social Services or Police Service is required **OR**
 - action should be taken in line with Disciplinary Procedures.



PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN A PARENT WISHES TO REGISTER A CONCERN ABOUT THEIR CHILD'S WELFARE IN SCHOOL

The course of action that a parent may wish to follow when registering their concern about their child's welfare in school will depend on the nature of their complaint.

A parent may -

- Speak / Write to their child's Class Teacher
- Speak / Write to the Principal
- Write to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors

All complaints will be followed up and, where appropriate, will be investigated in line with the Nursery School's Complaints Procedure.



CONFIDENTIALITY

In situations when a child confides in an adult working in our school and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the child is told sensitively that they will have to pass on the information to those who need to know about it, in order to keep them safe.

All adults who receive sensitive information about children or parents in the course of their professional duties should be aware that this information is *strictly confidential*, and as such should not be shared with any other individuals, other than Statutory agencies, as detailed in this policy.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Records are held securely within our Nursery School. Access to such records is restricted to the Designated and Deputy Designated Teachers.



VETTING

In order for all reasonable steps to be taken to select and employ suitable adults to work with the children in our care, we follow guidance on pre-employment checking and safe recruitment practices provided by the Department of Education. Copies of Circulars issued for guidance are available on www.deni.gov.uk.

All adults who will have contact with children in our setting receive our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and agree to adhere to the Code of Practice for Adults working in our Nursery School.



TAKING AND DISPLAYING PHOTOGRAPHS OF CHILDREN IN OUR NURSERY SCHOOL

In Dunclug Nursery School we take photographs of the children to –

- 🦋 record observations of progress towards early learning goals
- 🦋 record play experiences in Nursery School, on Educational Visits or when visitors come to Nursery.

Consent to take and use photographs of the children in our Nursery School is sought at the beginning of the school year.

With Parents' permission, children's photographs are used for –

- 🦋 pictorial evidence sources in observation and assessment records or for monitoring and evaluation purposes
- 🦋 classroom or corridor displays
- 🦋 local media coverage, such as local newspapers
- 🦋 online publication, on the Nursery School website or facebook page
- 🦋 children's end of year profiles
- 🦋 slideshows for parents
- 🦋 booklets, promotional material or to advertise our Nursery School

In order to safeguard children, the following steps are taken –

- children's names or personal information are never published alongside photos displayed outside of our Nursery School, online, or in local media
- comments on photographs on the Nursery School's facebook page are monitored by the Principal
- **Storage of images**
Digital and video images of pupils are, where possible, taken with school equipment. Images stored on school devices are accessible only to staff of Dunclug Nursery School. Photographs of pupils are removed when they leave the Nursery School. Please note that some photographs may be retained for promotional material such as a Nursery School prospectus or an advertisement.



ABUSE CATEGORIES AND INDICATORS

Child Abuse means ill treatment or neglect, leading to physical, sexual or emotional injury or harm. The following illustrations outline common indicators of abuse and neglect. These signs and symptoms are not in themselves proof that abuse has occurred and may be explained by alternative medical/psychological conditions or social difficulties.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

If a child is being deliberately hurt causing them physical harm such as cuts, bruises, broken bones or other injuries.

Physical Indicators –

- Unexplained bruises or burns, particularly if recurrent
- Human bite marks, welts or bald spots
- Unexplained lacerations, fractures or abrasions
- Untreated injuries
- Bruising on cheeks, ears, palms, arms, backs, tummy, hips, and backs of legs
- A history of bruising
- Multiple bruising in clusters, usually on the upper arms or outer thighs
- Bruises that look like they have been caused by a finger, hand or object
- Burns or scalds
- Burns that have a clear shape, like a cigarette burn
- Fractures
- Scarring
- Poisoning
- Drowning
- Suffocating
- Head injuries caused by a blow or shaking
- Fabricated or induced illnesses

Mental Health or Behavioural Indicators –

- Self-destructive tendencies
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Running away from home
- Aggressive or withdrawn
- Fear of returning home
- Reluctant to have physical contact
- Clothing inappropriate for the weather – to hide a part of the body
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Problems with relationships and socialising
- Trying to hide injuries under clothing

NEGLECT

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and / or psychological needs, resulting in serious impairment of health and / or development.

