

TÚSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach

EARLY YEARS INSPECTORATE

Quality and Regulatory Framework

Pre-School Service in a
Drop-In Centre



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This framework should be cited as:

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Pre-School Service in a Drop-In Centre*, Dublin:
Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla.

The definitions for services are taken from the Child and Family Act 2013. Under this Act, an Early Years Service is a service providing a pre-school service, or a school age service. A pre-school service is any pre-school, play group, day nursery, crèche, day-care or other similar service which caters for pre-school children.

The Act defines a pre-school child as a child who is under six years, and who is not yet going to a recognised school. In this Framework, the regulatory terms 'pre-school service' and 'early years service' are used interchangeably throughout.

This Quality and Regulatory Framework applies to all registered Drop-In Early Years Services.

A Pre-School Service in a Drop-In Centre is an Early Years Service offering day care to pre-school children on a casual, 'drop in' basis – that is, the children only attend the service from time to time for not more than 2 hours at a time.

The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 defines the responsibility of a registered provider to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations which promotes the care, safety and wellbeing of early years children attending services.

For ease of reading, the Quality and Regulatory Framework is referred to simply as 'the Framework' or 'the QRF' throughout this document.

This Framework is accompanied by supporting documentation, including:

- » 'Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide', and
- » 'Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements'.

Both of which you can access at: www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-quality-and-regulatory-framework/.

Author's note

This Framework document is Tusla's interpretation of the requirements for compliance with the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016. These requirements are based on best evidence drawn from national and international sources of the peer-reviewed, published and unpublished literature on best practice in inspection and Early Years Services.

The document has been developed to set out in a clear way the requirements for statutory compliance with regulations for registered services, the stakeholders and parents or guardians. It also informs the way in which inspections will be carried out.

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Foreword

The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs published the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 on 4 May and 30 December 2016 respectively. These revised regulations, building on Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013, provided for the inclusion of school-aged services within the definition of Early Years, and also enhanced the enforcement powers of the Inspectorate. These changes have transformed the way Early Years Services in Ireland are regulated.

This important development introduced new regulatory registration requirements, such as approval and inspection before setting up a service. Other new areas introduced were:

- » minimum qualification requirements for staff;
- » supervision and training of staff;
- » policy development and implementation;
- » annual review of service provision;
- » a requirement for existing services to re-register within a 3-year timeframe; and
- » a national register of services.

The revised regulations place a significant emphasis on the governance of services to ensure that children attending Early Years Services are safe, receive appropriate care and have a positive experience where they can develop and learn in a quality service.

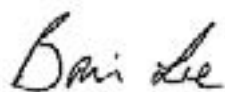
Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of Early Years Services in Ireland. Such radical revision and introduction of the 2016 Regulations means that we must continue to reform. The Early Years Inspectorate developed a programme of initiatives to support the implementation of the regulations, with the focus on actively enhancing benefits for children in early years settings. The changes included:

- » establishing a National Central Registration Office;
- » introducing a national registration system;
- » introducing 'Fit for Purpose' inspections of all new services;
- » implementing new processes and inspection procedures; and
- » centralising all unsolicited information received by Tusla.

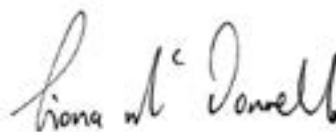
During the years 2014 to 2017, the Inspectorate engaged in an extensive process to create a resource for the Early Years Sector. This resource sets out in a clear way how the Early Years Inspectorate will assess services for compliance with the regulations. The result of that process is this document – The Quality and Regulatory Framework. It aims to provide information and clarification for providers and stakeholders on the requirements for compliance with regulation.

We would like to thank parents, registered providers, representative organisations, members of the Inspectorate, all stakeholders and national and international regulatory authorities who collectively contributed to developing this Framework. The collective contribution has resulted in a document that will serve as a resource to improve the quality and safety of services provided to children which will support better outcomes for children.

We would like to thank Helen Rouine, Quality Improvement Manager, for her extensive work with the Framework development. It gives us great pleasure, therefore, to introduce this Quality and Regulatory Framework to the Early Years Sector.



