



**This document details 4 of our most relevant Childcare Policies.**  
**Should you wish to read any of our other policies in particular, please do**  
**contact our Manager**



**Exclusion in relation to Sick Children and Staff**  
**St Michaels Little Scholars illness policy**

Principles

St Michael's Little Scholars is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all its staff/Volunteers/Students on Work placement and children attending the service. To this end the procedure will be adhered to in relation to sick children and staff. Fees will still apply for children registered with our service

**Policy**

- In order to ensure the health and safety of children and staff, children or staff who have any of the following conditions will be excluded from St Michael's Little Scholars until such time as; the condition subsides, it is no longer contagious or a doctor's note stating that the condition is no longer contagious is received.
  
- The following ailments may be grounds for the exclusion of children and staff from the service. Some symptoms may be evident individually or may be related:
  - Any member of staff or any child suffering from acute symptoms of food poisoning/ gastroenteritis
  - Any member of staff or any child who is seriously ill with any contagious/infectious disease.
  - A child or staff member whose temperature is 38 C (100.4F) or over.
  - A severe earache or a deep hacking cough.
  - Difficulty Breathing.
  - An unexplained rash - the extent of the rash and how long the child/adult has had it should be noted.
  - All children and staff who develop symptoms of diarrhea and vomiting should be excluded from the service until at least 48 hours after symptoms have stopped

When a child develops diarrhea while in the service, check with the parent whether any food intolerance have been diagnosed, if not advise the parent to collect the child and take him/her to the GP.

## WHAT TO DO IF A CHILD DEVELOPS DIARRHOEA OR VOMITING IN THE SERVICE

1 Contact the parents / guardians to take the child home

2 Ensure the child's hands are thoroughly washed after every visit to the toilet and before eating

- Parents are requested not to bring in a child during the first two days off an antibiotic treatment, fees will still apply. It is at the Supervisors discretion to contact the childcare service GP if a child is believed to be unfit to attend the service.
- Parents are requested to ensure the appropriate procedures are followed in relation to notifiable infectious diseases.
- If a parent knows or suspects that their child has a contagious disease, they are advised to call the service and let staff know, to take the child to a doctor to corroborate the diagnosis and to receive medication (if required). Parents/Guardians are advised to request a doctor's note that describes the condition and when it is safe for the child to return to the service. The service will notify all parents in writing who have children attending the service of the outbreak of the disease without naming the child.
- If in any doubt about a particular case the supervisor will consult with the local Public Health Nurse(s) or other relevant professional officer.
- All accident/incidents will be recorded in accident/incident book. It will be located in the 2<sup>nd</sup> draw in the filing cabinet
- This policy applies the same exclusion guidelines for children and staff in the service symptoms of food poisoning/gastroenteritis.

If a child has a broken limb outside the service then the parent must inform the service. If it is a surgical case then the payment will have to be reviewed by the committee.

## Healthy Eating St Michaels Little Scholars Health & Safety

### Principles

The UN Convention on the Rights of a Child (1991) states:

"Children have the right to be as healthy as possible, live and play in a safe, healthy, unpolluted environment and benefit from preventive health care and education"

### Policy's Statement of intent

St Michael's Little Scholars is committed to promoting children's health and to encourage healthy eating habits

### Policy

The service will therefore encourage parents/carers to provide snacks which are healthy and nutritious and help to provide children with the energy and nutrients they need.

### Snacks and drinks

The following are guidelines which we would highly recommend that parent/carers follow:

- *Sweets, crisps and fizzy drinks are not permitted at pre-school.*
- *We would recommend that parent/carers follow a healthy eating approach to children's food when they are attending the Early Years service.*
- *Where possible snacks should be sugar free to avoid causing damage to teeth. Fresh fruit is an ideal snack choice.*

A hot snack is available from 12:30pm - 2pm. A Menu is displayed in the main Hall for parents & Early Years Practitioner.

