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1. Admissions and Settling in

Admissions

Playgroup works in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council to provide free pre-school education places for eligible children. Playgroup follows council guidelines in allocating places with priority given to older children, as outlined in Council “Information for parents”.

In practice, places will be available for 4 year olds, then 3 year olds in the term after their third birthday. Any remaining places in the group may then be allocated to those children who have recently attained their third birthday.

Parents will be informed as to whether their child has a free place at the times specified by Aberdeenshire Council. This will be May for those children starting in August. Any remaining places will then be allocated. In line with Aberdeenshire Council pre-school centres, children whose third birthday falls after 28th Feb will be eligible for a place in playgroup in August of that year.

Playgroup works on a ratio of 1 adult to 6 children, which means that when 2 play leaders are employed, the group can take a maximum of 12 children. At the Discretion of the play leaders and committee, further children may be accommodated, provided a rota parent/carer, who is a member of the PVG scheme, is present during each session.

Playgroup can accommodate up to 6 2 years olds in a session. The staff ratio in this case would be 1 adult to 5 children. The decision to include 2 year olds will be taken at committee level, where the impact on the whole group will be discussed.
Guidelines for Settling-in Children to Playgroup

• On the child’s first day at playgroup it is essential to give lots of individual attention, lots of cuddles and re-assurance.
  • Find out from the parent about the routine the child is used to at home.
  • Encourage parents to ask as many questions as they feel are appropriate. Make parent and the child feel comfortable and welcomed.
  • Ask parent to bring along a favourite toy or comforter.
  • Encourage parents to stay as long as they wish and to make as many visits before the child’s first day as they wish. These visits could be planned or merely a drop-in-when passing by to the shop. The atmosphere should be such that the parents continue to feel comfortable spending time in playgroup not only when the child first starts, but also in the years to follow.
  • Do not make any sudden changes to the child’s daily routine, or take away their favourite toy or comforter. If they have a comforter, more than likely they will leave it lying somewhere. If this happens, discreetly pick up the comforter and put it on the child’s peg until they notice it is missing.
  • Re-assure parents by encouraging them to telephone on their first few days, or call them yourself if required.

Always respect the wishes of the parents and children

Children’s Privacy Policy

All children and their parents/guardians have a right to privacy. It is the responsibility of all Staff to protect the privacy of children and their parents or guardians.

  • A parent’s/guardian’s permission must be gained in order to video or photograph their child.
  • Consent for videos and taking photographs is included within the application form.
  • Parents/guardians/visitors will be advised on the suitability of videoing/photographing playgroup performances prior to any event.

Parental Rights to Review Children’s Records

Each parent has a right to access their own child’s records that are kept at playgroup; we positively encourage parents and carers to review their children’s records regularly.

These records include:

  • Details kept on the computer, i.e. personal information (records detailing contact telephone numbers, address, D.O.B. etc.)
  • Fee information
  • Information kept on file in the playroom, application form, permission for outings, videoing, medicine, etc.
  • Individual Educational Profiles.
  • Individual Profiles
  • Children’s portfolios of work

If a parent wishes to view these records, an appointment can be arranged with the Play leader to do so.
**Absence from Playgroup**

It is the policy of Monymusk Playgroup and Toddlers that when a child is expected to attend a session and has not appeared, and where no advance notice has been provided, that parents/carers will be contacted by the playgroup as early as possible on the same day and by no later than 10.30 am at the latest.

This contact will be made using the information provided by parents/carers. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that contact information is kept up to date and is accurate.

This contact will normally only be necessary at the time of the initial absence and it will be the parent/carers responsibility to notify playgroup when the child is expected to have returned after a period of absence.

Where an absence is prolonged, staff will use their own judgement in conjunction with the chairperson and based on particular circumstances as to how often to make check up calls. As a guide this should be at least on a weekly basis.

When playgroup staff are concerned about an unexplained absence, they should refer the matter to the relevant Social Work Department in conjunction with the chairperson.

**Equality Policy (Children)**

All children at Playgroup will be equally valued in terms of their individual differences e.g. their race, religion, gender, language, physical ability, culture and beliefs.

Every attempt will be made by the staff to learn about the individual differences of the children present in order to value and respect their needs. When inducting a new child into the playgroup the parents are encouraged to express any wishes or concerns about their child’s learning and socialisation needs. This will help the play leaders to provide an environment that encompasses and values the children’s individual needs.

The play leader should encourage the other children to learn from and about different cultures that are present in the group through the celebrating of festivals, the preparation of food and the explanation of beliefs.

All children in the playgroup will be treated equally, irrespective of their gender. No separations will be made by staff concerning gender, i.e. boys line up, girls go first etc.

All children will be encouraged to join in with the whole range of activities that are offered in the playgroup, i.e. both boys and girls will be encouraged to play football, and to take part in craft activities, etc. During circle time activities, boys and girls will both be given the opportunity to be Farmers, Doctors, Nurses, etc.

The resources in the playgroup should be carefully monitored to ensure that they show an equal representation of males and females, and that the roles and activities that they are depicted in are not stereotypical. Resources showing males and females in non-traditional positive roles should also be available.
The resources offered to the children should depict people from a variety of different races and cultures. An attempt should be made to include positive images of people with mental and physical disabilities.

The issues of race and gender should be openly discussed within the group and any comments and questions should be openly discussed. The play leaders should seek to provide the children with evidence from the resources and from their surrounding environment to support their discussions.

**Special Needs Policy**

The playgroup is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all children and families and as such is committed to the integration of children with special needs. The group believes that no child should be excluded because of his or her special needs or disability and recognises everyone stand to gain when all children share the same opportunities and are supported to overcome any disadvantages they may have.

Special needs cover a wide range and can include children who have physical and mental disabilities, children who are HIV positive, children with language needs and children with behavioural problems.

**Additional Support Needs Policy**

Additional support needs are wide ranging and can include those who have physical or mental disabilities, children who are HIV positive, children facing short-term difficulties, children with language needs and children with behavioural problems.

The group respects children as individuals and is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all children and as such is committed to the integration of children with additional support needs. The group believes that no child should be excluded because of his or her support needs or disability, and recognises that everyone will benefit when all children are given the same opportunities to share in the experience of the group.

**Policy**

- The group will uphold and respect the rights of the child and ensure that their needs remain paramount at all times.
- The group will encourage and support all children to realise their potential.
- The group will ensure that a child’s personal care needs are undertaken only by adults who are members of the PVG scheme.
- The group will ensure that all staff members, support workers, committee and parents or carers are informed of this policy and other related policies including the group’s child protection, equal opportunities and confidentiality policies.
- The group will, as far as is reasonably practical, uphold and implement the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act.
- The group will not divulge information, other than for child protection reasons about the child to any other agencies without the prior consent of the parents/carers.
Open Access

The group is open to every family in the community. If a child has a special need the group will prepare for integration by:

- Offering a warm welcome and support parents or carers of a child with special needs.
- Hold detailed discussions with parents or carers and staff to assess each child’s needs in terms of access to ensure specific needs are known and can be managed within the group.
- Making arrangements to ensure children’s needs will be met for example:
  - Providing a ramp
  - Providing suitable bathroom and changing facilities
  - Securing extra adult help where it is appropriate
  - Acquiring specialist equipment.
  - Ensuring the play area is accessible
- Seeking advice and support from other appropriate agencies, therapists, health visitors, social workers and psychologists. In addition to this we will seek help from the development team.
- Giving staff members appropriate training.
- Working with parents or carers to seek funding to support these arrangements.

The Curriculum

All children are treated as equals and are encouraged to participate in all aspects of the group’s provision. All children are encouraged to take part in the daily routine of the group and when outings are organised, children with special needs are always included.

The curriculum promotes positive images of people with special needs and offers all children the opportunity to learn about themselves and others. Within this context an awareness of illness and disability is explored in a sensitive and caring way.

Some children may need one to one support to experience some of the activities and where this is the case a staff member or registered support worker is appointed to assist the child. Full co-operation will be given to all appropriate agencies in order to meet the specific needs of the child.

Staff and support helpers will observe the child to assess his or her needs and interests. They will formulate plans to support the child’s learning and development consistent with his or her needs, interests and stage of development. A record of the child’s progress will, in collaboration with the parents or carers, be kept. The content of this record is confidential. It will be shared with parents or carers who must give permission before its content can be released to any other agency.

Personal Support and Care

All children are treated with respect and of equal worth. After discussion with the child’s parents or carers, all necessary personal care will be given to ensure the child’s comfort, safety and well
being. This includes dietary and medical care as well as personal hygiene. A written record of the discussion will be kept in the child’s file.

A staff member and/or support worker will be designated to fulfil these tasks. They will be members of the PVG scheme. Appropriate training will be given where necessary. A log will be kept of the dietary and medication administered while the child is in the group. Medication will only be administered under strict guidelines * that are agreed by parents or carers and the SPPA. A Medication Administration Recording System (MARS) will be utilised. It will show the child’s name, type of medicine administered, date and time administered, dosage, name and signature of person administering medicine, name and signature of witness, time and notification to child’s parent/carer when medicine has been given in an emergency. Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS) recommend that a separate page is kept for each child within the MARS to ensure confidentiality and best practice.

**Insurance**

The group will inform parents and carers of individuals with additional support needs of the special; terms or considerations applicable to them under the Personal Accident and Public Liability Cover in the group’s insurance policy.

- Groups must contact the SPPA centre before agreeing to administer any routine or emergency medication. If necessary, groups will be sent the appropriate forms for completion and return to the SPPA. Groups will be advised of the outcome as soon as possible. SPPA’s Medication in Pre-school Groups leaflet provides further information on guidelines and procedures, and storage of medication.

**Adults with Additional Support Needs**

Staff, parents, carers and visitors who have additional support needs will be welcomed by the group in keeping with the Equal Opportunity Policy.

**How does the Additional Support for Learning Act affect your group?**

This very much depends on whether or not the group have entered into partnership with the local authority to provide pre-school education or not.

**Voluntary sector playgroups that are not in partnership with the education authority**

The Act has not introduced any new duties on voluntary sector services. However The Act and the code of practice do recognise and stress the importance of voluntary sector services, and encourages education authorities to work together with voluntary groups that are supporting children and families.

These are some examples where voluntary sector playgroups could be consulted and involved by education authorities:

- If a child with additional support needs is going to be educated by the authority, then at least 6 months before they are going to go to school, the education authority must get
advice and information from any person they think is appropriate; this could include staff at the child’s playgroup.

- Disabled children under 3 years may be referred by the health board to the education authority, to assess if they have additional support needs. Again, the authority has to get information from any person they feel is appropriate, so playgroup staff may be consulted by the authority as part of the assessment process.

- In the case where a child is attending a partnership nursery school as arranged with the local authority, and also going to a playgroup not associated with the local authority, then this playgroup might be consulted about their experience of working with the child as part of an assessment process undertaken by the authority. This would also be the only scenario when this type of playgroup would be involved in the preparation of a co-ordinated support plan.

**Voluntary sector groups in partnership with the local authority**

These services are in a totally different position. The duties in the Act are on the education authority, but obviously the day-to-day practice of supporting children is carried out by the group. The education authority has to make sure that through the arrangements they make for pre-school provision, children with additional support needs can be identified, assessed, supported, and that this support can be monitored and reviewed.

Partner groups will be involved in all of these aspects of supporting children. In the case of a dispute, partner staff may be invited to participate in mediation. Some partnership groups may have children who qualify for a co-ordinated support plan, and staff will be involved in the process of maintaining the plan.

The Act also gives parents and carers of children with additional support needs the right to make placing requests to playgroups. It is for education authorities to manage this, but partner groups may be involved in discussions either with the authority or with the parents. This will be new to many groups, so they may wish to familiarise themselves with their local authorities placing request arrangements.

Other parental rights include the right to request their child is assessed for additional support needs, and whether or not they require a co-ordinated support plan. Parents also have the right to request specific types of assessment when the authority has agreed to start the assessment process. Partner groups should be aware of these and other new rights.

To find out more about the Equality Act, contact the Disability Rights Commission (DRC). It produces a range of publications which give more information on the above, including Codes of Practice covering each part of the Act. These can be downloaded free from the DRC website at [www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org). The DRC also offers a helpline which can provide further advice and information as follows:

DRC helpline:- (Monday to Friday 08:00-20:00) email enquiry@drc-gb.org Telephone 08457 622 633.

Enquire is also happy to provide information about the Additional Support for Learning Act. A range of guides and fact sheets have been produced for parents and carers, these are also useful for practitioners. For further details contact:
Additional Support Workers Contact Details

- Educational Psychologists- please see the next sheet.
- Children with English as an additional language:
  - EAL Team, Monquhitter Primary School, Thronhill, Cummniestown, Turriff, AB53 5WH
    01888 544831 / 07879 890178
- Health Visitors- 01467 644239
- Pre-school Development Worker for Special Needs Support : Sharon Stoneman- 01467 626391

The Equality Act (2010)
The Equality Act replaces all previous anti-discrimination legislation and brings together, harmonises and extends the current equality law. The Playgroup has a legal duty to have due regard of the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between all people including those having, or being perceived to have, one or more of the protected characteristics.