Brian Lee
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Tusla – Child and Family Agency



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Structure of the Quality and Regulatory Framework (QRF)

The Framework is constructed in four sections. The information boxes here describe what each section contains.

Section 1

This section contains:

Abbreviations and acronyms - a list of the abbreviated terms used throughout the Framework.

Introduction - information on who we are, the role of regulatory inspection, the aim and development of the Framework, and how inspections are conducted.

Overview of Early Years Inspectorate - a representation in pictures and words of the Early Years Inspectorate's relationships with stakeholders.

Inspection in Context of Other Legislation - information on the role of the Inspectorate in respect of other legislation which does not come under the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

Section 2

This section contains:

Information about the regulations grouped under four areas of:

1. **Governance**
2. **Health Welfare and Development of the Child**
3. **Safety**
4. **Premises and Facilities.**

Across these four areas, there are 123 numbered points, many of which are divided into subcategories, which will help you in achieving compliance.

The information explains the following elements of each regulation:

- » The **purpose** of each regulation - a description of the extent and purpose of the regulation.
- » The **core requirements for compliance** for each regulation - what the service must demonstrate to comply with the regulation. If the regulation is long and complex, it is divided into sub-elements to ensure that all requirements are covered.

Section 3

This section contains:

Appendix 1 – 19: Policies, Procedures and Statements – the core elements of regulatory requirements.

The following documents have been developed to assist you with these and are available at: www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-quality-and-regulatory-framework/.

- » Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.
- » Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Appendix 20: Service Record Retention Timeframe – the period of time detailed in the regulations for which each record is kept.

Appendix 21: Inspection in Context of Other Legislation – other legislation where the Inspectorate may identify a concern not within the remit of the 2016 Regulations.

Section 4

This section contains:

Explanatory Notes – notes to explain some words, terms and phrases used within the Framework. These notes are placed in alphabetical order.

Before you begin

Please note that we have tried to make the information in this document clear and easy to read. To do this, we have used several reader-friendly devices to help guide you through the Framework.

Section 1 opens with **a list of abbreviations and acronyms** that are used in the childcare sector in general and the statutory regulations in particular. You might find it useful to refer to this list as you read through the Framework.

Section 2 deals with the **Regulations** and describes the purpose of each regulation and the elements required for compliance. Throughout this section, **examples** are offered to help clarify the compliance requirements. The examples appear in blue shading underneath the point they relate to. Please remember that the examples given aim to simply show or suggest how compliance could be met. It does not mean that the example given is the only way to achieve compliance. The examples might, though, help to explain the regulation and give you some ideas of your own about how you can make your service compliant.

Section 3 is about **Policies, Procedures and Statements**. The core requirements are detailed in each policy, procedure and statement.

Section 4 is titled **Explanatory Notes**. There are many words, phrases and terms that have a particular meaning within the context of the statutory regulatory requirements in the Early Childhood Education and Care sector. In this section, we define the terms in alphabetical order, and, in some instances, we give additional information about the term as well as its definition.

Also, you will notice the word **‘See...’** at the end of some descriptions of regulations. When this is used, it will be followed by one or more regulation reference numbers or appendix numbers – for example, ‘See Regulation 10’ or ‘See Appendix 2’. This is inviting you to compare the regulation or appendix you are reading with other regulations or appendixes, so that you can see how they are linked.

Throughout the Framework, there are also some **footnotes**. These are notes at the bottom of the page that might suggest where you can find more information on a particular topic, or they might simply help to explain the meaning of a word or phrase.

Also, throughout the Framework, we use **hyperlinks** – some words or phrases underlined and in [blue text](#). The blue text is a hyperlink. If you are reading on screen, click on a hyperlink to bring you to further information on the topic in question – for example, it might link to the term in the Explanatory Notes. Or, it might bring you to a website if your device has access to the internet. For example, the Statement of Purpose and Function in Regulation 10 links to Appendix 1 which sets out the core requirements of this statement.

If you would like to **search** for a particular word or topic, you can do this using the search or find window pane. Hold down the ‘Ctrl’ button and then click the ‘F’ key. Or, you can go to your toolbar and click on ‘Edit’ and select the ‘Find’ option from the drop down menu.