### Rewards and Special Occasions

- Praise and attention are used to help develop children's self esteem and to act as a positive reward for good behavior.
- If other forms of reward are used, they support and do not conflict healthy eating principles. For example, sweets and fizzy drinks are not given as rewards
- If on occasions juices are provided, they are well diluted (one-part juice to eight parts water) and given at lunchtime only, to avoid causing damage to teeth-
- Celebrations of birthdays and other special occasions, E.G. Easter, Christmas we allow treats along with healthy food.

### Activities

- Healthy eating is promoted through a range of activities for the children including play, stories, music, outings cookery etc.
- The service participates in special campaigns and initiatives such as healthy campaigns, healthy snacks awards etc.

## **Child Protection Procedure St Michael Little Scholars Childcare Policy**

### *Principles*

We at St Michael Little Scholars are committed to a practice which protects children from harm and full compliance with Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Our Duty to Care. We recognise the rights of children to be protected from harm, treated with respect, listened to and to have their own views taken into consideration in matters that affect them. Management, staff and volunteers/students in this service recognise that the welfare of children is paramount and our service will endeavour to safeguard children by:

### *Policy*

- Having procedures to recognise respond and report in relation to concerns for children's protection and welfare.
- Having a procedure to respond to accidents;
- Having procedures to respond to complaints;
- To ensure that any staff member dealing with child welfare issues is supported.

### *Objectives*

- To empower children to protect themselves
- To work with parents
- To ensure that all staff members understand these policies and procedures.
- To ensure children have the right to be heard, listened to & taken seriously

### **Introduction**

These procedures apply to all staff members employed by St Michael's Little Scholars Community Childcare. They are also applicable to all those working as CE workers/Students on Work Placement /volunteers & all committee members within the setting.

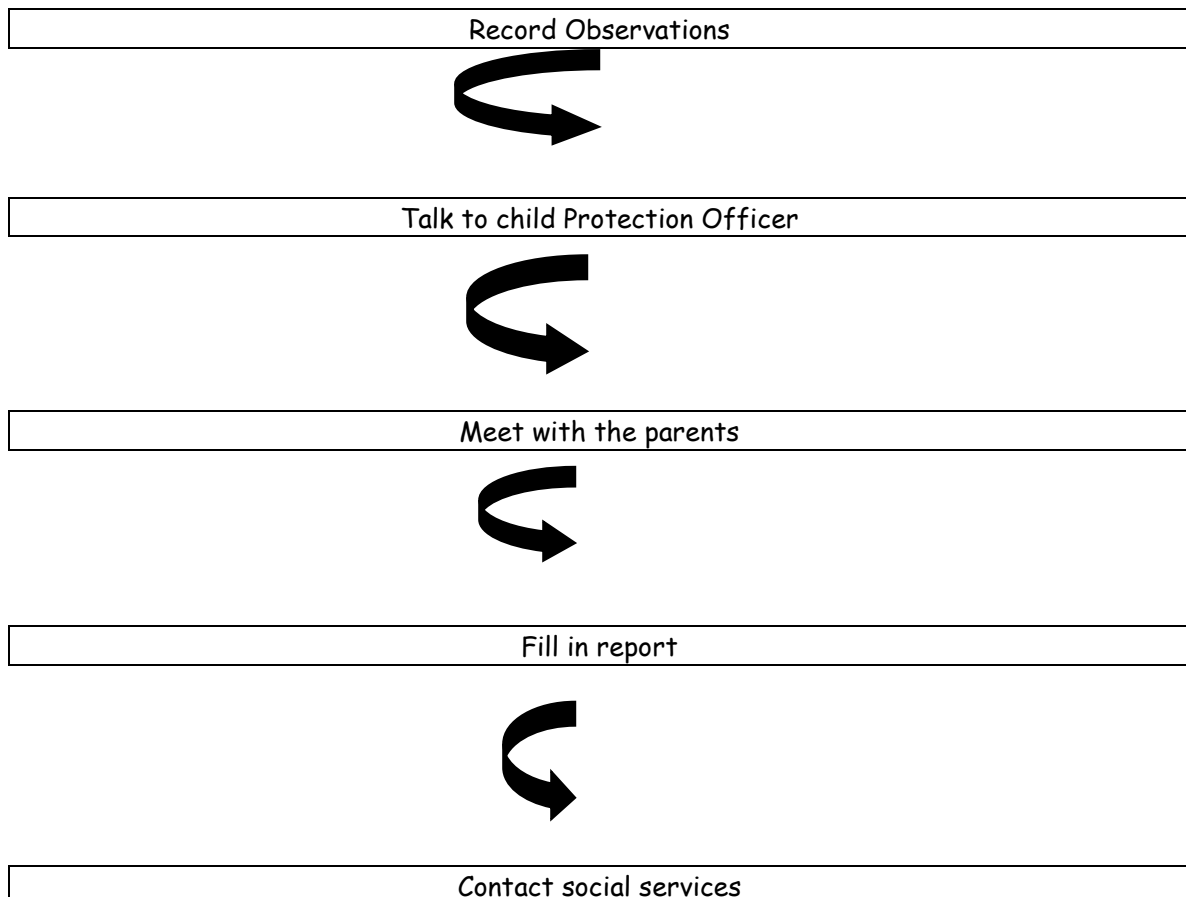
- **Designated child protection officer** - a member of staff will act as a child protection officer. They will be trained by the childcare first officer in the area on how to deal with child abuse. Our child Protection officer is Emma Markey. The duty Staff Liaison Officer is Sandra Dooley.
- **Safeguarding Children** -All staff, CE workers and volunteers are responsible for providing a safe environment for all the children in their care and knowing what to do if they have any concerns about the welfare of the children.
- **Priority** - All child welfare concerns should take priority and should be reported immediately to social services.
- **Children with special needs** - Children with special needs can be more vulnerable to child abuse especially if they have communication difficulties, therefore these children should be observed carefully and any changes in their behaviour noted immediately.
- **If Staff Member feels no action is being taking** - if a Staff member has reported to the designated officer and feels that there has being no progress, it is their responsibility to report it to social services themselves. The child protection officer must be notified of the action taking.
- **Involvement of Parents** - it is important to be open and honest with the parents and in most cases, they should be informed immediately about concerns regarding their children.
- **Children at Risk** - children may be put into care because there are welfare concerns about them. All staff members should work with and help these children