The Equality Act 2010 protects from discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics. These protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Religion or Beliefs
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage & Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy & Maternity

The Act applies to all organisations that provide a service to the public, or a section of the public (service providers). It also applies to anyone who sells goods or provides facilities

Parental Involvement Policy

Partnership with parents
Parents will be encouraged to see themselves as the prime educators of their children. All forms of parental involvement will be welcomed and encouraged. Support and friendship will be offered to all families so that they feel welcome.
The playgroup will:

- Encourage parents or carers and their children to visit the group as a family before registering.
- Offer a flexible approach to all parents/carers to allow for a settling in period when starting, and for all concerned to become used to the group’s routines and policies along with the philosophy of the Scottish Pre-school Play Association (SPPA).
- Welcome new parents/carers and help them become familiar with the routine of the group and guidelines of good practice. The group recognises that it is difficult for new parents or carers to understand how the group operates unless time is specifically given to this task.
- Welcome the contributions of all parents/carers whatever form these might take, and ensure they have opportunities to contribute their skills, knowledge and interest.
- Involve parents/carers in the progress of their child formally or informally and work with them in sharing all records concerning their child.
- Inform parents/carers that the group has adopted a number of policies to provide a quality environment.
- Ensure that parents/carers are kept fully informed about meetings and training, and that these will be held at various times and venues to take into account individual family needs.
- Ensure that parents/carers are aware of how any queries, complaints or suggestions can be made.
- Ensure that parents/carers are able to talk and discuss personal matters relating to their child, in confidence, on a daily basis if required.
- Offer parents/carers the opportunity to borrow, or buy SPPA publications and periodicals.
- Encourage parents/carers to play an active part in the running and management of the group and in the group’s role in the democratic decision making of SPPA.
- Provide opportunities for parents/carers to participate in the groups activities, to learn about the pre-school curriculum and the importance of play in the child’s development both in the group and at home.
- Make every effort to provide translation services or interpreters as needed for parents/carers whose first language is not that of the group.
- Encourage fathers to become more involved in the group. They will be welcomed, supported and encouraged to become parent helpers, to take part in the group’s rota system, and be given the opportunity to serve on the committee.
- Invite parents/carers to participate in their children’s learning and development through play, and not solely to confine their role to clearing up and other domestic duties.
- Be flexible enough to cope with adults who have additional support needs and as far as is practically possible make reasonable adjustments to do so.
- Encourage every parent/carer to participate as much as they are able to and ensure that no one is made to feel a burden or a nuisance.
- Inform parents/carers that the group has adopted a number of policies to safeguard the children in their care. The relevant policies include Child Protection, Recruitment, Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and Health and Safety Policies. Only staff members and volunteers who are members of the PVG Scheme will be left in sole charge of a child or take children to the toilet.
2. Health and Wellbeing – Behaviour

Behaviour Management Policy
For any group to function effectively there must be an agreed framework of community rules which is the basis for discipline and acceptable behaviour within the group.

The group recognises it has a duty to safeguard the well being of users and the rules should contribute to providing a safe stimulating environment in which the children’s potential for learning and development is at its best. The purpose of the rules is to enable all children to flourish.

As a pre-school group we want children to:

- Respect themselves and one another.
- Help take care of the group property
- Accept the authority of the adults in charge
- Observe the rules of the group, especially related to safety.
- Be willing to share and take turns.
- Show kindness to younger, smaller or less able children.
- Engage fully in play learning activities.

We recognise that children progress at different rates and we will support and encourage children in learning these skills.

By promoting good behaviour, valuing co-operation and a caring attitude, the group aims to help children develop a sense of responsibility and well being for themselves and others.

Monymusk playgroup promotes positive discipline in playgroup by:

- Using words such as “please” and Thank you” and show good examples ourselves.
- Children will be helped to find acceptable ways of expressing strong feelings and will have the reassurance of discovering that, through stories and conversations, other people can feel that way too.
- We are a well equipped group offering plenty of choice, making sharing easier and adults will ensure that no one group or individual dominates one piece of equipment to the exclusion of other children.
- We play turn taking games to help children understand sharing.

In the event of a child being unusually unsettled, playgroup would ask the parent/carer to remain with the child during the playgroup session and to gradually increase the time the child then stays in the session on his own.

The group aims to treat everyone as an individual whilst encouraging self awareness and an appreciation of how an individual’s actions affect others. With this in mind the group will:-

- Establish community rules which set out the codes of conduct and behaviour expected in the group
• Endeavour to include the children, as well as parents and carers, in drawing up good ground rules
• Inform parents, carers and children of the rules and check that they are understood and accepted
• Provide explanations why a particular rule should be respected
• Encourage all adults to provide positive role models by showing consideration, good manners and respect to and for others, including the children
• Praise and encourage acceptable behaviour
• Provide opportunities for individual freedom, self expression and exploration without threatening the enjoyment of others
• Help the children to develop good self image and acquire self discipline
• Endeavour to differentiate between deliberate and accidental occurrences taking into account understanding of age/ stage appropriate behaviour
• Use appropriate language and establish eye contact when talking to the children regarding a behavioural issue
• Deal sensitively with anyone who breaches the codes
• Offer fair and consistent treatment for breaches of codes
• Work with parents and carers to promote acceptable behaviour
• Review the rules periodically to ensure they are still appropriate

The group recognises that sometimes, despite all the best efforts of staff and helpers, children will misbehave and some form of discipline or sanction has to be applied. In such circumstances disapproval of the action is registered immediately. Disapproval may take the form of:-

• A firm warning
• Saying no
• Removing the child from the scene for a short period of time

It may be necessary to provide “time out”, when the child must sit quietly and think about inappropriate behaviour. A child may also be encouraged to formulate an apology for the results of inappropriate behaviour.

Once the incident has been dealt with, adults will build bridges to enable the child or children to reintegrate positively with the group and the people involved.

Children will NEVER be smacked, shaken, humiliated, ridiculed, isolated, threatened or made to feel unwanted or undervalued by any adult whilst in the care of the group.

Children will not be physically restrained unless by not doing so would put the child in danger. When a child’s behaviour is giving concern, the group will make every effort to understand why a child is acting that way and will consult with the parents or carers to identify ways in which the child can be supported. The group recognises the sensitivity and confidentiality of information shared with parents/carers. Confidentiality of information will be respected.

**Use of Restraint**

If a child is putting himself or others in danger, then the play leader or qualified adult (staff or volunteer helper) will be expected to restrain the child to ensure the safety of the child, other
children at playgroup and the staff. Please refer to the use of restraint policy for further information.

It may be necessary to provide “time out”, when the child must sit quietly and think about inappropriate behaviour. A child may also be encouraged to formulate an apology for the results of inappropriate behaviour.

Parents/carers will be informed of the strategies used with the aim of using similar techniques at home and at playgroup.

Where restraint is used, details will be noted in the incident book and a copy given to parents/carers.

Accessing help from outside agencies
If the combined effort of staff and parents/carers is not sufficient to enable the child to change their behaviour, it may be necessary to seek outside assistance. With the parents/carers consent, a health visitor or other professional will be invited to make an initial observation of the child in the playgroup setting. This will then hopefully give an insight into any difficulties and help required. This indicates a responsible approach to improving behaviour.

Biting Policy
There are many different ways in which we can deal with biting. The Play Leader’s response should be varied to take into account the individual differences of the children and the variety of circumstances in which biting occurs.
It should be remembered that biting often occurs in social groups where the individuals involved are developing their communication skills and often subsides once the children become more proficient in verbal communication. Biting as a habit can take some time to eliminate, as it is a highly effective form of behavior.

In an instance of a child being bitten, appropriate care and first aid should be applied and the bite recorded in the accident book and signed by the class supervisor and the child’s parents or guardian’s

Initial strategies
• A strong ‘No’ to be voiced at the biting child, this can be accompanied by a ‘stop’ hand signal and a grumpy or stern expression.
• It is often effective to remove the bitten child who is then comforted and cuddled whilst first aid is being applied. The bitten child should become the focus of attention. The child who bit should receive little or no attention in the few minutes after the incident. This includes eye contact. Within a few minutes, staff should continue as normal.

Strategies to use when a child has developed a persistent biting habit.
• A ‘Time Out’ system can be used.
• A system of shadowing can be carried out. (Shadowing procedure is detailed and forms part of this policy.) This involves a member of staff playing in close proximity to the biting child, who works to divert unwanted behaviour and helps the child to overcome instances where he/she normally bites i.e. when a child is wanting to play with a toy, or when another
child bumps into them. Language such as 'You can have the toy in two minutes' can be used. The member of staff must use constant praise to reinforce the positive behaviour it must be remembered that all negative behaviour is more easily eliminated in an environment where praise is the norm.

It is important that the staff and children operate within an ethos of ‘forgive, forget and move on’. The staff should always remain calm, controlled and consistent in their approach to biting.

All staff must be aware of the immense upset that a parent feels when their child has been bitten or has bitten another child. Support should be offered to the children and their families.

It is important to ensure client confidentiality. The identity of the child who has bitten should not be revealed to the family of the bitten child.

**Use of Restraint Policy**

In cases of ‘extreme’ behaviour difficulties or continuous aggressive disruption within the room, where the child has been unresponsive to adult intervention techniques as documented within the policy for promoting positive behaviour, resulting in a child becoming a danger to themselves or others e.g. children or staff.

Examples of Extreme Behavior include:

- Continuous biting
- Hitting
- Throwing of toys or overturning of tables and chairs

Whenever these situations arise and all other methods of behaviour modification techniques have been tried, the child will be dealt with in a fair, firm and consistent manner which may include a “hands on” approach to manage the tantrum or rage factors.

The hands on approach may consist of the following:

- Child held within the circle of adults hands,
- Hands held or child placed on adult’s knee and held until child becomes calmer.
- Actual bodily removal of the child from the room
- Removal of other children to another area of the room

The adult will approach the child in a quiet but authoritative manner using a soft spoken but firm tone of voice. The child will be given the time and opportunity to reflect on what has happened using non aggressive techniques such as discussion with the other child or adults. If the child does not respond to this it will be the responsibility of the adult/adults in the team to use the hands on approach to stem the behaviour and bring the conduct under control.

The adults will ensure that there is as little disruption as possible to the other children in the room situation and they will acknowledge that although the child is feeling angry, it is the **Behaviour** of the child which is unacceptable not the child themselves.

**Record of Restraint Procedure**

The Record of restraint form should be used to record all incidents where a measure of restraint has been used.
The record of restraint should also be recorded in the restraint index.

The record must include:

- Name of Child
- Date
- Description of event
- The type of restraint used,
- Why it was necessary
- Who authorized the restraint
- Manager Signature & date
- Parent/Carer Signature & date

Any incidents of restraint need to be reported to the manager.

The Child’s Parents should also be informed and should sign the restraint form to acknowledge this.

Any incident incurring an injury to a member of staff by the service user should also be reported, e.g. through incident and/or accident procedure.

**Health and Wellbeing - Security**

**Security Policy**

At Monymusk Playgroup we are committed to ensuring the safety and well being of our staff, children and visitors at all times. This includes ensuring that the building is secure. All individuals entering and leaving the building must do so through the front door which is accessed by ringing the playgroup doorbell unless, there is an emergency situation. In this instance it is appropriate to exit through the nearest emergency exit.

- Care must be taken by staff and parents not to let in unfamiliar people when they themselves are entering or leaving the building.
- Parents and Staff must ensure the front door is locked before the playgroup session starts

**This policy is supported by the Monymusk Playgroup Visitors policy**

**Visitors Policy**

At Monymusk Playgroup we are committed to ensuring the safety and well being of all our Staff and Children. This includes managing visitors to our Playgroup effectively. Visitors will not be subject to Disclosure Scotland procedures however, in line with our child and adult protection policies we do not allow any visitors to have unsupervised time with any children under any circumstances. All visitors will be assigned a staff member for the duration of their visit.

All visitors to the Playgroup will:-
• Sign in and out on the visitors log
• Be made aware of the fire procedures, the location of the fire exits and fire muster points.
• Be made aware of the location of toilet facilities.
• Be assigned a Staff member for the duration of their visit.

Work Experience Placements
Monymusk Playgroup recognises the benefit of accepting Student Placements into the work place. A successful partnership encourages a sense of community and gives everyone the opportunity to develop their skills with regard to teamwork and leadership; ultimately, creating a better environment for us all.

• All correspondence regarding work experience candidates from schools and colleges is dealt with by the play leader manager.
• All candidates will work closely with the Play Leaders in the room they are placed. Work Experience students are not to be left unsupervised with the children. Students are not allowed to take children to the toilet unaccompanied or change nappies without constant, direct supervision.
• It is important that Monymusk Playgroup works closely with schools and colleges so that a successful experience can be had by all parties.
• In the unfortunate situation that it is determined that the placement is not successful for either party i.e. Monymusk Playgroup or the volunteer/candidate, the placement will be terminated.

The work experience policy is supported by the Monymusk Playgroup Visitors Policy

Incident Policy
It is our intention, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure that all incidents are reported internally and, where appropriate, to the enforcing authority. We will investigate all incidents and take reasonable measures to prevent recurrence.