We hope you find these devices useful as you read through the Framework.

Section 1



This section contains:

Abbreviations and acronyms: a list of the abbreviated terms used throughout the Framework.

Introduction: information on who we are, the role of regulatory inspection, the aim and development of the Framework, and how inspections are conducted.

Abbreviations and acronyms

ACRO	ACRO Criminal Records Office, UK	HSE	Health Service Executive
AIM	Access and Inclusion Model	ICPC	International Child Protection Certificate
AISTEAR	The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework	IMEB	Irish Montessori Education Board
CCCs	City and County Childcare Committees	IUQB	Irish Universities Quality Board
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television	LINC	Leadership for Inclusion Consortium
CE	Community Employment	NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
CECDE	Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education	NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
CCPC	Competition and Consumer Protection Commission	NDA	National Disability Authority
CMI	Childminding Ireland	NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
DCYA	Department of Children and Youth Affairs	NQAI	National Qualifications Authority of Ireland
DES	Department of Education and Skills	NSAI	National Standards Authority of Ireland
DHC	Department of Health and Children	NVB	National Vetting Bureau
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education	OWL	Observe, Wait, Listen
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care	PHECC	Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council
ECI	Early Childhood Ireland	PIF	Powdered Infant Formula
EYI	Early Years Inspectorate	PNC	Police National Computer
FAR	First Aid Response	QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
FETAC	Further Education and Training Awards Council	QRF	Quality and Regulatory Framework
FOI	Freedom of Information	UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
HETAC	Higher Education and Training Awards Council	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
HSA	Health and Safety Authority	VCOs	Voluntary Childcare Organisations

Introduction

Who we are

[The Child and Family Agency \(Tusla\)](#) is a dedicated State agency responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children. The work of the Early Years Inspectorate is guided by the vision, mission, values and behaviours of Tusla as set out in Tusla's current [Corporate Plan](#).

In its unique role as the independent statutory regulator of children's services, the Early Years Inspectorate undertakes inspection of registered services that are listed on the [Early Years Services Register](#). The Inspectorate promotes quality, safety and the appropriate care of children. [The Early Years Inspectorate \(EYI\)](#) within Tusla operates under [Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013](#).

Many benefits of regulation in Early Years Services have been identified.

These include:

- » safeguarding children from harm;
- » ensuring the regulatory standards are met;
- » supporting the translation of quality standards into practice;
- » providing parents and the public with assurance that services are of a consistent quality; and
- » setting benchmarks so that service providers can develop, improve and maintain services for children.

Guiding principles

The Early Years Inspectorate works with Tusla's core values of trust, respect, empathy, working together and integrity. Its work is informed by national and international best practice, whilst also considering the unique elements of the Irish context.

The following principles and values underpin the Inspectorate's work. The Early Years Inspectorate:

- » respects the professionalism, knowledge and expertise base of those working in the early years sector;
- » respects the various philosophical perspectives and pedagogical (teaching) approaches in early years provision in Ireland;
- » promotes the safety, health, welfare, development and care of the child in early years' provision in line with the regulations;

- » is accountable and committed to providing a high quality inspection service, which will impact positively on children’s experiences in early years services; and
- » engages in a rigorous inspection process that is fair, reasonable, transparent, impartial and proportionate at all times and keeps children’s wellbeing at the heart of the inspection.

Valuing the care and education of the child

The Early Years Inspectorate acknowledges that:

- » every child is unique and has inalienable rights as set out in the United National Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- » early childhood is a significant and distinct period in life that must be valued, respected, nurtured and supported in its own right;
- » the child’s individuality, strengths, needs and rights are central to providing quality early childhood education and care;
- » children have the right to be listened to and appropriately responded to;
- » children’s health, wellbeing, safety, care and education must be protected and promoted at all times in all early childhood environments;
- » positive relationships, which are secure, responsive and respectful and which provide consistency and continuity over time, are the cornerstone of the child’s wellbeing; and
- » play is a central means to support young children’s learning, creativity and development.

