



Early Learning & Childcare Policy

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Policy Owner	Director of External Relations
Lead Officer	Early Learning & Childcare Manager
Review Officer	Early Learning & Childcare Manager
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Reviewer	Date	Review Action/Impact

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1. Overarching Statement

The Early Learning and Childcare Centre aims to create a warm and welcoming environment, which actively responds to the individual needs of children, parents, and staff. We aspire for excellence and work with parents, children and other relevant professionals as an integrated service supporting Inverness College UHI to ensure that all children feel safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected and included in line with Scottish Government initiative Getting It Right for Every Child (2006).

As a care and learning provider and employer, the Early Learning and Childcare Centre is committed to developing a culture of competence with continuous improvement in management and practice. This will be achieved at all levels through promotion of positive attitudes and behaviours, which we instil in staff, parents/carers, children and students. Parents/carers are actively encouraged to be fully engaged in all aspects of the centre – particularly in relation to children’s learning. An expectation that excellent practice is the norm. We are committed to promoting a positive and diverse culture in which all staff and children are valued and supported to fulfil their potential. We promote diversity, equality and inclusion through our activities, materials, ethos and environment, ensuring every child is included and supported.

The Early Learning and Childcare Centre acknowledges its statutory and moral obligations to adopt the highest standards for staff, students, parents/carers, children and visitors:

- All staff work within Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) standards. It is the responsibility of the staff, Manager and the College’s Human Resources (H.R.) department to ensure staff are registered.
- Staff adhere to SSSC Codes of Practice, The Health and Social Care Standards and The Standards of Childhood Practice Revised (2015) to ensure excellent practice is delivered to all service users.
- Staff are committed to continued professional development in order to enhance personal skills and knowledge for the benefit of the children in the centre.
- Staff team have a clear understanding of professional frameworks, which influence everyday practice. These include Curriculum for Excellence 3-18, Pre-Birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland’s Children and Families, Building the Ambition, My World Outdoors, Our Creative Journey and the How Good is Our Early Learning & Childcare self-evaluation tool kit.
- The Early Learning and Childcare Centre as a partner centre of the Highland Council delivers an annual Improvement Plan to ensure continuing development and improvement of the service.

The above points enable our staff team to create an environment, which allows all children to become curious, creative and inquisitive within their own learning. We strive to promote the importance of Outdoor Learning for all age groups, enabling each child to experience the natural environment. We provide the chance for children to access our forest environment on a weekly basis in which they can face challenges, risk take and test their own boundaries whilst developing their resilience. This positive approach to risk also emphasises confidence in Childcare Practitioners who rely on their professional judgement to support, nurture and challenge the children with an understanding of children's individual age and stage abilities. Within the environment, the active use of loose parts is being facilitated for all ages to further enhance children's learning experiences. Loose parts are materials that can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up and taken apart and put back together in a multiple of ways. They are materials with no specific set of directions that can be used alone or combined with other materials.

In support of this, Early Learning and Childcare Centre staff are committed to:

- Adhering to Confidentiality and Equality in line with the College's procedure.
- Conforming to all laws, regulations, and relevant standards as the minimum accepted behaviour.
- Dealing with Complaints and Grievances in accordance with the Inverness College UHI Complaints Procedure.
- The protection and well-being of all children and staff within the Centre.
- Preventing injury and ill health to all persons under the control of the Early Learning & Childcare Centre.
- Maintaining a secure, safe and healthy working environment
- Identifying all hazards and risks associated with its activities
- Providing suitable controls to mitigate risks arising from its activities to as low as reasonably practicable
- Promoting an incident free work place
- Promoting healthy eating and ensuring all dietary requirements are respected

The Director of External Relations sets the overarching strategy for the Early Learning & Childcare Centre and delegate's responsibility to the Early Learning and Childcare Centre Manager to ensure the Centre fulfils its responsibilities.

Director of External Relations.....Date:

Early Learning & Childcare Manager:Date:

2. Legislative Framework/Policies and Early Learning Childcare Procedures

2.1. Legislation

- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) May 2018
- Children & Young People Scotland Act 2014
- Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003
- The Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- Scottish Social Service Council (SSSC)
- Codes of Practice
- The Health and Social Care Standards (Scottish Government)
- The Standards of Childhood Practice Revised (2015) (SSSC)
- The Curriculum for Excellence 3-18 (Education Scotland)
- Pre-birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland's Children and Families (Scottish Government)
- Building the Ambition (Scottish Government)
- My World Outdoors (Care Inspectorate)
- Our Creative Journey (Care Inspectorate)
- How Good is Our Early Learning & Childcare self-evaluation tool kit (Education Scotland)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (Scottish Executive)
- Protecting Children and Young People: Framework for Standards 2004 (Scottish Executive)
- Safe and Well: Handbook for Staff, Schools and Education authorities 2005 (Scottish Government)
- Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC 2006) (Scottish Government)