When dealing with an incident we will ensure that:-

1. Our incident handling process complies with all relevant legislation
2. All incidents are recorded and communicated appropriately.
3. The enforcing authority is informed of “notifiable” Incidents and accidents.
4. We have undertaken suitable and sufficient investigation.
5. We have put appropriate measures in place when necessary.

The definition of an incident is wide ranging and will encompass any event or potential event where the health, safety, welfare and security of the playgroup staff, children, parents or visitors are at risk.

Where there is an element of doubt, it is the responsibility of the employee to escalate their concern to their line manager who will make a decision as to whether the event has to be investigated under the playgroup’s incident policy. Individual members of staff should not exercise their own discretion in deciding whether to escalate an incident or not; if there any reasonable concerns at all, the matter should be referred to the line manager.
Examples of the types of events that may be deemed an incident are as follows:

- Unusual or inappropriate behaviour by a member of the public or visitor
- Loitering by members of the public or non-authorised individuals near the playgroup premises.
- Any events that may cause alarm or appear out of the normal
- Sudden change in behaviour by children, staff or parents

Please note that this list is not exhaustive and those events which may appear to be normal and easily explained can mask a more serious problem.

Employees should therefore be vigilant and be cautious about accepting any explanation that does not appear to make sense.

Employees are expected to report and record any incident to the company.

What to do in the event of an Incident

1. Incidents should be reported to the Play leader, Manager and the Committee.
2. The Incident Report should be filled in and appropriate investigations carried out.
3. Incident report should be filed in Incident register and copies should be filed in child/staff folder as appropriate.
4. Where appropriate, advice should be obtained from SPPA.
5. Appropriate preventative measures should be put in place when necessary.
6. Incident/accident should be reported to the enforcing authority when appropriate.

Health and Wellbeing Emergency Closures and Evacuations

Emergency Evacuation and Contingency Plan

In the event of an emergency situation, the playgroup should be evacuated at the nearest appropriate fire escape. The Play Leader should take their register folders that contain up to date contact details and the playgroup mobile phone.

A safe place to gather should be selected by a senior member of staff and register taken

Visitors to the Playgroup should be accounted for.

The appropriate emergency services should be contacted.

If it is not appropriate to return to the playgroup within a short period of time the children will be evacuated to Monymusk Primary School.

The children’s parents will be telephoned to arrange collection.

The Committee should be notified as soon as is practical.
**Emergency Closure**

In the event of any unplanned closure, the committee and play leaders will ensure that all parents are aware of this by telephone and the telephone contact sheet will be used. If any closure is necessary during a session then the play leaders will contact parents/carers to inform them. Where parents/carers are unavailable, the emergency contact will be telephoned.

In the event of evacuation follow the fire procedure for exiting the building. Parents will be contacted by telephone and if not available the emergency contacts will be called.

In cases of adverse weather, the school information telephone line should be used to check if the school is to be closed. When Monymusk School is closed, Playgroup does not operate.

**School Information Telephone Number:** 08700544999

**Monymusk Primary School PIN:** 022280

Information about school closures can also be accessed via the Aberdeenshire Council website: [http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/closures](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/closures)

North Sound Radio broadcast reliable information regarding school closures.

**Health and Wellbeing – Food and Hygiene**

**Food Safety Policy**

All persons responsible for the preparation of snack must read and understand the information contained in The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland ‘the Food Hygiene Handbook’.

**Cleaning**

**The food preparation and storage areas**

The kitchen should always be kept clean and tidy with any spillages being dealt with as soon as possible. The following cleaning procedure should be carried out:

1. Pre-clean: remove excess soil by sweeping, wiping or pre-rinsing.
2. Main clean: loosening of the surface grease and dirt using a detergent.
4. Disinfecting: destroying micro-organisms
5. Final rinse: removal of disinfectant
6. Drying: preferably naturally by evaporation

The cleaning of the kitchen floor areas and emptying of bins is the responsibility of the Hall Cleaner. Where spills have occurred during a playgroup session these should be cleaned immediately.
On the last playgroup session of the week the Kitchen will be cleaned and the fridge should be emptied and cleaned. This should be recorded on the appropriate Kitchen cleaning charts.

**Recording the Temperature of Food Storage Appliances**

**Refrigerator:** The temperature of the fridge should be checked and recorded once a day in the warmest part of the day. The temperature should be between 1 degree Centigrade and 4 degrees Centigrade.

**Freezer:** The temperature of the freezer should be checked and recorded once a day in the warmest part. The temperature should be minus 18 degrees centigrade (-18C). New stock should always be placed below existing stock.

**Recording and Monitoring the Temperature of Food**

1. Food should not be prepared too far in advance. Food must be stored below 5 degrees and above 63 degrees.
2. If food is to be reheated it must be cooked thoroughly to a core temperature of 82 degrees. Reheated food must only be reheated once.
3. Hot food must not be placed in the fridge or freezer. Food must be cooled one and a half hours prior to refrigeration.
4. Hot food must be kept at 63 degrees or above.

**The Use of Frozen Food**

Homemade food, which is frozen, must be dated and have a use by date of one month. The freezer must be completely emptied and defrosted on a monthly basis.

**Food Handlers Fitness to Work**

Any food handler should be absent from work during and for 48 hours after vomiting and diarrhea.

**Food Preparation**

Playgroup will serve the recommended low risk foods – See Aberdeenshire Council Guidelines (notice board in kitchen).

Any person involved in food preparation will have cuts or wounds covered with an appropriate protective dressing.

Food preparation and washing up will be carried out following the procedure outlined on the notice board including:

- Hand washing
- Washing fruit
- Sanitising work surfaces and tables
- Use of chopping boards
- Washing of dishes and air drying
- Storing dishes in a closed box
Note – When numbers are such as to make air drying impractical dishtowels will be used and removed daily for laundering by the rota helper.

**Healthy Eating Policy**

At Monymusk Playgroup and Toddlers a mid morning snack is provided each session and is served at approx 10.30am. The children are all encouraged to enjoy sitting, eating and drinking with each other. Snack time is seen as an opportunity for the children to learn good social skills associated with eating and drinking. The snack menu changes weekly and a copy of the menu is available in the kitchen/notice board for parents to view. Snacks will be as nutritious as possible and fruit will always be offered, giving the children the chance to experience different tastes and textures.

**PROCEDURE**

- Children will be offered suitable foods taking into account special dietary requirements, allergies and specific likes and dislikes;
- Water or milk will be offered as a drink with the snack;
- Second helpings of fruit and or water and milk will be available;
- Parents/carers will be notified if children are not eating well at snack times;
- Parents/carers of children who have special dietary needs will be asked to provide as much information as possible about suitable foods, and in some cases may be asked to provide food themselves;
- Details of children with special dietary needs will be made available in the food preparation area to ensure that all staff and duty parent/carers are aware of specific needs;
- Staff will sit with children while they eat and will provide a good role model for healthy eating;
- Children will be encouraged to develop good eating skills and table manners and will be given plenty of time to eat;
- Physical exercise will be encouraged daily preferably outside, weather permitting. Parents will be responsible to provide sunscreen for their child as necessary. This will ensure that they have an opportunity to be exposed to summer sunlight which helps their bodies to make vitamin D;
- Peanuts and peanut-containing products will be avoided wherever possible.
- A portion of fruit or vegetable will be served with every snack.
- Food will not be used as a reward, and withholding food will not be used as a punishment.
- Advice will be given to parents about suitable food to bring from home when required.
- Food-centred activities will be integrated into the curriculum for education and fun. Children’s cooking/baking sessions will focus on the preparation of ‘healthier’ foods.

**Infection Control Policy**

Playgroup liaises with the public health department on issues regarding infection control. The NHS (Grampian) exclusion policies for infectious diseases have been adopted in order to give continuity throughout the playgroup and in order to give clear guidelines to staff and parents. If advice is needed, phone Grampian Health Board, communicable diseases on **01224 558520**.
It is important to maintain high standards with regard to Infection Control. All members of staff should adhere to appropriate hygiene procedures throughout the session. This includes washing hands at appropriate times, before handling food, and after using the toilet, or after helping children within the toilet.

Grampian NHS Board exclusion policies for infectious diseases are considered part of this policy and can be found in the cupboard.

The most important aspect of behaviour that a child learns at playgroup is how to share e.g. toys, parents/carers whilst they are on playgroup duty, adult and or peer attention etc. This coupled with the natural tendency of the pre-school child to explore things with their mouth means that minor infections will inevitably be shared with family and friends during these playgroup years.

Playgroup therefore has in place procedures to reduce the transfer of minor infections and to prevent the transfer of blood born pathogens such as HIV, HBV and HVC infections.

**Infection Control Procedures**

**Control of the Environment**

**Responsibilities:**
- Everyone has the responsibility to ensure that the environment they are working in is clean and fit for purpose
- Responsibilities for cleaning schedules should be clearly defined
- Play Leaders have the responsibility to ensure risk assessments are carried out where necessary, e.g. to identify the use of appropriate protective equipment, to ensure adherence to safe practices and any incidents that occur are reviewed and subsequent actions taken where appropriate

**General Good Practice Points:**
- Staff cleaning the environment should ensure they are appropriately protected with protective equipment and perform hand hygiene during these times
- Equipment used for cleaning of the environment should itself be clean, fit for purpose and in a good state of repair
- Cleaning equipment should be safely stored, and inaccessible to children
- Cleaning solutions and products should be used safely and manufacturer’s instructions referred to
- Records of cleaning of toys and equipment should be kept

**Hand Hygiene**

**Responsibilities:**
- Everyone has the responsibility to ensure that they undertake adequate hand hygiene and to encourage others to do so. This applies to all disciplines of staff and all children attending the service
• Managers have the responsibility to ensure risk assessments related to hand hygiene processes are carried out and that safe practices are adhered to, including the provision of resources to ensure adequate hand hygiene

**General Good Practice Points:**
• Hand hygiene is carried out before and after the preparation and/or handling of food
• Liquid soap and disposable towels are provided in toilets, kitchen and playrooms, where appropriate
• Staff encourage children to undertake hand hygiene at appropriate times e.g. before snack and mealtimes, after using toilet, after involvement in “messy” activities
• Posters featuring hand hygiene are displayed in relevant, prominent areas.

**Personal Protective Equipment (Gloves and Aprons)**
• Gloves and aprons must be appropriate for use, fit for purpose and well fitting. Therefore the supply and choice of the correct size of glove e.g. small, medium or large, is important
• Expiry dates/lifespan of gloves and aprons should be adhered to, according to manufacturer’ instructions
• Gloves should be donned prior to commencement of any procedure where exposure/contamination might occur, by holding the wrist end of the glove open with one hand to allow the other hand to enter easily. Never wear jewellery under gloves
• Gloves and aprons should be worn when contamination might occur e.g. when changing soiled nappies, undergarments, clothing and bedding and when cleaning blood and other body fluids
• Gloves and aprons should be removed immediately once a procedure or task has been finished
• Gloves and aprons should be changed between each procedure
• Torn, punctured or otherwise damaged gloves or aprons should not be sued and should be removed immediately (safety permitting) if this occurs during a procedure
• Never perform hand washing while wearing gloves and never use products such as alcohol hand products to clean gloves, or wash disposable gloves in any manner
• Care should be taken when removing used gloves to avoid contamination. The wrist end should be handled and the glove pulled down gently over the hand, turning the outer surface inward while doing so i.e. the gloves are then disposed of inside-out
• Place used gloves and aprons into an appropriate receptacle
• Perform hand hygiene immediately after removal/disposal of gloves

**Management of Blood and Other Body Fluid Spillages**
• Spillages should be dealt with immediately
• All necessary equipment to deal with the spillage should first be gathered: gloves, apron and waste receptacle

**Blood Spillage**
• If the spillage is large, first use disposable towels to absorb the fluid. Care must be taken to avoid splashing during this time
• For hard surfaces: apply an approved disinfectant to the spillage, ensuring the spillage is completely covered/towels are completely saturated. For soft furnishings: use a solution of water and general purpose detergent
• Clean towels/disinfectant up from the area, placing disposable towels immediately into a waste receptacle. The waste receptacle should be close to hand for this purpose
• The area should then be further cleaned, if required, using fresh disposable towels and a solution of water and general purpose detergent
• Ensure area is cleared and is safe, with all items that have been used, removed and disposed of
• Personal protective equipment worn should be disposed of safely.

Urine spillage

• Absorb the spillage with disposable towels. These should then be disposed of in appropriate waste receptacle
• The area should then be cleaned using fresh disposable towels and a solution of water and general purpose detergent
• Ensure area is cleared and is safe, with all items that have been used, removed and disposed of
• Personal protective equipment worn should be removed and disposed of into a waste receptacle
• Hand hygiene should be performed

Vomit and faeces

• If the spillage is large, first use disposable towels to absorb the fluid. Care must be taken to avoid splashing during this time
• Absorb the spillage using disposable towels. These should then be disposed of into an appropriate waste receptacle
• The area should then be cleaned using fresh disposable towels and a solution of water and general purpose detergent, as organic matter will inactivate the recommended disinfectants
• Then disinfect if deemed necessary
• Ensure area is cleared and is safe, with all items that have been used, removed and disposed of
• Personal protective equipment worn should be removed and disposed of into a waste receptacle
• Hand hygiene should be performed

Procedure for dealing with body fluids as a spill

All body fluid spills are to be treated the same regardless of whether there is visible evidence of blood or not.