Aim of the QRF

The aim of the Framework is to help and support registered Early Years Services to comply with the 2016 Regulations. This Framework sets out the Early Years Inspectorate’s interpretation of these regulations in a transparent way. It presents the scope of how the Inspectorate will assess services for compliance with these regulations which, in turn, will promote the quality and safety of services provided to children.

We expect that this Framework document will be revised in five years, and we don’t expect to have to make amendments in the meantime. However, a revision may be necessary if regulations change, or if significant findings from research indicate that a change is needed to support best practice. If we have to revise the Framework, we will do it systematically and we will communicate and consult with you and others.

Development of the QRF

In 2014, Tusla undertook research into the quality of preschool services based on an analysis of over 3,000 inspection reports. The research findings identified a need to develop and set out clearly the levels of evidence needed for regulatory compliance. Therefore, in 2015, the Early Years Inspectorate began to develop standardised levels of evidence required for each regulation. This process provided a baseline for developing the QRF throughout 2016 and 2017.

The QRF now brings together evidence-based, national and international research and best practice in Early Years Services. The Framework is child-centred with a specific focus on the quality and safety of the care provided directly to children using the services.

The QRF was developed in consultation with the following groups and agencies:

- » Representatives of all stakeholders in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Sector in Ireland.
- » Statutory and regulatory organisations not directly involved in ECCE, but whose work can impact on the provision of ECCE. For example – The Food Safety Authority, local authorities, and so on.
- » International ECCE regulatory authorities and the European Commission.

The QRF was also informed by both national and international legislation, and policy and guidance documents in the ECCE Sector. For example:

- » [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#) ratified by Ireland in 1992.
- » [Key Principles of a Quality Framework European Commission](#) 2014.
- » [Department of Children and Youth Affairs publications](#), for example:
 - [Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Care and Education](#) (DCYA 2016).
 - [Access and Inclusion Model](#) (DCYA 2016).
 - [Right from the Start](#) (DCYA 2013).
 - [Better Outcomes Brighter Futures](#) (DCYA 2014).
- » [Early Years Education Focused Inspections](#) (DES 2016).
- » [Better Start](#) (National Early Years Quality Development 2015).
- » [Síolta](#), the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education (CECDE 2006).

- » [Aistear](#), the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (NCCA 2009).
- » [Aistear Síolta Practice Guide](#) (NCCA 2015).
- » Regulation of Early Years Services in other Jurisdictions.

You can access the report on the consultation process at:

www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-quality-and-regulatory-framework/.

Purpose of regulatory inspection

Regulatory inspection under the [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016](#) and the [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#) aims to determine the extent to which:

- » the service is well governed;
- » the health, welfare and development of each child is supported;
- » children are safe in the service;
- » the premises are safe, suitable and appropriate for the care and education of children.

Methodology of inspection – how inspections are done

When a service is being inspected, relevant evidence is collected using the ‘triangulation’ method. Triangulation means using several ways of gathering information rather than relying on just one way. The information can then be cross-checked to see if the findings are consistent. Using this approach gives a more accurate and detailed assessment of the service.

The evidence is gathered in the following ways:

- » The information and documentation submitted in the application for registration is reviewed.
- » Documentary evidence of how the regulations are being implemented within the service is examined. This may include, for example, examining policies and procedures, reviewing the service’s and the children’s records.
- » Interviews and consultations are held with management and staff.
- » Operational practices in the service are observed directly during the inspection. This includes observing care, play, interactions between the childminder and children, and so on.
- » The premises and facilities are reviewed.

Compliance is determined by examining the evidence under the four areas to establish if:

