**Donegal County Childcare Committee**

**Comments and Complaints Policy**

Donegal County Childcare Committee (DCCC) welcomes feedback from those who use our services. Comments and complaints are opportunities for us to improve the quality of our service and learn lessons.

**Comments or Complaints**

A comment or complaint can be made in person, by telephone, letter, and email. The comment /complaint must be made to the Manager or Chairperson of Donegal CCC. A complaint about a particular person which includes the person’s name must be given in writing. It should include dates and locations.

The complaint must be made within 3 months of the date of the event or within 3 months of becoming aware of the event.

A complaint can be made by anyone about any action of Donegal CCC, which is considered to be unfair, unsatisfactory or is thought to have a negative impact.

If a complaint is made anonymously it may not be possible to investigate it properly or to decide if action needs to be taken.

**Confidentiality**

Donegal CCC is committed to keeping private and confidential any information given when making a complaint. This is governed by the Data Protection Acts.

Where complaints information is requested for reports or statistical reasons, all data that would identify the person who complained will be removed.

If confidential personal records or information are needed as part of the investigation of a complaint, the consent of the complainant must be granted in order to do this.

Details of a complaint will be seen only by relevant personnel and only for purposes of investigation.

If a complaint is made on behalf of someone else, Donegal CCC will contact that person to check that the complaint was made with their consent.

**Response**

Upon receiving a complaint it will be responded to promptly and where possible every effort will be made to resolve it locally and quickly. It should be understood that some complaints will require formal and careful consideration.

A verbal complaint will receive a verbal response as soon as possible from the Chairperson. In the case of a written complaint the Chairperson will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days of receiving it.

**Informal Resolution**

The Manager will be informed by the Chairperson of all complaints made to him/her whether written or verbal. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Manager, in consultation with the Chairperson and with the consent of the people involved, may consider if an informal resolution might be appropriate. As part of this procedure the Chairperson may arrange a meeting between the parties concerned or may use mediation.

If this approach is not appropriate or turns out not to be successful, a formal investigation of the complaint will commence.

**Investigation of Complaint**

The Chairperson of the Board of Management will coordinate an investigation within 30 days of receipt. Other Board members, staff, witnesses, advisors, etc may be called upon to assist. If a complaint cannot be investigated within 30 days, the complainant will be so informed and advised of the time required to do so. Any further delays will be explained and a plan of action for the complaint outlined.

**After Investigation**

A report of the investigation will be written and a copy given to the complainant, the relevant staff member and all relevant parties.

This report will include any recommendations needed to resolve the matter. All parties can raise questions or seek clarification of any issues and will be advised of their right to a review of any recommendations made.

**Implementation**

The Manager will put an action plan in place to implement the recommendations made. This will set out who will be responsible for their implementation and the time it will take.

**Review**

Where the individual is not happy with the outcome of a complaint the complainant has a right to a review of the entire complaint and how it was conducted. The review will be carried out by an officer appointed by the Donegal CCC Board of Management.

Nothing in this complaint procedure affects the individual’s statutory rights under Freedom of Information, Data Protection or other relevant legislation.

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_