The play leader will use disposable gloves and apron, paper towels and polythene bags for disposal.

Cleaning of spills is to be performed immediately and children will be removed from the area concerned.
Paper towels will be used to mop up the spill and placed in the polythene bag.

If the spill is substantial it may be necessary to discard and replace affected flooring such as carpet tiles or rugs. If not, then the area will be washed with an appropriate sterilising fluid as provided, then hot soapy water.

Disposable items will then be discarded by double bagging, tying securely and placing in the outside bin.

**Soiled Clothing**

- Staff should always wear protective coverings and gloves.
- Child should be cleaned efficiently and respectfully always maintaining their dignity.
  Soothing words should be said and the child should be kept warm and when possible out of the sight of others.
- Clothing should never be rinsed (*Rinsing clothing releases viruses into the air*); however, deposits that can be easily placed in the toilet should be flushed away. Once this is achieved, clothing should be double bagged and returned to parent/carer.

**Cleanliness**

The Hall cleaner is employed to clean the hall after functions when the floor is mopped down and the toilets and kitchen cleaned. Carpets and floor are vacuumed at the end of each day by the rota parent. Equipment such as construction sets, farm toys and sand and water toys will be washed by parents/carers taking a box home each term – see the cleaning rota in play leaders box for details.

**Nappy and Clothing Changing Procedure**

The majority of children attending Monymusk Playgroup may already be toilet trained, however on occasion children will have the occasional accident or a child may not yet be toilet trained. This procedure applies to Play leaders and Playgroup children although the equipment may also be utilised by Toddler carers who should follow the procedure where relevant.

- The nappy changing unit should be used in the disabled changing room where there is privacy for the child, an extractor fan, no touch taps and a no plug sink.
- Check the washable surface is clean and clean thoroughly after every use. The unit should also be cleaned as per the end of term cleaning schedule.
- Before starting changing procedure, ensure that the correct equipment is available;
  - Disposable gloves which should be within date
  - Plastic disposable apron which should be within date
  - Cream and wipes as necessary
  - Clean nappy and clothes

- All above items should be kept in a clear plastic box located on bottom shelf of nappy changing unit.
- Place child on mat on their back and DO NOT leave unattended or move out of arms reach
● Remove any soiled clothes and seal in a nappy sack and label.
● Remove nappy and place in a separate sack
● Use only wipes provided by the parent for their child. If none, use Playgroup wipes if agreed with parent and dispose of in sack with nappy. Seal.
● Use only cream provided by parent for their child. There should be no sharing of creams between children.
● Dispose of gloves, aprons and nappy sacks in a sealed nappy sack immediately into an outside bin.
● Clean mat with antibacterial spray and dry.
● Wash hands thoroughly afterwards.
● Potty’s which are primarily used by Toddler carers should only be cleaned in the sink closest to the window. The sink should not be utilised for hand washing. Potties and the trainer seat should be wiped after each use with disinfectant spray and paper towels. These items should also be cleaned as per the end of term cleaning schedule.

*Note – Only adults who are members of the PVG scheme may accompany a child to the toilet.*

**Waste Management Policy**

- Nappies should be bagged in the nappy sacks and placed in the normal Waste Bins which will be emptied by the Local Council on a weekly basis.
- Nappies should be intermingled with normal waste from the Playgroup.
- This is in-line with information received from Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils.

**Sickness and Exclusion**

It is expected that small children will attend playgroup when suffering the symptoms of the common cold. Playgroup will assist the child in learning to blow their nose and avoid spreading infection by coughing over others etc.

With all other infections parents are requested to keep the child away from playgroup until all risk of infection has passed. If parents/carers are in any doubt as to when this should be then advice should be sought from their general practitioner before the child is returned to playgroup.

Please note that with sickness or diarrhoea bugs, this means keeping the child at home for 48 hours after the last symptoms were shown.

Parents are requested to inform playgroup of any infections or infestations your child may suffer, as it may be necessary to temporarily close playgroup to prevent the spread of infection.

For further guidance please refer to the Sickness exclusion information posted on the notice board.
**Health and Wellbeing - Medication**

**Administration of Medication**

It is the policy of Monymusk Playgroup and Toddlers that wherever possible parents and carers should arrange to give routine medications to their child before attending the playgroup session.

Where this is not possible, medications can be administered at playgroup and the medication administration procedure must be adhered to at all times.

The staff will receive training as necessary, in the administration of the medication. This will be done in conjunction with the child's parent/carer and any other relevant professional e.g. health visitor, GP. Attention will also be paid to the group’s premises and staff/child ratio to ensure that the child’s needs are safely met.

**Medication Administration Procedure**

Every situation must be dealt with individually. Groups must contact SPPA Centre on 0141 221 4148 before agreeing to administer any life saving or emergency invasive medication (see below). Groups can request the appropriate forms for completion and return to SPPA. They will be advised in writing of the outcome as soon as possible. SPPA’s insurance provider, RSA, provides cover under the Public Liability section of the Group Insurance Policy where a group is found to be legally liable. The Public Liability section of the insurance cover can be extended to include administration of medication, provided that the group is fully compliant with the National Care Standards, Standard 3 (section 6 and 7) and the following procedures are adhered to. Groups that do not have their insurance via SPPA should contact their own insurer for information on their requirements.

The following procedures must be adhered to:

Oral medication can be medication prescribed by the child’s GP or other health professional as well as proprietary brands which can be purchased over the counter. The instructions for dosage and frequency should be adhered to. The group must have the parent or guardian’s prior written consent and clear instructions as to how to administer such medication. If a group is asked to administer paracetamol or an antibiotic in a one-off situation or for a short period of time, as long as they have their own consent form signed by the parent, the group is not required to complete an SPPA consent form. This completed consent form should be retained by the group. Inhalers for asthma and nebulisers are treated as oral medication for the purposes of this insurance. The group’s own consent form should be completed and signed by the parent and retained by the group. SPPA does not require the form to be submitted. However, groups must ensure that staff training by a health professional such as the child’s GP/District Nurse/ Child Nurse Specialist/Community Paediatric Nurse or approved first aid training agency is undertaken in the use of inhalers, prior to the child being left at the group without their parent/guardian. Refresher training should be accessed on a three year cycle by the group. For life saving or emergency invasive medication for example breathing apparatus, colostomy bags, feeding tubes, epipen or adrenaline injections for anaphylactic shock caused by a reaction to nut products or other allergic reactions, or rectal diazepam for epilepsy, to request an extension to your group’s cover you need to send a copy of a parent/guardian consent form to the SPPA Insurance Team at SPPA Centre for appraisal.
Where rectal diazepam is being administered, an individual care plan consent form should also be requested from SPPA Centre. Parent/guardian consent forms covering the above are available from SPPA Centre. The consent form states the child’s condition, the treatment required and gives written consent for the staff to administer medication from the child’s parents/guardians. The form also confirms that staff have been trained in the administration of such medication by a qualified health professional. Attention must be paid to the group’s premises and the staff/child ratio within the group to ensure that no child’s welfare is overlooked. Staff should preserve the dignity and privacy of the child when administering medication to them.

**Checklist**

Before a child with particular medication needs starts attending the group, you must:

- Find out what your local authority regulations are. These can differ from council to council.
- Contact SPPA Centre for advice and a parent/guardian consent form
- Ensure that all relevant medical information is noted on the parental consent form; send the original to SPPA Centre and keep a copy for the group’s information. Permission from parents should be time limited depending on the condition each medication is to treat e.g. 7 days for a course of antibiotics or 28 days for longer term medication and then reviewed.
- Wait for written confirmation from SPPA Centre on the insurance position before the child is left at the group without a parent/guardian.
- Ensure that when a child has food allergies their food is stored separately in a sealed container clearly labelled with their name, and that all staff and volunteers are aware of food handling and storage procedures.
- Ensure that everyone in the group knows who is responsible for the medication of children with particular needs.
- Care providers should not give the first dose of a new medicine to the child. Parents should have already given at least one dose to ensure the child does not have an adverse reaction to the medication. The information leaflet should accompany the medication and staff should always read this. Check the expiry date and the dispensed date, is this medication intended for the current condition? Check the dosage and when the child should take the medication with the parent and against the label. If staff have concerns over the instructions given by the parents these should be queried with them or checked with NHS 24 www.nhs24.com or 08454 242424.
- Ensure that staff and volunteers are appropriately trained in the administration of such medication by a qualified health professional such as the child’s GP/District Nurse/Child Nurse Specialist/Community Paediatric Nurse or approved first aid training agency. Staff should also be trained to recognise the symptoms that may warrant such medication being given. Refresher training should be accessed on a three year cycle.
- Risk-assess the number of trained personnel who must be present to deal with medicinal needs. Ensure all spoons, syringes, spacers for inhalers etc are labelled and cleaned appropriately. Infection control issues in terms of applying creams, eye drops etc. need to be considered. If children self-medicate, staff should be aware of this and supervise if necessary. Consideration should be given to the safety of other children e.g. children who self-medicate and carry their own medication.

**Secure storage of medicines**
Medicines should be kept in their original containers and must be clearly marked with the child’s name. Ensure the safe storage of all medicines in a locked container that is kept below 25 degrees C with access only by authorised persons. If medication requires storage in a fridge it should be placed in a sealed box. If children can access the fridge, a risk assessment should be done to determine if the fridge requires a lock. There should be daily audit of medication i.e. records of medication brought in from home, medication administered and medication sent home. This should be recorded in the MARS.

**Medication Administration Recording System (MARS)**

A Medication Administration Recording System must be kept showing the child’s name, name and strength of medicine administered, details of when the medication was last administered by the parent, reason for the medication being prescribed, date, dosage and time administered, name and signature of person administering medicine, name and signature of witness, and time of notification to the child’s parent/carer when medicine has been given in an emergency. The Care Inspectorate recommends that a separate page is kept for each child within the MARS to ensure confidentiality and that the parent/carer collecting the child from the group should sign the medication record to ensure that they have been informed of the time when the last dose of medication was given. If written procedures are followed, trained staff and volunteers will be deemed to have acted in good faith. Trained staff and volunteers are required to act as a caring parent would and not as a medically trained practitioner.

**Illness / allergy occurring during Playgroup Session**

In the event of an Illness or mild allergic reaction occurring during a playgroup session, the play leaders will contact the parent/carers or other emergency contact noted on a child’s admission information to advise of the illness or allergic reaction and discuss next steps.

Parents/carers/emergency contact will be asked to return to the playgroup as to collect the child or determine if medication is required as appropriate. In the event of an emergency, the play leader/manager will call for an ambulance.

**Asthma**

Monymusk Playgroup welcomes all children with asthma. We recognise that asthma is an important condition affecting many children. We will ensure that the group environment is favourable to children with asthma. We will encourage and help children with asthma to participate fully in activities safely. We will work in partnership with the parents and other workers to ensure that the needs of the children with asthma are met.

**Seek and Supply Training**

We will seek out training opportunities for our Play workers to ensure that they have a good knowledge and understanding of asthma and how to deal with asthma attacks, therefore having the confidence to care for children with asthma.

**Good Practice**
We will ask the parents of a child with asthma to bring an inhaler or other suitable medication to playgroup with the child in case of emergency. We will ensure that the child has immediate access to their medication with the help of the play leader.

Such medication will be labelled with the child’s full name and will be kept in the designated place. All play leaders will know the designated place ensuring quick, effective action. Inhalers will be taken on group trips and outings. We will mark the register to notify / remind Play leaders of children with asthma. They can in turn bring the attention of the duty parents to this.

**What to do if a child has an asthma attack**

Sit the child down in fresh air, some prefer to lean forward. Calm the child and reassure. Let the child take his/her medicine (puffer or nebuliser) as described in their Asthma Information Record. If symptoms persist, contact parents. If the condition deteriorates rapidly, get the child to hospital without delay.

*In the event of an emergency seek medical help immediately.*

**Keep Records**

Clear, written records will be kept on each child with asthma, detailing the following necessary information:

- What usually triggers the child’s asthma?
- What medication is to be taken?
- When is it to be taken?
- How is it to be taken?
- How to tell when the child’s asthma is getting worse
- What to do if their asthma gets worse.

A record will be kept each time a child takes the medication for asthma (as stated in our policy on medication). We will ensure good communication with parents and the person collecting the child will be informed if the child has had to take medication.

**Effective Communication**

Parents of children with asthma will be given a copy of the group’s policy on asthma. We will ensure that other children in the group understand asthma if/when the need arises, so enabling them to support their friends with asthma, and so that they, themselves will not be frightened.

3. **Health and Safety**

**Health and Safety Policy**

**Smoking**

Playgroup maintains a strict ‘No Smoking’ policy at all times.
Fire
See fire risk assessment and procedure for evacuation.
Fire drills each month – noted in the register.
Fire fighting equipment checked and maintained by hall Inspection Company – record displayed in hall.

Electrical equipment
The Hall Committee require an annual check of hall electrical items for renewal of the public entertainment licence.

Playgroup equipment
Items will be purchased from reputable suppliers and will be checked regularly for signs of wear by the play leader.
Equipment will be cleaned regularly – see equipment maintenance log.