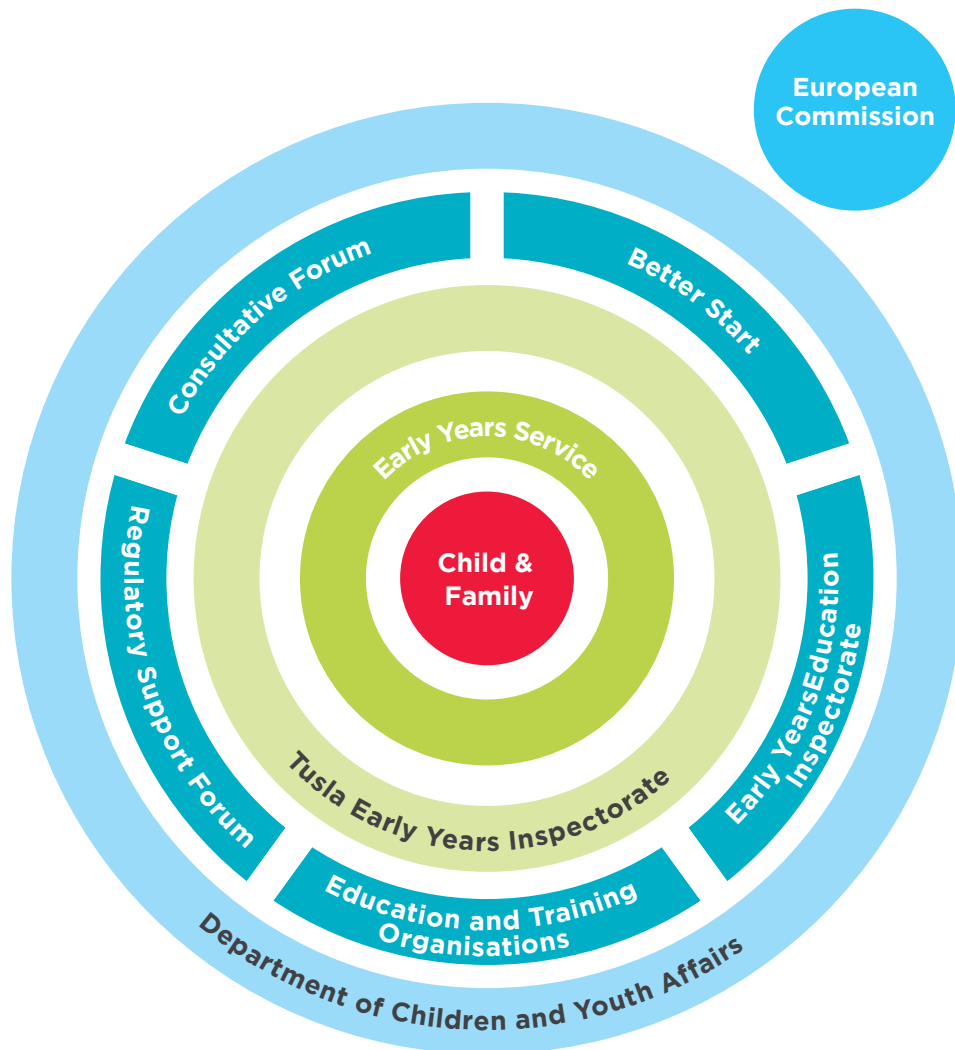
- » the service is well governed;
- » the health, welfare and development of each child is supported;
- » the children are safe in the service; and
- » the premises are safe, suitable and appropriate for the care and education of children.

Inspection in the context of other legislation

Each [registered provider](#) must ensure that the service complies with the legislative requirements of all relevant statutory agencies. During inspection, the Early Years inspector may identify child safety concerns relevant to other legislation that is not within the remit of the 2016 Regulations, and which is having, or may have, a negative impact on the health, welfare and/or safety of a child attending your service. If this happens, the inspector can request the service to provide information in respect of any risk(s)¹. If Tusla is not satisfied with the information provided, it can refer the matter to the relevant statutory agency. See [Appendix 21](#) for areas of legislation where concerns could be identified and referrals made. In all instances, the referral and the reason for the referral is made known in advance to the registered provider.

¹ Regulation 33(1), Furnishing of information to the Agency (Tusla), of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016, requires that a registered provider provides the Agency with any information it may reasonably require to enforce and execute the 2016 Regulations.

Overview of Tusla Early Years Inspectorate: Key Relationships



The infographic above provides an overview of the Early Years Inspectorate and key relationships that are needed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and their families who use Early Years Services.

Tusla Early Years Inspectorate is currently going through a programme of reform and development. We are conscious of all our partners, whilst as a statutory regulator we are mindful to remain impartial and independent in our regulatory judgements. We work in partnership with the Early Years Sector to promote compliance with the Childcare Regulations 2016. Sometimes we work with stakeholder groups to promote understanding and encourage quality and service improvement within the sector.