- **Monitoring child at risk** -staff should record anything they notice about the child when entering the services in the mornings (ie. Bruising). They should also notify child protection officer, if children leave the service without giving any explanation and think the circumstances are suspicious.
- **Support for Staff** - strong emotions can arise in staff when dealing with child abuse. The staff member should be able to talk to someone about how they are feeling (i.e. the child protection officer).

### **Reporting Procedures**

- **Designated child protection officer** -all staff should be made aware of the child protection officer (see appendix 1)
- **Deciding to report** - all suspicious no matter how significant they are, should be reported to the child protection officer.
- **Contacting parents** - the child protection should inform the parents of your concerns and explain to them that it is your duty to report this to your social services. Staff member who reported their concern should be at this meeting with the parents.
- **Reporting to social services** - once you think there are grounds for reporting, it should be done as soon as possible and while the child is still in your care.
- **Absence of Designated officer** - staff member should report directly to social services
- **Information Required** - you will be asked detailed information about the child, family and your concerns. Have this information at hand when you make the call

### **Steps in Reporting Child Abuse**



## Important Phone Numbers (appendix 1)

### Child Protection Officers

Name: Emma Markey Phone No: 0429692720 -

Deputy: Name: Sandra Dooley Phone No: 0429692720

### Children's First Officer

Name: Deirdre Horan Martin Phone No: 0879672724

### Duty Social Worker Monaghan

Name: Monaghan Duty Social Worker Phone No: 047 30426/27

Mondays 9:30am -5:15pm

Tues - Fri 9:30am - 5:00pm

An Garda Siochana Phone No :0429661222

Carrickmacross

Definitions & Signs of Abuse

### Neglect

Where the child suffers significant harm of development or impairment of development of being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision & safety, attachment & affection from adults and or medical care.