Moving and handling
Setting up of playgroup equipment, where this involves heavy lifting, will be shared by two people. All parents / carers will be expected to lend a hand at packing away. Pregnant mums will not be asked to do duty.
Should there be children at playgroup who require lifting or carrying, playgroup will seek help in providing suitable training for play leaders.

Food handling and storage
Snack food is stored in the refrigerator or covered box as appropriate. Low risk foods are served, as directed by Aberdeenshire Council. The refrigerator is cleaned and re-stocked on Mondays by the designated parent, and the temperature checked on the fridge thermometer daily.

First Aid
The first aid box is kept on the shelf underneath the sink in the playroom. Play leaders will maintain a current first aid qualification, which is renewable every three years.
All accidents and incidents are recorded and a copy given to the parent.

Child safety
Children are not allowed in the kitchen.

Accident Policy
All accidents should be dealt with quickly and sensibly.
The ‘First Aid Box’ is situated in the Playroom in the cupboard under the sink.

What to do in the event of an accident.
• Report accident to the manager.
• If the accident is serious, phone 999 for an ambulance. A member of staff must go with the child and a copy of the child’s application form should be taken. Another member of staff at the playgroup should phone the child’s parents to give them details.
• If the accident does not require an ambulance, but it is felt that the child should be taken to the emergency room, i.e. a cut, bump, etc, then a responsible member of staff should accompany the child as well as an additional member of staff for the purpose of driving. A photocopy of the child’s application form should be taken and Administration should notify the parent/guardian so that arrangements can be made to meet at the accident and emergency reception at Aberdeen’s children hospital.
• If the accident can be dealt within playgroup, take appropriate action.
• Sometimes it may be necessary to telephone a parent giving details of an accident giving the parent the option of seeking medical advice or making a doctor’s appointment. If the parent decides to take the child to the hospital, then a member of staff should offer to go with the parent for support and assistance.
• If a child is found to be unconscious, an ambulance should be called immediately.
• Staff should remain calm at all times supporting the child and parent. Common sense should prevail.
• All accidents should be reported to
• If a child has been injured, a report must be completed in the accident book. This report must be shown to the child’s parent at the end of the session and the parent must sign the report. Confidentiality is of prime consideration and staff should be careful that parents are able to view their own child’s accident record ONLY. Care should be taken that the parent does not see any other information within the accident book that does not pertain to the child in question.
• Once the parent has signed the accident book, two photocopies should be taken. One copy should be given to the parent and the other copy should be placed in the child’s records.
• All accidents involving staff need to be reported to the committee and recorded in the accident book.
• Records of accidents have to be kept for 3 years.

**Maintenance Policy**

At playgroup we are committed to ensuring the safety and well being of our children, staff, parents, carers and visitors at all times. This includes ensuring that our playroom and resources are well maintained at all times.

Daily room checks and periodic outside play area checks are undertaken and any maintenance issues are to be noted and dealt with as detailed below.

All staff are aware of their responsibilities in terms of maintenance and are aware that the first course of action is always to make the area/resource safe immediately. This includes the immediate removal of an unsafe resource and in some cases restricting access to an area/room.

• The Notification of Maintenance issues are the responsibility of all Staff.
• When a member of staff identifies a Maintenance Issue, Section 1 of a Maintenance Notification report should be filled in and given to the manager or committee member.
• The Manager or committee member should investigate the notification, fill in section 2 of the report and take the appropriate action.
Guidance in the Event of a Child Going Missing

Every effort should be made to ensure the safety of the children whilst in the group’s care. This guidance sets out the procedures for dealing with the unlikely event of a child going missing from the group’s premises or whilst on an outing. Risk assessments should be undertaken on a regular basis and staff must be aware of times when extra vigilance is needed. If parents or guardians are required to remain with their children, for example, in a toddler group, it should be emphasised that they are responsible for ensuring the safety of their own child.

In the event of a child feared missing:

- The staff should not leave the premises unattended until the child has been found.
- A designated staff member should search the whole of the premises calling the child’s name, checking all cupboards, unused spaces etc. If the child is not found on the premises the staff member should check the immediate surrounding area.
- A mobile phone should be taken to ensure contact is maintained with the premises.
- A designated person should gather the remaining children and other adults for story time in the book corner. They should ensure that the children are reassured and kept secure.
- If after 5-10 minutes there is no sign of the child, staff must dial 999 and alert the police.
- Staff must call the parent or guardian of the missing child.
- Staff must call all other parents or guardians and ask them to collect their child.
- Staff should re-assure the children until they have been collected by their parents or guardian.
- Staff must cooperate fully with the police.
- A record of any incident must be made in the incident book and where the police have been contacted the manager should also inform a SCSWIS Officer.

There should be designated persons who will undertake a search and who will remain and reassure the children.

Once the incident has been resolved, the staff team must review all relevant policies and procedures and implement any changes where necessary. This should also include a review of the security of the premises and effectiveness of risk assessments, to ensure that adequate measures are being taken to minimise risk and safeguard the children. Where changes are required these should be made as soon as possible.

Outings

Before any outing, staff must carry out a written risk assessment to identify risks and to put in place measures that will safeguard all the children on the outing. During playgroup outings, generally, parents or guardians will accompany their own children. As a general rule there should be a minimum child to adult ratio of 2:1 for all outings.

If a staff member or parent or guardian fears that a child is missing they must immediately inform the person in charge of the outing who should then:

- Gather the rest of the group together and check register.
- Designate two people to go to look for the missing child, if the parent or guardian of the missing child is present they should be one of the two.
- If after an appropriate time searching the child has not been found (5-10 minutes) they should contact the Ranger, manager of the facility or police, as appropriate to the situation.
Ask staff to gather parents, guardians and children and facilitate their return home.
Ask staff to remain with the parent or guardian of the missing child and not leave until the missing child is found.
Staff must cooperate fully with police.
A record of the incident must be made in the incident book and where the police have been contacted the manager should also inform the SCSWIS Officer
Once the incident is resolved, the staff team must review all relevant policies and procedures and implement any changes where necessary. This will also include a review of the security of the premises and effectiveness of risk assessments, to ensure that adequate measures are being taken to minimise risk and to safeguard the children. Where changes are required these should be made as soon as possible.

4. Fire Policy and Procedures

Fire Policy

• A fire drill will be carried out every month at various times/days.
• The fire warden will test the fire alarm weekly from a different call point. Chubb will test the fire alarm biannually.
• The fire warden will check emergency lighting monthly. Chubb will check the emergency lighting biannually.
• Any problems implementing the fire drill should be promptly reported to Designated Fire Warden or the Manager.
• A staff register will be taken using the sign in sheet and visitors handbook.
• Chubb will check the fire extinguishers annually. The fire warden will be expected to regularly check the fire extinguishers to make sure they are in the appropriate place and appear to be in good working order.
• Any faults should be reported to the Fire warden, the manager or the administrator who will inform Chubb Fire.
• The Fire Warden will be responsible for keeping appropriate logs and records.

In the event of a fire, Responsibilities and duties of Fire Warden are as follows:
  1. Roll call of children, staff and visitors.
  2. Liaising with emergency services giving location of fire and any unaccounted for persons.

Fire Procedure

When the fire alarm sounds, children gather with the adult present at the nearest fire exit

The responsible adult will check that all children are accounted for, and then proceed outside in an orderly manner. The play leader will bring the register outdoors.

The group will congregate on the grass by the green barrier. When it is safe to do so, the emergency services will be contacted by phone. No one is to re-enter the hall until the emergency services declare that it is safe to do so.
Roles and Responsibilities of the Fire Warden

- Ensure that all logs are accurate and up to date
- Check that the contractor carries out the necessary checks
- Ensure that regular fire drills are carried out and on occasions block certain fire exits.

In the event of an emergency situation

- The fire warden should always wear the Hi-Vis jacket so they can be easily located by staff and emergency personnel.
- Ensure that the building has been evacuated
- Ensure roll call has been completed for:
  - Children – From registers
  - Staff – From signing in sheet
  - Visitors – From visitors book
- Liaise with emergency services about possible location of fire and about any unaccounted for people.

5. Staff and Recruitment

Recruitment Policy
At Monymusk Playgroup we promote and uphold Safe Recruitment practices. Our goal is to employ individuals who are committed to helping us deliver a high standard of care and education to the children at Monymusk Playgroup.

- Staff will be carefully selected to individual posts within the playgroup based on their qualifications, previous experience and personal skills.
- Staff will be carefully selected to ensure that they bring with them the qualities that will enable them to work happily within our ethos.
- When employing qualified staff we look for appropriate qualifications and experiences. We focus on what the individual can bring to us as well as what we can offer them. We have an emphasis on communication and team skills, along with their knowledge already gained about the importance of putting ‘the child at the centre’.
- When employing unqualified staff the main emphasis is on enthusiasm and commitment to learning and training.
- As part of the recruitment screening process, new staff may be invited to the playgroup as part of a skills match. The prospective employee will have the opportunity to work alongside staff already in post. These prospective employees will be subjected to the same guidelines as outlined in the procedure for Volunteers and Student Placements.
- All new staff must prior to taking up their post, complete a series of checks to ensure that they comply with Scottish Statutory Instrument, 2002 No. 113, Social Care.

Requirements for Employment

1. Two References (At least one written. One should be previous employer/Guidance Teacher.)
2. Completed Medical Questionnaire. (stating mental and physical suitability)
3. Doctors letter (stating mental and physical suitability) If required
4. Proof of identity (photographic and address related)
5. Disqualification Declaration
6. Disclosure Scotland – member of the PVG scheme
7. Qualification Check

SSSC Registration where appropriate as per national advice

**Staff Communication Policy**
Sharing information is important within any establishment; however, within a playgroup setting that is caring for children with many different needs it is vital. The lack of effective communication can lead to not only a small misunderstanding or inconvenience, but can ultimately lead to a serious accident or illness. The well being of every individual within the playgroup setting whether that is an adult or a child is paramount to us all and is our moral responsibility. For this reason we ask that you carefully read the following:

- It is the responsibility of every member of staff upon entering the playgroup to make themselves aware of any information that is important to the well being of the children or the staff i.e. allergies, appropriate medication, illness, etc.
- It is the responsibility of every member of staff to pass on important information to staff or parents within the playgroup, particularly at the beginning or end of a session.
- It is important that incidents, accidents and complaints are passed on to the appropriate supervisors, managers, committee member, etc.
- Allergies should be taken very seriously and at no time should a child be placed in a situation whereby they eat something they shouldn’t or touch something that they are allergic too.
- Medication procedures should be taken very seriously and only given in accordance with the medication guidelines.
- When the decision has been made that a child or adult should be taken to the emergency room, make sure that the individual that is travelling with the injured party has a copy of their information i.e. application form or staff information sheet. The play leader manager should contact the closest of kin.
- All serious accidents and incidents should be passed on to the manger and the committee, as well as any situations that involve biting or serious challenging behaviour.
- If in doubt, ALWAYS seek advice from the manager, committee or SPPA as appropriate.

**Confidentiality**
During the course of their work, staff and committee members will have access to information which is confidential. This includes:

- Children’s details
- Parent/carer details
- Group/staff details

It is essential that information is kept within these boundaries. It is therefore expected that staff:

- Do not discuss children/parents/carers outside the group
- Do not discuss children with other children’s parents/carers
All documents headed “confidential” will be kept in the locked cupboard with the play leader’s box.

Monymusk Playgroup registration forms are not marked “confidential” and the information therein is copied onto the register. Register information is available to play leaders, inspectors from social services and education departments (when required), office bearers on the committee and to adults present in an emergency situation. It is not available to other parents/carers, or others outside the group. The register will also be kept in the locked cupboard.

Medical conditions or allergies which require special treatment will be noted in the register with parental permission.

Staff folders will be maintained and stored at home by the committee, but contact details will be available to all parents.

**Safe Recruitment**

Monymusk Playgroup aims to ensure that children are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with staff and volunteers in this organization. In order to achieve this we will ensure our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised.

**Selection**

- All applicants to our organization will complete an application form.
- Shortlisted applicants will be asked to attend interview.
- Shortlisted applicant will be asked to provide references and these will always be taken up prior to confirmation of an appointment.

**Screening**

- Where relevant to the post, the successful applicant will be asked to agree to an appropriate disclosure. Disclosures will be requested prior to the applicant taking up post.

**Training**

- The successful applicant will receive induction training, which will give an overview of the organization and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure.
- Relevant training and support will be provided on an ongoing basis, and will cover information about their role, and opportunities for practising skills needed for the work.
- Training on specific areas such as health & safety procedures, identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality will be given and a priority to new staff and volunteers, and will be regularly reviewed.

**Supervision**

- Regular feedback and support will be provided to all staff and volunteers by the Playgroup committee.
• Every member of staff and volunteer will attend an annual review, where their performance, skills, motivation and expectations will be discussed. Annual reviews will be minuted and copies made available to the member of staff / volunteer.

• Monymusk Playgroup will ensure that all staff and volunteers involved in recruitment, training and supervision are aware of this policy and have received appropriate training and support to ensure its full implementation.