Child and Family: Promoting the quality, safety and appropriate care of each child and their family who use Early Years Services, is at the centre of the purpose of Tusla’s Inspectorate.

Early Years Service: Work in partnership with families promoting, supporting and enabling each child to have a positive experience in the early years setting.

Tusla, Early Years Inspectorate: The statutory regulator with responsibility to register and inspect early years services in line with regulatory requirements.

Consultative Forum: Tusla's Early Years Consultation Group where early years representatives and stakeholders contribute to the ongoing reform and development of the early years Inspectorate.

Regulatory Support Forum: A joint initiative of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Early Years Inspectorate of Tusla. The aim of the forum is to provide an opportunity to brief support organisations on the processes within the Inspectorate, to enable these organisations to provide support, advise and training to those working in the Early Years Sector.

Education and Training Organisations: Representatives of education and training organisations are informed of and share relevant regulatory information.

Better Start National Early Years Quality Development: A national quality development service to support and improve quality in early years services. It provides an Early Years Specialist team to work directly in a mentoring capacity with early years services. Better Start complements and adds to other quality resources such as training, continuing professional development programmes, networking, cluster-type support groups and individual or team-based development work provided by the City and County Childcare Committees (CCCs) and the Voluntary Childcare Organisations (VCOs).

Early Years Education Inspectorate: The Early Years Education Inspectorate has responsibility for evaluating the quality of education provision in early years settings, taking part in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme. Department of Education and Skills (DES) is concerned with improving the quality of learning for children.

Department of Children And Youth Affairs (DCYA): The Department of Children and Youth Affairs focuses on harmonising policy issues that affect children in areas such as early childhood care and education, youth justice, child welfare and protection, children and young people's participation, research on children and young people, youth work and cross-cutting initiatives for children.

European Commission: Works with EU member states to develop a European Quality Framework across areas regarding access, workforce, curriculum, monitoring and governance.

Section 2

Governance

The regulations that apply to this area are:

- **Regulation 9:** Management and Recruitment.
- **Regulation 10:** Policies, Procedures and Statements of a Pre-School Service.
- **Regulation 11:** Staffing Levels.
- **Regulation 13:** Pre-School Services in Drop-In Centres.
- **Regulation 14:** Review of a Pre-School Service.
- **Regulation 15:** Record of a Pre-School Child.
- **Regulation 16:** Record in Relation to a Pre-School Service.
- **Regulation 17:** Information for Parents.
- **Regulation 31:** Notification of Incidents.
- **Regulation 32:** Complaints

Regulation 9: Management and Recruitment

Purpose

As the [registered provider](#), you must ensure that an [effective management](#) structure is in place, and appropriate people are recruited to ensure the quality and safety of the care provided to the children attending the service. You must ensure that [staff](#) are [competent](#) to perform their roles by providing appropriate training, supervision and performance evaluation.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

1. Governance

- » The service has clearly defined governance arrangements and structures that:
 - set out lines of authority and accountability²;
 - specify roles and responsibilities;
 - are appropriate to the size, ethos, purpose and function of the service; and
 - are documented and available.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- » The registered provider and each person working in the service has a clear understanding of their own role and range of responsibilities to ensure the quality and safety of care provided to the children attending the service.
- » The registered provider has established, and maintains, an appropriate administrative process, ensuring the effective operation of the service.

² Being responsible for making decisions and justifying actions.

3. Management

- » There is a designated [parent or guardian](#).
- » There is a named person who can [deputise](#) if required.
- » The designated person in charge, or a named person to deputise, is on the [premises](#) at all times while the service is in operation. The person in charge on a day-to-day basis is documented.

Example: this could be an entry in the staff roster.

- » There is an alternative person in charge in the absence of both the designated person and the deputy.
- » There is a person in charge or a deputy at each place, where the service operates in more than one premises.

4. Recruitment

Recruitment Policy

- » There is evidence of the [recruitment policy](#) being implemented.
- » [Relevant staff](#) know the requirements, and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the recruitment policy.
- » Relevant staff have received training on the recruitment policy.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 14.