Physical Indicators –

- Constant hunger
- Poor state of clothing / personal hygiene
- Untreated medical problems
- Emaciation / distended stomach
- Constant tiredness
- Inappropriate dress for the weather
- Dirty or unbathed
- Inadequately supervised or left alone for unacceptable periods of time
- Malnourished
- Lack of hygiene

Mental Health or Behavioural Indicators –

- Tiredness, listlessness
- Lack of social relationships
- Lack of attachment to adults
- Compulsive stealing, begging or scavenging
- Frequently absent or late
- Low self-esteem
- Poor attendance / poor school performance
- Poor social skills
- Demanding of affection and attention
- Little understanding of basic hygiene

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Emotional abuse is severe and persistent ill-treatment of a child. It can have long lasting and devastating effects on a child's emotional health and development. It can be an element of other child abuse and neglect.

Physical Indicators –

- Sudden speech disorder
- Signs of mutilation
- Signs of solvent abuse
- Wetting and / or soiling
- Attention seeking behaviours
- Poor peer relationships
- Tense meal times

Mental Health or Behavioural Indicators –

- Neurotic Behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)
- Reluctance about parent liaison
- Fear of new situations
- Running away from home
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Eating disorders
- Self-isolating / anti-social behaviour
- Difficulty expressing / controlling emotions / interactions and relationships
- Negative Impulse Behaviour

SEXUAL ABUSE

Involves forcing or persuading a child to take part in sexual activities or encouraging a child to behave in a sexually inappropriate way. It can be very difficult to identify.

Physical Indicators –

- Soreness or bleeding in the genital or anal areas, or in the throat
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothes
- Chronic ailments such as stomach pains or headaches
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Frequent urinary or yeast infections
- Unexplained pregnancies

Mental Health or Behavioural Indicators –

- Chronic depression / suicidal
- Inappropriately seductive or precocious
- Sexually explicit language
- Low self-esteem, self-devaluation, lack of confidence
- Recurring nightmares / fear of the dark
- Outburst of anger / hysteria
- Overly protective towards siblings
- Aggressive behaviour
- Problems sleeping
- Bed wetting / soiling
- Risk taking behaviours
- Negative thoughts
- Problems with school / poor attendance
- Fear of adults and reluctance to socialise with adults
- Becoming sexually active at a young age
- Use of sexual language / information (beyond age-appropriate knowledge)

Adults working in school are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have relating to potential indicators of abuse with the Designated / Deputy Designated Teacher promptly.



SAFEGUARDING Code of Contact

Guidelines for Staff, Governors and all adults who interact with children in Dunclug Nursery School

The Code of Conduct outlines standards expected from staff, governors and all adults interacting with children in Dunclug Nursery School to enable us to provide a happy, safe and stimulating environment to support young children's learning and development.

This Code of Contact is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences the children in our care gain from positive interaction with caring adults. It is intended to assist adults interacting with children in Dunclug Nursery School by drawing attention to the areas of risk, by offering guidance on prudent contact.

RELATIONSHIPS AND ATTITUDES

- Children, their families and visitors to our Nursery should be treated with respect at all times. Positive professional relationships should be maintained, giving thought to our attitude, our demeanour and the language we use when addressing others.
- Adults should ensure that their relationships with their pupils are appropriate to the age, maturity and gender of the children in their care, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation.

Commitment to Learners -

Adults will –

- Maintain professional relationships with children entrusted to their care which respect the child as a person, and encourage growth and development; acknowledge and respect the uniqueness, individuality and specific needs of pupils and thus provide appropriate learning experiences; and aim to motivate and inspire children with a view to helping each realise his or her potential.

Commitment to Colleagues –

Adults will –

- Work with colleagues and others to create a professional community that supports the social, intellectual, moral, emotional and physical development of children; promote collegiality among colleagues by respecting their professional standing and opinions and, in that spirit, be prepared to offer advice and share professional practice with colleagues.