- Usually not one event
- Happens over a period of time
- Results in the child's development being severely affected

Here are some forms of **Neglect**:

1. **Physical Neglect** - when a child's basic needs for food, clothing & shelter are not met.
2. **Medical Neglect** - when a parent fails to provide healthcare not giving or delaying medication.
3. **Homelessness & Neglect**- where an inability by a parent or carer to provide shelter is the result of not managing their finances appropriately & there is evidence that the money has been spent not on rent but on drugs or alcohol, or the family has been engaged in anti-social behavior leading to eviction.
4. **Supervisory Neglect** - when a parent leaves a child without arranging necessary care, fail to supervise their child or leave them in the care of another child who is not old enough.
5. **Emotional Neglect**- inadequate nurturing or affection, exposure to chronic or extreme domestic violence, permitted drug or alcohol abuse, other permitted maladaptive behavior & isolation
6. **Educational Neglect**- permitted chronic truancy, failure to enroll or other truancy & intention to special education needs.

### Signs & Symptoms of Neglect

- Abandonment or desertion - parents does not pick up child & cannot be contacted
- Children persistently left alone - without adequate care & supervision.
- Malnourishment
- Lack of warmth
- Lack of adequate clothing
- Lack of protection & exposure to danger

- Inattention to basic hygiene
- Persistent failure to attend school
- Non organic failure to thrive i.e. child not gaining weight due to malnutrition but also due to emotional deprivation
- Failure to provide adequate care for child's medical problems

### **Emotional Abuse**

Is normally to be found in the relationship between a parent/carer and a child it occurs when the child's development need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met.

### **Signs & Symptoms of Emotional Abuse**

- Rejection
- Continuous lack of praise & encouragement
- Lack of comfort & Love
- Lack of attachments
- Lack of proper stimulation (e.g fun & Play)
- Lack of continuity of care (e.g frequent moves, particularly unplanned)
- Inappropriate non physical punishment (e.g locking in bedrooms)
- Family conflicts or violence
- Inappropriate expectations of a child's behavior - relative to his or her age or stage of development (e.g expecting 3year old to be able to dress self independently)
- Serious over protection

### **Physical Abuse**

Is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction or lack of interaction which reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust, there will be single or repeated incidents.

### **Signs & Symptoms of Physical Abuse**

- Shaking
- Bruises
- Fractures
- Swollen joints
- Burns/ scalds
- Cuts & abrasions
- Damage to body organs
- Hemorrhages
- Poisonings
- Failure to thrive
- Coma/ unconsciousness
- Death
- Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy which is when a parent/carer pretends that there's child is sick by making up stories about their illness or causes physical signs of illness or secretly gives a child dangerous drugs or poisons.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse is when a child is used by another person for his or her satisfaction or sexual arousal or for that of others.

### **Signs & symptoms**

Cases of child sexual abuse principally come to light through

- 1) Disclosure by the child or his or her siblings or friends

2) The suspicious of an adult

3) Physical symptoms

Cares and other professionals should be alert to the following physical and behavioral signs:

- Bleeding from Vagina/Anus
- Difficulty/pain in passing urine/faeces
- An infection may occur secondary to sexual abuse, which may or may not be definitive sexually transmitted disease. Professional should be informed if a child has a persistent vaginal discharge or has warts/rash in genital area.
- Noticeable and uncharacteristic changes to behavior/mood, child becomes withdrawn fearful or acting out
- Hints about sexual activity
- Age inappropriate understanding of sexual behavior
- Sexually aggressive behavior with others
- Uncharacteristic sexual play with peers/toys
- Unusual reluctance to join in normal activities that involve undressing, e.g games, swimming.

*Particular signs & emotional problems suggestive of child abuse in young children include:*

- ❖ Mood change where the child becomes withdrawn, fearful, acting out
- ❖ Lack of concentration, especially in an educational setting
- ❖ Bed wetting, soiling
- ❖ Pains, tummy aches, headaches with no evident physical cause
- ❖ Skin disorders
- ❖ Reluctance to go to bed, nightmares, changes in sleep patterns.
- ❖ School refusal
- ❖ Separation anxiety
- ❖ Loss of appetite, overeating, hiding food.