5. Vetting³

- » Vetting is completed before a person is appointed, assigned or allowed access to, or contact with, a child attending the service.
- » Each [employee](#), [unpaid worker](#) and [contractor](#) is vetted.
- » Vetting documentation is available in English⁴ (or in Irish where applicable).
- » Vetting includes references and Garda/Police vetting:

³ Please note that a registered provider, each member of a [Board of Directors](#) and each member of a Board of Management must be vetted at Registration/Re-Registration. This is in accordance with Regulation 6.

⁴ Vetting documents provided in a language other than English or Irish must be translated through a reputable source of translation by the service and the evidence of the source of translation is available to [Tusla](#) Early Years Inspectorate.

References:

- » At least two written past employer references if a person has been in previous employment. (One of the past employer references must be the most recent employer.)
- » References from reputable sources⁵ if a person has no past employers.
- » A reference, if practicable, from the childcare employer if the person was previously employed in childcare.
- » A reference from the registered provider if the person has been employed in the service for five years or more and does not have a previous employer.
- » All references must:
 - be from a reputable source;
 - be in writing;
 - be dated and signed by the referee, giving details of the referee's position;
 - contain the address, phone number, logo or headed paper of the referee and the organisation's stamp where applicable;

Example: a letter with a college stamp.

- be [validated](#) by the person's employer or relevant organisation;
- be kept (along with any other validations) in each individual's file.

See Regulation 16.

Garda/Police Vetting:

- » Vetting disclosure for the person is obtained from the [National Vetting Bureau](#) of the Garda Síochána in accordance to the [National Vetting Bureau Act 2012](#).
- » Garda vetting is undertaken for any person aged 18 years and over.
- » Garda vetting is undertaken by the person's employer or relevant organisation.
- » Police vetting, in so far as is practicable⁶, is available for a childminder who has lived in a state or country outside Ireland for more than 6 consecutive months.

⁵ A highly regarded, well thought of, respected person who is independent, unbiased and not a family member.

⁶ Every reasonable effort has been made to obtain police vetting. This is evidenced by a paper trail of its denial or refusal or un-attainability.

- » Police vetting is undertaken by the individual and given to the employer.
- » Garda vetting for each person has been undertaken within the last three years, including Garda re-vetting.⁷

6. Qualifications

Each employee and a registered provider working directly with children holds one of the following:

- » A minimum of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.⁸
- » An exemption from the qualification requirement and confirmation that this exemption is accepted by the Minister.
- » The qualification requirement or relevant specialist training and the basis on which the capitation may be used for a person employed under the [Access and Inclusion Model](#) (AIM), detailed in an exemption letter from [Pobal](#).

7. Staff supervision

Staff Supervision Policy

- » There is evidence of the [staff supervision policy](#) being implemented.
- » Relevant staff know the requirements, and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the staff supervision policy.
- » Relevant staff have received training on the staff supervision policy.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 18.

⁷ Renewing earlier Garda vetting. In social care settings, this is required every three years.

⁸ Early Years (Pre-school) Regulations and DCYA Childcare Programmes Qualification Requirements: www.dcy.gov.ie/viewdoc.asp?fn=/documents/childcare/qualifications.htm.

8. Information exchange

- » An effective internal communications system is evident within the service which enables the flow of information between staff and management. This is evidenced by:
 - having time set aside for one-to-one discussions and staff meetings for staff to ask and respond to questions without interruptions, and to communicate important information and provide feedback to management about the service;
 - having staff meetings facilitated by a senior member of staff. Minutes are taken and made available, and actions are implemented; and
 - having one-to-one supervision meetings between staff members and their manager.

9. Staff Training

Staff Training Policy

- There is evidence of the [staff training policy](#) being implemented.
- Relevant staff know the training requirements, and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the staff training policy.
- Relevant staff have received training on the staff training policy.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 17.

Regulation 10: Policies, Procedures and Statements of Pre-School Service

Purpose

As a [registered provider](#), you must develop, approve, distribute and review policies, procedures and statements in a consistent way. Policies and procedures will standardise your service's approach to implementing best practice and ensuring compliance with the regulations.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

10. Roles and responsibilities

- Management and [relevant staff](#) have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to developing, approving, distributing and reviewing the service's policies, procedures and statements.