(General Teachers' Council – Code of Values and Professional Conduct)

PRIVATE AND 'ONE TO ONE' CONTACT WITH CHILDREN

- Staff should be aware of the dangers that may arise from private and 'one to one' contact with children. It is recognised that there are times when contact of this nature is required and wholly appropriate, however this should, as far as possible, be conducted in a room with visual access or with the door open. Where such conditions cannot apply, staff are advised to ensure that another adult knows that the 'one to one' contact is taking place.

PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH CHILDREN

- As a general principle, staff and adults working with children in our Nursery School are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with them.
- There are times in the Nursery School setting when children may need some physical comforting as a reassurance, in the absence of a caring parent. Staff employed by Dunclug Nursery School may provide this, however they should exercise their discretion when providing reassurance in this manner, ensuring that such contact could not be misconstrued by the child, parent, or other casual observers as being unnatural or unjustified.
- Natural affection, as offered by many young children, will be received sensitively. Staff should avoid prolonged contact with the child without rebuking them.
- First Aid will be only administered by Staff who are employed by Dunclug School, unless in exceptional circumstances. Staff should ensure, where possible, that another adult is in close proximity while they tend to the injured child.
- Children who require assistance with their Intimate Care will be assisted by Staff employed by Dunclug Nursery School, with their parent's permission. Staff should inform another adult when they are assisting a child in this manner and ask that the other adult stay close by. If a child requires help with changing clothes or cleaning themselves after the toilet, they will be encouraged to be as independent as possible and will be dealt with in a way that ensures their privacy is respected at all times.

MOBILE PHONE USAGE IN SCHOOL

- Adults working in our Nursery School are advised to protect their personal mobile phone numbers from children and their parents.
- Mobile Phones should NOT be used to take photographs of any children who attend Dunclug Nursery School.
- Mobile phones should be kept out of reach of children in the Nursery School and should not be accessed during session times, unless in cases of emergency.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

- Staff and adults working with children in our Nursery School should maintain professional boundaries and avoid improper conduct when using Social Networking sites.
- Staff and adults working with children in our Nursery School are advised to be mindful of the type of personal information they share on Social Networking sites, or the types of photos they are sharing or tagged in. Staff should therefore ensure that they use appropriate privacy settings to protect such information.
- Individuals who work with children should not, under any circumstances, make, view or access illegal or inappropriate images of children.
- Staff and adults working with children in our Nursery School should not engage in online behaviour which could harm the reputation of colleagues, the profession, or our Nursery School. Any inappropriate posting should be reported to the Principal.
- Any postings on Social Networking should not mention Dunclug Nursery School, unless to share a post when requested to do so by Dunclug Nursery School Facebook Administrator in order to publicise Nursery events.
- Staff and adults working in our Nursery School should not post comments on any posts on Dunclug Nursery School's Facebook or Website pages.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- Out of respect for children and their families, staff and adults interacting with the children in our Nursery School should refrain from discussing confidential matters, including children's behaviour, stage of development, learning difficulties, or other private matters with anyone who is not working directly with the child. Information pertaining to children should be shared on a strict 'need to know' basis and should never be included in general conversation about that child.

The Board of Governors and Principal of Dunclug Nursery School recognise that the guidelines provided in the Safeguarding Code of Conduct will affirm existing good practice for the vast majority of employees. Adults working with children in our Nursery School are encouraged to continue to exercise professional judgement and a 'common sense' approach to their work in Dunclug Nursery School.

The Safeguarding Code of Conduct is not, and could not be, intended to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all the circumstances in which staff and other adults working in our Nursery interrelate with children, or where opportunities for their conduct to be misconstrued might occur.

It is important, however, as reflective practitioners, that we continuously reappraise our teaching styles, relationships with children and the manner in which we approach individuals, to ensure that we give no grounds for doubting our intentions, in the minds of children, their parents/carers, or our colleagues.

_____ Date - _____
Principal

_____ Date - _____
Chairperson, Board of Governors

I confirm that I have read and understood the Updated Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (September 2018)

Signed - _____

Date - _____