Staff Development

The group recognises that its success depends to a significant extent upon the contribution made by its employees. It acknowledges that the training and development of staff assists the group in achieving high standards and quality in all aspects of provision. It appreciates that staff who are offered training and development opportunities are likely to express a high commitment to the group and enjoy increased job satisfaction as well as gaining enhanced prospects for career progression.

The group values the contribution made by the staff and will, within the limits of the constraints and resources available, provide training and development opportunities for all staff.

Group Aims and Objectives

The employer recognises the importance of staff being involved in setting the group’s aims and objectives and will:

• Seek, and take into account, staff views on setting appropriate standards of performance for the group
• Ensure staff are involved in identifying group priorities and setting objectives and targets
• Ensure staff are made aware of the constraints on the group and the resources available to it

Management Practice

Staff are more effective if they are aware of the group's aims and objectives and the general framework in which they are required to work on a daily or regular basis.

The employer will ensure that:

• Where applicable all staff have and maintain professional registration with the Scottish Social Services Council or other approved professional register, for example, the General Teaching Council, the General Medical Council
• All staff have read, understood and adhere to the Code of Practice for Social Service Workers
• All staff undergo a structured induction
• All staff receive regular supervision
• All staff have annual appraisal
• Appraisal and supervision identify individual training and development needs
• Ongoing professional development is promoted, encouraged and supported
Safety and Welfare of Children

The employer recognises that the safety and well being of children attending the group is paramount and to this end will ensure all staff doing regulated work with children will be members of the PVG Scheme and that they:
• understand and know their responsibilities in respect of keeping children safe and free from harm
• ensure that all staff receive and refresh child protection training on an annual basis to enable them to carry out their responsibilities.

Professional Registration

The employer will comply with the requirement under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 for early education and child care workers to hold or be working towards achieving a qualification that is recognised and meets the criteria of the Scottish Social Services Council for professional registration.

The employer will:

• Ensure that their early education and child care workers hold registration with the Scottish Social Services Council or other approved registering authority
• Enable non qualified staff to work towards achieving a nationally recognised qualification that is relevant and appropriate to the role they undertake in the setting
• Support qualified staff to meet the requirements for post registration training and learning
• Provide opportunities for staff to deepen their knowledge and understanding of early education and childcare work through information
• Seek funding support to enable staff to access qualifications

Training Plans

Staff training and development needs are addressed through individual training and development plans, which support the achievement of group aims and enhance the professional competence and status of the employee.

To implement individual training and development plans the employer will:

• Use supervision and annual appraisal to identify individual training and learning needs
• Estimate a realistic cost for staff training and development which takes account of indirect costs such as staff cover, travel expenses, registration and assessment, and childcare, as well as direct costs
• Specify and allocate a proportion of its annual budget to staff training and development which takes account of the constraints and resources available to the group
• Identify and promote opportunities for the employee to gain accreditation towards nationally recognised qualifications
• Take account of the needs and aspirations of individual employees
• Take account of individual learning preferences and circumstances, and accommodate these where appropriate when agreeing individual training and learning plans
• Give employees appropriate support to achieve their plans
• Acknowledge training and learning achievements and keep a record in the individuals personnel file

Evaluation

The employer recognises the importance of reviewing staff training and development to ensure that it is relevant and effective in terms of helping the group achieve its aims, making effective use of resources and assisting staff to develop their potential as early years workers.

The employer will:

• Monitor and evaluate all staff training and development
• Use the results of evaluation to inform future training and development plans for staff
• Keep abreast of trends and developments in training for early years workers and assess the implications for staff
• Consult with staff about the changes to training policy and procedures

Recruitment of Ex Offenders

Monymusk Playgroup undertakes to treat all applicants for positions within the organization fairly and not to discriminate unfairly against the subject of a PVG scheme record on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

We will only request a that they are members of the PVG scheme where it is necessary and relevant to the position sought.

Where a position requires a PVG scheme membership application we will make this clear on the application form, job advert and any other information provided about the post.

At interview we will ensure that open and measured discussions can take place on the subject of offences. Failure to reveal information at interview, that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

At interview or when receiving a disclosure/PVG scheme record which shows a conviction, we will take into consideration:-

• Whether the conviction is relevant to the position being offered
• The seriousness of the offence revealed
• The length of time since the offence took place
• Whether the applicant has a pattern of offending behaviour
• Whether the applicant’s circumstances have changed since offending took place.

We will ensure that all our staff involved in the recruitment process are aware of this policy and have received relevant training and support.
We undertake to make a copy of this policy and the Code of Practice, available to any applicant for a post with Monymusk Playgroup that requires a PVG scheme check.

The Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG Scheme)
The Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 (PoCSA) has been repealed and replaced by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act, 2007 which establishes the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme.

The PVG Scheme ends the use of disclosure checks under Part 5 of the Police Act 1997 (“the 1997 Act”) for regulated work with children and adults at risk. They are replaced by new types of disclosure records which ensure that those who either have regular contact with vulnerable groups through the workplace, or who are otherwise in regulated work, do not have a history of inappropriate behaviour. It excludes people who are known to be unsuitable, on the basis of past behaviour, from working with children and/or protected adults and detects those who become unsuitable while in the workplace.

The PVG Scheme is managed and delivered by Disclosure Scotland which, as an agency of Scottish Government, will take on additional responsibilities. This will include taking decisions, on behalf of Scottish Ministers, about who should be barred from working with vulnerable groups. The voluntary sector can access the Scheme via the Central Registered Body in Scotland (CRBS).

Organisations must not offer regulated work to a barred person and should use the PVG Scheme to prevent this. They should ask individuals to whom they are offering regulated work with children for the first time, to become PVG Scheme members. Organisations can ask existing staff to join the PVG Scheme as part of a continuation of existing practice of rechecking employees or volunteers from time to time.

Secure Handling, Use, Storage and Retention of PVG Information
In accordance with the Scottish Executive Code of Practice, for registered persons and other recipients of PVG Scheme Information, Monymusk Playgroup will ensure the following practice.

- PVG Scheme records will only be requested when necessary and relevant to a particular post and the information provided on a PVG certificate will only be used for recruitment purposes.
- Monymusk Playgroup will ensure that an individual’s consent is given before seeking a PVG scheme record, and will seek their consent before using the information for any purpose other than recruitment.
- PVG information will only be shared with those authorized to see it in the course of their duties.
- Where additional PVG information is provided to Monymusk Playgroup and not to the applicant, Monymusk Playgroup will not disclose this information to the applicant, but will inform them of the fact that additional information has been provided, should this information affect the recruitment decision.
- PVG information will be stored in a locked non-portable container, for a maximum of 6 months. Only those authorized to see this information in the course of their duties will have access to this container.
PVG information will be destroyed by shredding.

No image or photocopy of the PVG information will be made, however the following details will be retained:

- Date of issue of PVG scheme record
- Name of subject
- PVG type
- Position for which PVG scheme record was requested
- Unique reference number of PVG record
- Recruitment decision taken.

Monymusk Playgroup will ensure that all staff with access to PVG information are aware of this policy and have received relevant training and support.

Monymusk Playgroup undertake to make a copy of this policy and the Code of Practice available to any applicant for a post with Monymusk Playgroup that requires a PVG scheme record.

6. Whistle Blowing

Purpose
Making public the wrongdoings of colleagues
Protection by law for people who pinpoint wrongdoings

Policy
Monymusk playgroup will not accept or condone any behaviour by staff, volunteers or other adults associated with the group that is contrary to the group’s aims and objectives, and policies and procedures.

We will actively encourage and support the reporting of such behaviour.

We will do this by:

- Promoting an environment of mutual respect, trust and open communication free from bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Treat everyone equally and fairly with dignity and respect and by valuing individual differences.
- Ensuring the quality of work from each staff member / volunteer is effectively monitored as well as the group as a whole.
- Ensuring that procedures are in place for reporting unacceptable behaviour / practices
- Actively support staff that blow the whistle both during the investigation and after, and in line with relevant legislation.

Concerns can take many different forms:

- Breaches of the conditions of regulation of the resource: these would include the quality of education and care of the children, health and safety issues, and issues regarding the regulation of staff (e.g. requirements of Disclosure Scotland and the safe conduct of all staff).
• The improper use of funds.
• The concealment of malpractice and/or abuse.

How to take things further

Monymusk playgroup will raise concerns as follows;
• Staff will make known their views and concerns as part of the day to day contact with the Chairperson (or other committee member)
• The member of staff will arrange a specific meeting to identify and discuss their concerns. In almost all cases the concern will be resolved satisfactorily by this stage.
• Contact an external agency. Which agency to contact will depend on the nature of the concern:
• General concerns about the quality of care and/or education, and health & safety issues, should be referred to the Pre-school Development Worker. If the issue cannot be resolved at this stage, referral can be made to SCSWIS.
• Concerns about the immediate safety of a child should be addressed to the Social Work Office
• Concerns over serious financial irregularities should be addressed to the Education Officer (Early Years) or their representative.

When contacting an outside agency it is helpful if:
• Concerns are expressed in writing although a telephone call can be made.
• Any concern expressed in writing gives the writer’s name and position within the group.
• Letters and telephone calls are not made anonymously as it is often far more difficult to resolve these and put right what the whistle blower feels is wrong. But an anonymous phone call is far better than no contact at all if there is something seriously wrong and children are at risk.

Contact Points

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCSWIS</th>
<th>Aberdeenshire Council Social Work Department</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Johnston House</td>
<td>Children and Families Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose Street</td>
<td>93 High Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aberdeen AB10 1UD</td>
<td>Inverurie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01224 793870</td>
<td>Aberdeen AB51 3AB</td>
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<tr>
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<td>01467 625555</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Officer (Early Years)</th>
<th>Preschool Development Worker</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woodhill House Annexe</td>
<td>Aberdeenshire Council Pre-School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westburn Road</td>
<td>Development Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aberdeen AB16 5GJ</td>
<td>Hut 10 Inverurie Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01224 664400</td>
<td>Jackson Street</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inverurie AB51 3PX</td>
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<td>07887 833177</td>
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7. Parent / Carer Duty

Please refer to the duty rota for dates of sessions that you will be helping out at. It is your responsibility to find a replacement for any duty that you are unable to do (emergencies excepted). If you are unable to do a duty and have not been able to arrange a swap, please let the play leaders know as soon as possible. If you do swap, please up-date the paper version in the playroom.

Where possible, we would like to have all people taking part in Playgroup duty to be cleared through Disclosure Scotland, please see Chairperson for the appropriate form. Only Disclosed parents / carers can assist with taking children to the toilet (however, you may take your own child to the toilet). If you are not a member of the PVG scheme then you are not permitted to be left alone, unsupervised at any time with the children.

Cleaning materials can be found in the plastic box above the sink in the playroom. When preparing snack remember to clean all surfaces and wash hands before you start.

Most importantly, remember to join in and have fun with the children.

Parent/Carer Duty Guidelines

Monymusk playgroup relies on parents/carers to provide additional support, for the safe operation of the group to meet minimum supervision levels.

The requirement for additional support is assessed by the Playgroup leader and dependant on the number of children and/or activity being undertaken, may require either a designated “mini duty” or “full duty” assistant. Details of the requirements of each of these are found below.

A duty secretary will be appointed by the playgroup committee who will schedule all duties.

Parents of children scheduled to attend on a given day are expected to undertake an equitable number of duties. No adjustment will be made for children who attend additional sessions during a term, though such use will be reviewed at the end of each term to ensure fairness is maintained.

A schedule of duties will be prepared at the start of each term. Where a parent is aware of restrictions of their availability, this should be advised to the duty secretary at the end of the preceding term. Should a parent/carer subsequently be unable to fulfil a duty, it is their responsibility to arrange a swap with another parent or provide an alternative adult helper.

All changes to the schedule must be advised to the playgroup leader as soon as they are confirmed, so she is aware of who is expected.

It is recognised that parents undertaking a duty may need to bring another child with them to playgroup. Parents should advise the playgroup leader in advance if they intend to bring
another child as they may need to be included within child numbers for adult ratio numbers. Parent/carers remain solely responsible for any non-playgroup child during the session.

Parent/carers may also be required to take on additional duties e.g. to cover staff absences and again, every attempt will be made to distribute these extra duties fairly.

**Full Duty**

Be ready to go outside with the children in all weathers.
- Arrive at 9:15 and ask how to help set out the room for the session. This may involve filling up the water tray, mixing paints, setting up the computer and any other tasks required by the play leaders. Please allow more time for mixing up paints on a Monday morning.
- Turn on the water heater in the kitchen.
- Check toilets; just check that everything is OK and sign the check list on the wall. (Heather cleans the hall and toilets every evening so you don’t need to clean them anymore) However, if anything needs to be done the cleaning gear is in the third drawer in the kitchen.
- Record the fridge temperature on the sheet on the front of the fridge.
- Check the play park area before going outside and sign the checklist on fire exit door.
- Prepare snack and have it ready to be served from 10.00 to 10.30
- Play leaders will guide you as to what tasks you will do but these will usually be activities with the children.
- Help and encourage the children to tidy up the room when advised. Usually 11:30.
- Washing dishes should be done at the end of the session when children have story time and play leaders want to have the room quiet. Take your own tea towel. If you use a play group one take it home and return it washed.
- Brush the playroom floor ensuring any spillages have been appropriately cleared up.
- On a Friday, or the last day of the play group week, the fridge must be cleaned and this should be recorded on the fridge cleaning sheet. All food items should be checked and if necessary disposed of.