#### **GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO A DISCLOSURE BY A CHILD**

- Be as calm & natural as possible
- Remember that you need have being approached because you are trusted & possibly liked. Do not panic.
- Be aware that disclosures can be very difficult for the child.
- Remember the child may initially be testing your reactions and may only fully open up over a period of time.
- Listen to what the child has to say. Give them the time & opportunity to tell as much as they are able & wish to.
- Do not pressure the child. Allow him or her to disclose at their own pace and in their own language.
- Conceal any signs of disgust, anger or disbelief.
- Accept what the child had to say - false disclosures are very rare.
- Keep questioning to a minimum, if you need to ask questions, keep them open ended. Who? Can you tell me a little more about that? Don't ask the child to repeat the story unnecessarily.
- It is important to differentiate between the person who has carried out the abuse and the act of abuse itself. The child quite possibly may love or strongly like the abuser while also disliking what has been done to them. It is important to therefore to avoid expressing any judgment on or anger towards, the alleged perpetrator while talking with the child.
- It may be necessary to reassure the child that your feelings towards him or her have not been affected in a negative way as a result of what they have disclosed.
- Record in writing what the child has told you in "his or her own words"



- Report the information immediately to the DPL or if the DPL is unavailable, to the HSE/ An Garda Síochána
- Confidentiality - Do not promise to keep secrets at the earliest time, reassure the child, that you acknowledge what they said to you because they trust you. Say you will be sharing this information with people who will understand & help.

**The Role of the DLP is to:**

- Provide information and advice on child protection and welfare concerns and issues to the staff of the service
- Be accessible to all staff
- Ensure that they are knowledgeable about child protection and welfare and that they undertake any training considered necessary to keep updated on new developments
- Ensure that the Child Protection and Welfare Policy and procedures of the service are followed
- Be responsible for reporting concerns about the protection and welfare of children to TUSLA - Child & Family Agency or to An Garda Síochána
- Ensure that appropriate information is included in the report to the Child & Family Agency and that the reported is submitted in writing (under confidential cover) using the Standard Report form (see Appendix (i))
- Liaise with the Child & Family Agency, An Garda Síochána and other agencies as appropriate
- Keep relevant people within the organisation informed of relevant issues, whilst maintaining confidentiality
- Ensure that an individual case record is maintained of the action taken by the service, the liaison with other agencies and the outcome
- Advise the organisation of child protection training needs
- Maintain a central log or record of all child protection and welfare concerns in the service
- If the concern is urgent and the child is in immediate danger, the report to the Child & Family Agency will be made by telephone and followed up with the completed Standard Report Form.
- In the event of an emergency and the unavailability of a Duty Social Worker, the DLP will contact An Garda Síochána
- The DLP may use the process of informal consultation with the Duty Social Work Team to discuss the response to a child protection and welfare concern and whether or not it warrants reasonable grounds for concern. Informal consultation is carried out without providing the name of the family or the child. If advised to do so, a formal report will be made.
- When a child protection concern is being reported to the Child & Family Agency, good practice indicates that parents should be informed about the report unless doing so may put the child at further risk. The DLP may seek advice from the Child and Family Agency Social Work Department in relation to this.

The DLP will record information about the concern, informal consultation (if carried out) and details regarding if and when the parents were informed

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

- A child tells you or indicates that she/he is being abused. This is called a disclosure.
- An admission or indication from the alleged abuser
- A concern about a potential risk to children posed by a specific person, even if the children are unidentifiable
- Information from someone who saw the child being abused
- Evidence of an injury or behaviour that is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused in any other way
- Consistent indication over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect
- An injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse, but an innocent explanation is given
- Concern about the behaviour or practice of a colleague
- If there are reasonable grounds for concern (see Appendix (v)) the DLP will complete the Standard Report Form without delay and send it to the Duty Social Work Team in the Child & Family Agency
- Community Services/Services with a Voluntary Management Committee: Where there is a voluntary management committee in place, the chairperson is informed each time a referral or report is made under the Child Protection and Welfare Policy. In accordance with the confidentiality policy, no identifying information is included when informing the chairperson.