2.2. Policies & Procedures

- Absence Management Policy/Procedure
- Absence Management Staff Procedure
- Accident/Incident Procedure
- Additional Support Procedure
- Administering Medication Procedure
- Admission and 'Settling In' Procedure
- Behaviour Management Procedure
- Biting Procedure
- Bottle Feeding Procedure
- Child Protection Procedure
- Council Funding Procedure
- Dealing with Bodily Fluids Procedure
- Emergency Closure Procedure

- Equal Opportunities Procedure
- Evacuating Early Learning and Childcare Centre Procedure
- Exclusion for Illness/Communicable Disease Procedure
- First Aid Checks Procedure
- Food Handling and Storage Procedure
- Handling Pets Procedure
- Health and Safety Procedure
- Holiday (Staff) Procedure
- Mini Bus Procedure
- Mobile Phones (Personal) Procedure
- Nappy Changing Procedure
- Outings Procedure
- Overtime and Additional Hours Procedure
- Participation Procedure
- Potty Training Procedure
- Registration Procedure
- Risk Assessment Procedure
- Sleep Procedure
- Social Networking Procedure
- Tooth Brushing Procedure
- Transition Procedure
- Waiting List Procedure

3. Scope

3.1. This policy applies to all staff, parents/carers, children, students and visitors within Inverness College UHI, Early Learning and Childcare Centre.

4. Organisation and Responsibilities

To ensure the effective implementation of the Early Learning and Childcare Centre policy, specific responsibilities are detailed below.

4.1. Director of External Relations

4.1.1. The Director of External Relations will set the strategic direction and will have overall responsibility for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all staff, parents/carers, children, students, visitors or other persons affected by the organisation's activities.

4.1.2. The Director of External Relations will ensure systems and standards are monitored regularly to ensure their effectiveness.

4.2. The Early Learning and Childcare Centre Manager

4.2.1. The Early Learning and Childcare Centre Manager will have a responsibility for the activities and functions carried out within the centre. They will have responsibility for motivating the staff in the centre to fulfil their roles.

4.2.2. In order to meet their responsibilities, the Early Learning and Childcare Centre Manager will:

- Liaise with The Director of Organisational Development to establish the principles of continual improvement.
- Be aware and act upon legislation relevant to the activities of the Early Learning & Childcare Centre.
- Allocate sufficient financial resources to allow procedures to be effectively implemented.
- Demonstrate commitment to achieving and maintaining a high standard.
- Ensure monitoring and review of the implementation of the Centre's policy and procedures.

4.2.3. The Early Learning and Childcare Manager will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that the Early Learning and Childcare policy and procedures are explained to employees and they are made aware of their duties and responsibilities and that staff equally convey this to children under their care.
- The training needs of employees are assessed and addressed to include the requirement for role specific induction training for new employees.
- Ensuring that the activities of the Centre's employees do not expose employees, students, parents/carers and children or others to risk.

4.3. Staff

4.3.1. Staff will abide and promote the Early Learning and Childcare Centres' policy and procedures. They will have a shared understanding of the Centre's vision and Improvement plan.

4.4. Parents

4.4.1. Parents are encouraged to:

- engage in the life and work of the Early Learning & Childcare Centre
- abide by the policy and procedures for the Centre as

communicated by the manager and staff.

4.5. Children

4.5.1. A child shall exercise reasonable care:

- For his or her personal safety and the safety of others, where age appropriate.

5. Communication

5.1. The Policy & Procedures shall be actively communicated throughout the Early Learning and Childcare Centre using a variety of channels; examples of such channels include but are not limited to:

- The Procedure folder.
- Inclusion within the new start induction process.
- Provision to all external interested parties upon written request.
- Notice boards.
- Working Structures

6. Monitoring

6.1. The Early Learning and Childcare policy will be monitored and its implementation evaluated. Appropriate procedures for monitoring and evaluation are the responsibility of the manager. These procedures will be subject to audit by the Quality Unit, HMIE, Highland Council Quality Assurance Team and Care Inspectorate.

7. Audit

7.1. A schedule will be developed and implemented to cover the Policy & Procedures. Scope and criteria for audits will consider (but not be limited to):

- Management system
- The existing policy and/or any existing/new procedures
- Risk assessment and environmental aspects
- Outputs from external audits or previous internal audits

8. Review

8.1. The policy and procedure will be reviewed formally every three years or if legislation requires. It will also be reviewed annually as part of the team's

self-evaluation process to include emerging practice, to ensure currency of content and to provide a framework for the setting and reviewing of procedures.

- 8.2. Revisions will be brought to the attention of staff, parents/carers, children and students through agreed arrangements for consultation and communication.