When you are on duty during the gym session at the school, please arrive promptly at 9.15 to ensure all the equipment is set out in time. Stay at the school hall and assist throughout the session and then return to the hall with play group to organise snack and help set out activities for the remainder of the session.

When necessary the paint aprons and water proof clothes require to be washed. This job will be shared between all the parents.

**Mini Duty**

Arrive at 9:15

- Switch on water heater.
- Clean the toilets and sink area with antibacterial cleaner.
- Assist with the preparation of snack.
- Check there is sufficient milk in the fridge and if not replace accordingly.
- Set out snack plates and cups on trolley.
• Record fridge temperature and note on the sheet on the front of the fridge.
• Tidy up snack and wash the dishes. Dishes should be washed with a disposable blue cloth which should be discarded after use.
• Dry dishes with the tea towel and place back in the plastic box provided.
• Take tea towel home and return washed.
• Please aim to be finished by 12.15 as the play leader’s finish at this time.
• On a Friday or the last day of the playgroup week the fridge must be cleaned and this should be recorded on the fridge cleaning sheet. All food items should be checked and if necessary disposed of.
• Once a month the paint aprons require to be washed. Again this job will be shared between all the parents.

8. Complaints

Complaints Procedure
At Monymusk Playgroup we take the raising of complaints and or concerns seriously. We Endeavour to ensure that through our open door policy, parents, carers and members of the public are comfortable dealing with our staff when discussing concerns.

Parents are encouraged to channel complaints or concerns initially to the Manager or Chairperson, who will try to remedy the situation.

All complaints or suggestions will be dealt with seriously, and all staff will endeavour to deal with complaints quickly and appropriately. We would hope that all complaints can be resolved within four weeks. The following steps will be taken:

• The Complaint or Concern will be entered into the Complaint/Concern/ Child Protection Form
• The area of concern will be discussed with the parent by the manager or chairperson.
• The appropriate staff will discuss the area of concern after consultation with the parent.
• A decision will be made as to the appropriate course of action.
• The person making the complaint will be informed of the action to be taken and more discussion will be entered into if necessary.
• The agreed course of action will be implemented.

We hope that we will be able to handle any difficulties you are having at Monymusk Play Group. Should you feel that this has not been the case you may also wish to contact SCSWIS directly with your complaint:

SCSWIS
North Region
Johnstone House
Rose Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1UD.

Telephone Number: 01224 793870
9. Outings

Playgroup Outings
Outings provide children with a range of learning opportunities that are impossible to offer within the confines of a setting. Outings may represent part of a playgroup’s everyday programme or they may be a special event. The former will make use of the facilities available in the local area including the play park, trips to the walled gardens and walks. The latter would represent visits which are not part of the group’s everyday programme such as to the Bennachie centre or The Beach.

Outings Policy
All children will be given opportunities to go on outings.

Prior to an outing being organised, the proposed venue will be visited to ascertain the suitability and safety of the destination. A written risk assessment will be undertaken prior to each outing. Measures will be put in place to minimise any identified risk.

Information will be provided to parents/guardians regarding the outing. This will include date, times, travel arrangements, preferred dress, whether food is required, the activities that children may engage in, number of adults in attendance and cost.

Children should have the chance to learn about the outing beforehand and discuss it afterwards. The visit may fit in with the groups curriculum planning or it could be in response to something initiated by the children.

Parent/guardian/carer helpers will be invited to accompany children on the outing if necessary. They will be provided with clear instructions on their role during the day.

The group will seek written permission from parents/guardians to take children on an outing. Parents/guardians will be issued with a consent form. Written consent will be obtained prior to a child going on an outing. Parents/guardians should speak to a committee or staff member if they have queries or concerns about an outing and/or giving their consent.

Where vehicles are being used, checks will be made to ensure the road worthiness of the vehicle and that adequate insurance cover is held. Child restraints (seatbelts/ car seats) will be checked to ensure that they are sufficient and appropriate to the age and weight of the child. Where the cars of parents/guardians are being used, they will be asked to consult their own insurance company and to make any necessary arrangements for appropriate cover. Written consent will be sought from parents/guardians prior to their child being conveyed in a staff member’s or parent’s/ guardian’s vehicle.

Children on outings will be clearly identified, by a badge with the name of the group and not with their own name. During the outing there will be frequent head counts to ensure that everyone is accounted for. Each group leader will have a list of the children they are responsible for and any relevant medical details.

The risk assessment should include an assessment of the ratios required on each outing.
On an outing the person in charge will carry the following items with them:

- First Aid Kit.
- Accident and incident book.
- A list of all participants.
- Completed consent forms containing relevant medical details and contact numbers.

Copies of the consent forms and a complete list of everyone attending the outing including adult supervisors and destination details will be left at the groups premises.

10. Protecting our Children

Monymusk Play Group Child Protection Policy

Prevention and Detection of Abuse

All children have the right to be protected by adults. The law states that the child’s needs must always be placed first. It is each member of staff’s responsibility to be familiar with the NESPC child Protection Guidelines, Protecting Children and Young People: Framework for Standards, and Safe and Well.

If a member of staff has concerns regarding the safety of a child they should:
1. Discuss their concerns straight away with the Manager and / or Chair Person.
2. Determine with the Manager / Chair person whether this information needs to be shared, and if so with whom.
3. Ensure all this information is accurately recorded, with reasons for any decision reached. Notes should be brief and factual i.e. injury, behaviour, comments made by the child, etc. All records should be dated and are confidential. Records should only be shared on a need to know basis. Records should be kept in the child’s file. Child Protection form should be used to record this information.
4. If you cannot contact the Manager in the first instance, and there are immediate concerns for the child’s safety, contact chair person or any of the committee member, the social work or police yourself.
5. Parents are made aware of this procedure, as it is outlined on their child’s application form and included as part of the playgroup booklet.

Useful Contacts for Child Protection:

1) Aberdeen City Child Protection Unit—Telephone 01224 306879
2) Aberdeen City Council Social Work Department—Telephone 01224 765220
3) Aberdeenshire Council Social Work Department Out of Hours Service—Telephone 0845 840 0070
4) Aberdeen City Council Social Work Department Out of Hours Service—Telephone 01224 693936
5) Grampian Police—Telephone 0845 600 5700
6) Out of Hours urgent referrals: Royal Aberdeen Children’s Hospital—Telephone 0845 456 6000
11. Curriculum

Curriculum Policy

The playgroup recognises the importance of quality pre-school care and education for young children. It is committed to providing a stimulating and challenging environment which will develop and broaden children’s learning experiences, leaving them confident, eager, highly motivated and disposed to learn more.

As a member of SPPA, the playgroup believes in a developmentally appropriate curriculum which takes into account the importance of the whole child and the stage of development he or she has reached. It recognises that people learn in a variety of different ways and that for very young children the following opportunities make powerful contributions to a child’s learning:

- To have a first hand experience of a range of different activities and learning situations
- To play
- To talk, interact and socialise with other people

The importance of the child

The playgroup aims to provide a curriculum which has regard for the best interests of the child. It will do this by:

- Identifying and assessing the individual needs of the children
- Building on children’s previous experience
- Keeping profiles on individual children to monitor progress and inform planning
- Recognising the interdependence of care and education by paying due regard to the welfare, safety and well-being of the child
- Adopting a flexible approach to planning the curriculum to incorporate ideas, interests and concerns indicated by the children and/or the parents or carers
- Encouraging all children to participate in the full range of activities and experiences offered
- Working with parents and carers
- Fostering equal opportunities between adults and children involved in the setting

The curriculum

The curriculum refers to the activities and experiences, planned and unplanned, offered to the children from which they can learn, either formally or informally. The curriculum aims to support and guide children’s learning and development in key aspects of learning.

The playgroup will use a Curriculum for Excellence, to guide its approach to providing a range of learning activities and experiences, which will motivate children and will build upon their previous experiences.

The curriculum for Excellence aims to enable all young people to become:
• Successful learners
• Confident individuals
• Responsible citizens
• Effective contributors

The playgroup will also pay due regard to all national curriculum developments such as “Birth to Three: Supporting our Youngest Children which embraces Relationships, Responsive Care and Respect as ‘the three essential features through which effective provision for young children’ can be developed.

Planning and Record Keeping

Planning, observation, record keeping and assessment will be used to ensure the children’s best interests are being served. Planning will help staff provide breadth and balance across the curriculum as well as setting out clear goals for children’s learning and development. It will be flexible enough to respond to starting points indicated by the children themselves, or their parents and carers.

Through observing, talking to and listening to children, staff and helpers will monitor and record individual children’s progress. The information gained will be used to ensure that children’s needs are being met and that they are being offered activities and experiences which are relevant and meaningful to them.

Individual profiles/records of the child’s development will be kept. Children and their parents or carers will be encouraged to contribute to its content along with the staff. The information contained in the file will be shared with parents or carers informally during day to day activities, and formally at individual parent or carer meetings with a member of staff. These records are the property of the child and will be given to the child when they leave. Information will not be disclosed to any other person without the consent of the parents or carers.

Evaluating the Curriculum

The playgroup’s primary aim is to offer high quality childcare and education and it recognises the importance of reviewing and evaluating its practice against this aim.

The playgroup will comply with the inspection process required under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 and the National Care Standards for Early Education and Childcare up to the Age of 16 as implemented by SCSWIS. If the playgroup is a partner provider, it will comply also with the inspection requirements of Her Majesty’s inspectorate of Education (HMIE). The playgroup will endeavour to implement recommendations within a reasonable timescale.

Staff meetings will be used to monitor and assess the relevance of the curriculum. Staff will attend training in curriculum development, in order to keep abreast of developments. Evaluation tools, such as The Child at the Centre 2 will be used to review and evaluate the curriculum offered, and to formulate development plans for maintaining and improving quality across the curriculum.
Children will be supported and encouraged in developing confidence and self-esteem. They will be encouraged to play and work both independently and cooperatively, as the situation requires.

Taking turns, sharing and being aware of the needs of others will develop in different children at different times, but will always be emphasised.

Games, working in pairs and group activities are all opportunities to learn important social skills. Playgroup will strive to provide variety in this all important are of early development.

From the start, each child will be given free access to paint, collage materials, drawing and 3-dimensional materials. Adults will always show respect for the creative process and the end product.

Role-play and imaginative play are a fundamental part of the learning in playgroup. By participating in imaginative play in small groups, children learn to develop in all areas of the 3-5 curriculum.

Playgroup encourages children to express their thoughts and feelings in music, making and movement and uses parental input in this area whenever possible.

In this area, children will be encouraged to talk about and share their thoughts, plans, questions and feelings. They will also be encouraged to listen to others and to respond appropriately. There will be regular play opportunities provided where children may communicate verbally and non-verbally.

The story corner will provide a stimulating variety of books, which will be used in individual and group story/rhyme sessions, for finding out information and for distribution and use around playgroup in different play situations.

A writing table will always be available where children may express themselves freely in drawings. There will be opportunities for their stories to be written by adults in addition to their own written remarks. Children will have regular play opportunities in which they become familiar with their name and simple phonics.

Sorting activities, displays of work and matching games will all reflect the importance of the written word in playgroup.

Playgroup emphasises the importance of physical activity, in an individual or group setting, for the well being of the child. Young children should be supported in their need to be active throughout their day.

Whenever possible, children will be given the opportunity to climb, balance and jump during each session. Regular space will be made for other whole body exercise in a group situation, both indoors and outdoors.

Imagination and creativity is encouraged in games and stories where children act out and develop ideas.
Attention will be paid to the development of fine finger skills, using appropriate pens, pencils and scissors, and adapting other materials in play situations.

Children will be encouraged to explore the world using touch, smell, taste, sight and sound.

Early numeracy skills will be encouraged in the play situation by the provision of suitably structured games and puzzles. Opportunities will arise in the daily routine of sorting, comparisons, pattern making and the appropriate use of mathematical language. Colour and shape will be noted in puzzles and games, as well as in the world around.

Planning, designing, making and testing will be encouraged by junk modelling materials, gluing activities and construction toys.

Outings are important and all parents will be encouraged to take part. Here children will become aware of the adult world and the roles people play in our society. Playgroup will explore outdoors when weather permits, and ask adults to visit and share the interest and work with us.

The playgroup year follows the seasonal cycle and activities will be introduced to involve the children directly in change and growth in the world outside and in their own development.

**12. Anti Bullying and Harassment**

Playgroup is committed to the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status, sexual orientation, race colour, nationality, religious belief, ethnic or national origins, age and disability. We recognise the problems associated with bullying and harassment of both children and adults and are committed to providing an environment in which all individuals can operate effectively, confidently and competently.

Harassment and/or bullying is not acceptable under any circumstances, either to adults or children who use the service, or to members of staff.

The focus of this policy is to promote good relationships and positive behaviours that engender mutual respect and esteem between and among staff, children and parents.