**Behavior Policy**  
**St Michaels Little Scholars Childcare Policy**

**Policy statement.**

This service is committed to encouraging children to grow and develop to their full potential in a suitably planned environment, that supports and provides guidance to enable all children to recognize, manage and deal with their own behavior in a socially acceptable way; where children know what is expected of them and where clear limits are set, appropriate to their age and stage of development and taking into account culture, diversity and any additional needs they may have. We believe in promoting positive behavior and encourage respect for others and development of self-control and tolerance.

All staff working in the setting will adopt a pro-active, positive approach in assisting children to regulate their behaviors and provide coping mechanisms to deal with positive and challenging behavior.

**Rationale**

In accordance with Regulation 9, St. Michael's Little Scholars recognize that there is a need to implement a Behavior Management Policy in the setting in order to promote a positive behavior management and provide clear guidelines for staff to take when dealing with challenging behavior. This policy is in place to support, strengthen and maintain a safe environment for all children and staff. This will ensure that responses are fair, respectful and based on the understanding of the needs of the individual child.

**Scope**

This policy informs all Early Years Practitioners including management, Domestic and Ancillary staff, students and voluntary workers including parents, extra-curricular/contracted providers and any other persons who come in contact with children in the setting to comply with this said policy.

**A number of strategies are in place to encourage positive behavior and support challenging behavior.**

- ❑ Children who misbehave will be given one-to-one adult support in helping to identify what was wrong/inappropriate and working towards a better pattern.
- ❑ Observations will be carried out regularly and as behavior prescribes to assist with understanding and planning support mechanisms for the child.
- ❑ Adults in the pre-school will model, praise and endorse desirable behavior such as kindness and sharing.
- ❑ Adults will not shout, or raise their voices in a threatening way.
- ❑ Physical punishment, such as smacking or shaking, will be neither used nor threatened.
- ❑ Children will never be sent out of the room by themselves.
- ❑ Techniques intended to single out or humiliate individual children will not be used.
- ❑ There will be no spitting, biting or hitting of other children by the children themselves tolerated. Parents will be notified immediately if there is a problem.
- ❑ It is policy not to name the other child involved in the incident.

## **Procedures for dealing with Challenging behavior**

Our techniques for dealing with an incident are as follows:

- ❑ Approach Calmly
- ❑ Place yourself on the same physical level as a child
- ❑ Recognize each child's feelings and emotions
- ❑ Ask for an explanation from those involved give all involved the chance to speak
- ❑ Listen attentively
- ❑ Re-state what each child has said
- ❑ Ask the children for ideas on how to solve the problem
- ❑ Any response must be proportionately linked to the behavior and the child's capacity to understand
- ❑ Observe and record the incident using incident form No. 1
- ❑ Based on findings from observations, staff may change the layout of the room & how activities are implemented for the children.
- ❑ All staff are trained and skilled in understanding children's development
- ❑ Staff members act as positive role models by being considerate to each other.
- ❑ In the case of misbehaviour, it will always be made clear to the child/ children in question that, it is the behaviour and not the child, which is unacceptable.
- ❑ The key worker/Manager will work with the child to address the unacceptable behaviour and will try to find a solution to the problem.
- ❑ If the unacceptable behaviour continues, the Manager will address the problems with the parents of the child. They will work in partnership to resolve the problem.
- ❑ If the child is extremely violent or has violent outburst; towards other children and staff parents will be contacted and we will have to decide on a plan of action to resolve the child's behaviour.
- ❑ If there is a repeat of extreme unacceptable behaviour, the parents will be contacted immediately and asked to remove the child permanently but this is only for extreme cases.
- ❑ All the above actions will be kept confidential recorded and filed away in a lockable cabinet.
- ❑ The numbers of staff to children will be in keeping with current Childcare regulations
- ❑ Regular and effective communication between the preschool and the Childs parent or guardian is seen as vital.
- ❑ Where necessary the service may seek additional advice or support from relevant professional services.

## **Other approaches to promote positive behavior**

Good behavior will be rewarded with encouragement and positive attention, whereas unacceptable behavior will gain less attention.

Programmes will be ongoing to support the children to identify their emotions and feelings, parents will always be kept fully informed of their child's progress.

- Service provides a wide range, variety and quantity of play equipment and toys as this may assist with reducing the possibility of fighting and competition for toys
- Service provides daily access to spacious outdoor play areas so that children can partake in physical activity and release tensions.
- The curriculum, daily routine and programme of activities is matched with the child's ability and allow for natural progression
- Positive behavior such as kindness, tolerance, respect and willingness to share will be encouraged through activities, projects, role play of pro-social behaviors and games.
- Opportunities to discuss/ impart knowledge on positives rules and boundaries

*Corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule or confinement of a child or deprivations of food, clothing or any other basic need are **ABSOLUTELY FORBIDDEN**. Any suspicions of abuse must be reported immediately as per Policy No. 002. For definitions of abuse, see Appendix 1. Any breach of this policy will result in immediate dismissal or removal from the service.*

### **The Staff Code of Behavior**

#### **Supervision**

There are a few basic principles to be aware of:  
 Children will not be left unsupervised. Adequate staff ratios will be working.  
 You know where all children are & what they are doing at all times  
 Dangerous behavior by children will not be allowed, for example horseplay etc  
 Make sure the area & Materials are adequate for the session.  
 Appropriate age-related range of toys, equipment & materials are supplied.  
 Individual personal needs of all children will be taking into account.  
 All tasks, games etc will be organized well in advance

Please follow the below staff ratio in accordance to which session you will be carrying out

#### **One to one work**

Staff members may be requested to undertake a one to one with children such as homework, activities.

#### **Touch & Physical Contact**

Touch and physical interaction are essential to the healthy development and well-being of young children. Misunderstanding of Child Protection and Welfare Policy has, at times, left practitioners unsure as to how to provide the care that children require.

Points to Consider:

Young children and babies require touch and physical contact to develop.

Touch and physical contact are important in offering comfort and reassurance to young children.

## Developing a Code of Behaviour

- A Code of Behaviour is an important part of a Child Protection and Welfare Policy as it sets out the standard expected from all employees and explains what is acceptable and what is not when employees are working with children.
- The Code of Behaviour can be used to:
  - Explain to new staff how we work with children and what is acceptable
  - Explain to parents what they and their child can expect from employees in the service
  - Create a shared understanding of best practice
  - Challenge an employee when practice is not at an acceptable standard
  - Challenge parents when behaviour in the service is not acceptable
  - As a Training tool
- The Code of Behaviour relates both to interactions with children and to what is acceptable between adults while children are present; it applies to all adults in the service including parents.
- The Code of Behaviour is developed in consultation with employees, parents and children (if relevant) and will vary depending on the age of children in the service and the scope of the service.
- We recognise the importance of a Code of Behaviour between staff and children as recommended in *Our Duty to Care*. Our Code of Behaviour is kept under regular review. In Accordance with regulation 9 here at St Michael's little scholars recognize that there is a need to implement a behaviour Management policy in the setting in order to promote a positive behaviour management and provide clear guidelines for staff to take when dealing with challenging behaviour. See behaviour policy for more information
- We recognise that children have an equal right to our service provision in line with the *Equal Status Acts* and the *National Disability Strategy*.
- We are committed to -
  - Valuing and respecting all children as individuals
  - Listening to children
  - Involving children in decision making as appropriate
  - Encouraging children to express themselves
  - Working in partnership with parents

- Promoting positive behaviour
- Valuing difference
- Implementing and adhering to all relevant policies to keep children safe
- Information on adult to child ratios in the service should be included in this section.
- The Code of Behaviour is given to all staff and volunteers at induction and it is expected that all staff and volunteers are familiar with the code and that they will raise any questions arising with their line manager. The policies book is on the table at the door for parents to look through at all times.

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