To fulfil our commitment to provide an environment in which all individuals, including children, can operate effectively, confidently and competently, the organisation will:

- Promote a safe, healthy and fair environment in which all adults and children feel secure, valued and respected. Listen to children and adults who are being bullied and reassure them that they are safe and have done the right thing by telling someone.
- Take all reports of bullying and or harassment incidents seriously and investigate promptly. Staff, children and parents will be fully supported if bullying is reported or observed.
- Ensure all members of staff, children and parents have an understanding of what bullying/harassment is and know what the group procedures are when it is reported or observed.
- Ensure all children and parents are made aware of the group's behaviour management policy and the requirement to accept it.
- Help children to communicate more effectively in conflict situations.
Review the settings environment and routine to identify any factors which might allow or foster incidents of bullying or harassment
Encourage individuals to record incidents which they feel are indicative of bullying and/or harassing behaviour
Adhere to the SSSC Code of Practice for Employers to implement policies and procedures to deal with dangerous, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour and practice
Ensure staff know and understand the SSSC Code of Practice for Social Care Service Workers to respect the rights of service users while seeking to ensure that their behaviour does not harm themselves or others.
In circumstances where a staff member is identified as the bully, then the complaint will be made to the manager. If it is the manager who is named, then the owner or chairperson will be contacted to deal with the situation.
If any disciplinary action is taken in a group registered with SCSWIS against a member of staff for incidents relating to bullying or harassment, the organisation will report the outcome to SCSWIS.
It is the responsibility of every member of the group and of those who are visiting the organisation's premises, to take responsibility for their behaviour and modify it if necessary.
The manager will be responsible for embedding anti-bullying awareness in the policies and practices of the group.

This policy will be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure that it is achieving its objectives and is effective.

Definitions of Bullying and Harassment
Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person which causes pain and distress for the victim. Bullying is an unacceptable form of behaviour through which an individual or group of individuals feel threatened, abused or undermined by another individual or group of individuals. Harassment is defined as any conduct which is unwanted by the recipient, or any such conduct based on the grounds of sex, marital status, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, creed or religious belief, ethnic or national origins, age and disability that affects the dignity of any individual, or group of individuals at work. Harassment may be repetitive, or an isolated occurrence against one or more individuals.

Forms of Bullying :
Emotional - Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation
Physical - Pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, pinching, violence, threats
Verbal - Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Racist - Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Sexual - Unwanted physical contact, sexually abusive comments
Homophobic - Because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
Mobile/Internet (Cyberbullying) - Abusive e-mails, telephone calls, text messages.

Forms of harassment
Physical - Contact, assault or gestures, intimidation, aggressive behaviour
Verbal - Unwelcome remarks, suggestions, and propositions, malicious gossip, jokes and banter based on any of the above characteristics
Activities Bullying
Persistent, offensive, abusive, intimidating or insulting behaviour. Abuse of power or unfair sanctions that: make the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable undermine an individual's self confidence may cause an individual to suffer stress.

Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Codes of Practice:
The codes of practice describe the standards of conduct and practice within which both social services employers and workers should operate. The two codes for employers and workers are complementary and mirror the joint responsibilities of employers and workers in ensuring high standards.

The SSSC Codes of Practice Standard 4 stipulates that:
A social service employer, must put into place and implement written policies and procedures to deal with dangerous, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour and practice. A social service worker, must respect the rights of service users while seeking to ensure that their behaviour does not harm themselves or other people.

Keeping a record
It is important that anyone who believes that they have suffered from bullying or harassment should keep notes of the details outlined below for each incident and that they are made as soon after the event as possible.
The notes should cover: Date, Time, Place, Name of person harassing them, What actually happened, How the person actually felt at the time, Name of any witnesses, Action taken and whether reported to management, Any correspondence relating to the incidents and subsequent complaints.

How should employers respond to a complaint of bullying / harassment?
Employees do not normally make serious allegations unless they feel seriously aggrieved. All complaints should be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly and objectively. Following the investigation decisions can then be made as to what action, if any, needs to be taken.

Informal approaches
In some cases it may be possible to rectify matters informally. Sometimes people are not aware that their behaviour is unwelcome and an informal discussion can lead to greater understanding and an agreement that behaviour will cease. It may be that the individual will choose to do this themselves, or they may need support from their line-manager or a colleague. Guidance on acceptable behaviour should be discussed and a written record should be kept of this discussion. In other cases it will be necessary to carry out a more formal process.

Disciplinary procedures
Where an informal resolution is not possible, the employer may decide that the matter is a disciplinary matter which needs to be dealt with formally by following the organisation's disciplinary procedure. In cases that appear to involve serious misconduct, and where there is a reason to separate the parties, a short suspension of the alleged bully/harasser may need to be
considered while the case is being investigated. The ACAS website has information on
disciplinary procedures www.acas.org.uk

What should be considered before imposing disciplinary action?
The action to be taken must be reasonable in light of the facts. In some cases it may be
carried out that discipline is unnecessary or that training or counselling are preferable as the
individual may now be more able to see the need to change their behaviour. Where a penalty is
to be imposed all the circumstances should be considered including the employee's disciplinary
and general record, action taken in previous cases, any explanations and circumstances to be
considered. If any disciplinary action is taken against a member of staff, it must be reported
with the outcome to SCSWIS.

Recognition of bullying
The following list highlights some of the indicators of bullying that a child might display if they
were a victim although it is important to note that although a child could be displaying some of
these signs or behaviours it does not necessarily mean that the child is being bullied. These
signs could indicate that the child has other problems, but bullying should be considered a
possibility.

Indicators of bullying:
Unwillingness to attend group
Withdrawn, isolated behaviour
Refuses to talk about the problem
Easily distressed
Lacking confidence, low self-esteem, anxious
Becomes aggressive, disruptive and unreasonable
Begins to bully other children
Changes in eating and sleeping patterns, stomach upset
Starts stammering
Has unexplained cuts and bruises.

Within pre-school groups the most common forms of bullying are biting, hitting, pushing,
kicking, and ridiculing by adults. Biting is often a cry for attention by a child who is feeling
abandoned, frustrated or afraid. Children whose language is not yet fluent or finding
themselves in a situation where they cannot do things very effectively, may well bite or hit out
as they are full of feelings that threaten to overwhelm them.

Resolving the bullying
It is the responsibility of all staff, management group/owners and parents to do everything
possible to protect children from all forms of bullying. If bullying does occur, children should be
enabled to talk about it and be confident that incidents will be dealt with promptly and
effectively. The following procedures aim to ensure that all children in our care have fun in a
safe caring and respectful environment.

Dealing with the child being bullied
When bullying is reported or a member of staff observes that it is taking place, they will take the
child aside and try to encourage him/her to talk about what has happened. The playworker will
sit with the child and allow the child to recount the story freely. Open and non leading questions
will be asked to try to get as much detail from the child as possible. A record of what the child has said will be kept. The child will be given reassurance that the bullying is not their fault and plans will be put in place to re-enforce the child's confidence and self esteem. The child's parents will be informed that their child is being bullied and given reassurance that actions are being taken to address the situation.

Even if the bullying is not happening in the group, the playworker will still try and help the child to resolve the situation. The playworker will inform the child's parents, and suggest that they inform the relevant authorities.

**Dealing with the bully**

If an allegation of bullying and/or harassment is found to be true, then the playworker will try to establish why the child has been bullying and explain the hurt that it causes their victim. The playworker will explain in words that children can understand that bullying/challenging behaviour will not be tolerated in the setting and what the consequences are if their behaviour continues. Children will not be humiliated as part of the process of managing behavioural situations. The best time to talk to a child about his challenging behaviour is when they are settled and relaxed and not when they are in the middle of a tantrum. The playworker will take the child to one side to talk to them and not tell them off in front of the other children. The playworker will tell the child that when he bites/hits someone that it is not acceptable or likeable behaviour and that the other children and adults find it hurtful and upsetting. They will try to help the child understand the effect their behaviour has had on the other people, including the child being bullied. Clear, consistent and direct messages will be given about what is acceptable behaviour and repeated as often as necessary. The playworker will ask the child accused of bullying to make a genuine apology to their victim. If possible, the playworker will try to reconcile both parties.

**Informing Parents**

When the parents of those involved come to collect the children, the playworker will ask to speak to them privately and explain what has been happening and what has been done to try to resolve the situation. Parents will be reminded of the group's behaviour management policy and asked that they help the group to enforce this. Reassure parents that staff will monitor the situation to ensure that repeated bullying does not take place. In serious cases and when bullying persists, the manager and/or chairperson or owner, will, with the child's parents, try to resolve the situation. This may entail putting sanctions in place, for example, telling the child that he/she will not be allowed to play with a favourite toy or participate in a favourite activity for a period of time after the episode. The child has to understand that these sanctions will be carried out if the need arises. There is no point in making empty threats or he/she will quickly learn that you do not mean what you say. Discussing the situation with the parents to gain their support is crucial to this process. The sanctions could also be re-enforced by the child's parents if the behaviour continues at home. Even if the bullying is not happening in the group, the playworker will still try and help the child to resolve the situation. The playworker will inform the child's parents, and suggest that they inform the relevant authorities. Find out possible causes by working with the family. For example, the arrival of a new sibling or changes to early years staff may result in challenging behaviour being demonstrated. If challenging behaviours persists, consider the necessity to refer the child, in consultation with the parents, to a specialist for example a health visitor, doctor or child psychologist. Exclusion of the child who is persistently using bullying behaviour from the group will only be used as a last resort.
Investigating, dealing with, recording and monitoring incidents:
It is recognised that incidents of bullying occur in all groups. All such incidents will be taken seriously and dealt with in an appropriate manner. Practice will be monitored to ensure an environment is created where incidents of bullying cannot flourish. The effectiveness of monitoring process will be gauged through asking:

- Is there an explicit whole group policy or set of principles?
- Is there joint staff, child and parent involvement in reviewing the policy?
- Is what constitutes bullying made explicit?
- Are the roles and responsibilities of staff and management committee members clear in terms of dealing with recording and monitoring incidents?
- How is this supported through staff induction and training?
- What curriculum activities support this policy? Can they be developed further?
- Do children know what to expect if they are bullied or caught bullying?
- Is there a 'no hitting back' rule, and are parents and children aware of it?
- Does the policy include methods of monitoring and evaluating its effectiveness?
- Is bullying mentioned in the group's handbook?
- Is there a systematic approach to checking and analysing the level of bullying incidents?
- Are parents aware of and satisfied with procedures?

13. Internet Acceptable use Policy

Adult Workers/ Helpers

MONYMUSK PLAYGROUP INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY:
ADULTS WORKING WITHIN EARLY YEARS SETTINGS.

1. Adult users may only access the Internet on establishment equipment after they have read and signed the Acceptable Use Policy Agreement of Monymusk Playgroup.
2. Adults may access the Internet for educational and professional purposes. This includes classroom activities, study and research activities, the exchange of project-related work, ideas, opinions and questions via e-mail, bulletin boards, discussion forums etc.
3. Adults must keep within any access time limits that are set by the Head of Establishment.
4. Adults must follow:
   - All guidelines related to system integrity, security and passwords
   - All guidelines related to the use of appropriate language
   - All guidelines related to accessing inappropriate materials
   - All guidelines related to personal safety
   - All guidelines related to the data and files of other users.
5. Adults must accept that all on-line activity will be subject to monitoring and that all materials accessed, published and mailed may be viewed by the Head of Establishment.
6. Any breach of the code of acceptable use, practice and behaviour could lead to the withdrawal of an individual's ability to access the internet.
7. Any use of the internet for activities which may be in violation of the Data Protection Act or the Computer Misuse Act, may be subject to criminal prosecution.
GUIDELINES INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY:
ADULTS WORKING WITHIN EARLY YEARS SETTINGS.

System integrity, security and passwords
Users must not access or modify the hardware and software setup without permission. Sign on passwords should be used appropriately and adults should ensure that confidential information is not accessed by pupils or other users. They should not modify or distribute the sign-on password of any other user.

Appropriate language
Users must not use rude, vulgar, abusive or racist language in any materials written on, published from, e-mailed from or posted from an establishment computer.

Appropriate materials
Users must not access, view, print, download, publish, post or e-mail abusive, pornographic or racist materials. Users must not publish, post or e-mail the address (URL) of any website, which contains abusive, pornographic or racist materials. Users must not create, publish, post or e-mail any materials, which are for commercial, business (other than for their own setting) or political purposes.

Personal safety
Users must not publish, post or e-mail personal details about themselves, their family or any other user. Users must inform the Head of establishment of any e-mail received, which asks for the personal details, e.g. telephone number, home address etc. of any user. Users must not engage in any on-line financial transactions.

Data and files and Copyright
Users must not use or incorporate any material downloaded from the Internet in their own work without identifying its source and author. Users must not use copyright materials without the permission of the copyright holder.

Children

GUIDELINES - INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY:
CHILDREN WITHIN EARLY YEARS SETTINGS.

1. Only children whose parents have signed an agreement form to give permission for internet access will be allowed to use the internet.

2. Children will be supervised by an adult at all times when accessing the internet.
3. Any websites used with children will have been previously evaluated by an adult for suitability for use with young children.

4. All computers will use the latest screening and filtering techniques to prevent access to all categories of unsuitable, offensive and inflammatory Internet materials.