See Regulation 9.

11. Policies, procedures and statements⁹

- » A process is in place to develop and approve a policy and procedure, or statement.
- » Relevant staff have access to an up-to-date version of each of the policies, procedures and statements. They have these in [hard copy](#) or [electronically](#).
- » Approved policies, procedures and statements are consistent with the services practices.
- » The following as detailed within Schedule 5 of the 2016 Regulations are in place:

⁹ Please note that a [Safety Statement](#) (within the meaning of the [Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005](#)) is also required for your service in accordance with Regulation 6 - Registration of Pre-School Service. See Appendix 21. Your Safety Statement is required at Registration/Re-Registration.

- [Statement of Purpose and Function](#) – See Appendix 1.
- [Complaints Policy](#) – See Appendix 2.
- [Policy on Administration of Medication.](#) – See Appendix 3.
- [Policy on Infection Control](#) – See Appendix 4.
- [Policy on Managing Behaviour](#) – See Appendix 5.
- [Policy on Safe Sleep](#) – See Appendix 6.
- [Fire Safety Policy](#) – See Appendix 7.
- [Inclusion Policy](#) – See Appendix 8.
- [Policy on Accidents and Incidents](#) – See Appendix 9.
- [Policy on Authorisation to Collect Children](#) – See Appendix 10.
- [Policy on Healthy Eating](#) – See Appendix 11.
- [Policy on Staff Absences](#) – See Appendix 12.
- [Policy on the Use of the Internet and Photographic and Recording Devices](#) – See Appendix 13.
- [Recruitment Policy](#) – See Appendix 14.
- [Risk Management Policy](#) – See Appendix 15.
- [Settling-In Policy](#) – See Appendix 16.
- [Staff Training Policy](#) – See Appendix 17.
- [Staff Supervision Policy](#) – See Appendix 18.

12. Communication of policies, procedures and statements

- » Policies, procedures and statements, including any updates, are communicated and available to [parents and guardians](#).
- » Parents and guardians confirm that they have read and accepted the policies, procedures and statements of the service.

Examples: they could sign a declaration form, or complete a declarations online, or sign a parent’s handbook.

See Regulations 14, 16 and 23.

Regulation 11: Staffing Levels

Purpose

Your service must ensure that an adequate number of [staff](#) are available at all times during the provision of services to meet the needs of the children attending. At all times, the number of staff within the service will be appropriate to the needs of children, the type of service and the care provided.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

13. Roles and responsibilities

- » Management and [relevant staff](#) have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to maintaining the minimum adult:child ratios at all times.

See Regulation 9.

14. Staffing

- » There is a sufficient number of suitable [employees](#) with the necessary experience and [competencies](#) (qualifications, knowledge, skills and abilities) to:
 - meet the needs of all children at all times;
 - ensure adequate supervision while children are sleeping or resting and during staff breaks;
 - reflect the size, layout and purpose of the service.
- » The adult:child ratio is followed at all times, and a sufficient number of qualified staff are working directly with the children.

See Regulations 9, 27 and 29.

15. Staff roster

- » The service displays the current staff roster and keeps a record of all rosters within the service.
- » The staff roster:

- gives details of the staff on duty while the service is in operation (including a person trained in [first aid](#) for children);
- gives details of each person not included in the adult:child ratio;
- records the actual start, finish and break times of each person in attendance every day;
- demonstrates that there is sufficient cover for early arrivals, late collections, breaks, holidays, sick leave and any other situation where additional staff may be needed; and
- is documented for a weekly or monthly period.

16. Adult:child ratios

- » For children aged 0 - 6 years, the adult:child ratio is 1:4.
- » There are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times.
- » If more than 15 children are attending, a designated employee or [unpaid worker](#) is responsible for checking the children in and out. This person is not included in the adult:child ratio.
- » If a [parent or guardian](#) is included in the adult:child ratio, their managerial duties do not detract from direct childcare.

See Regulation 9.

17. Staff planning

Policy on Staff Absences

- » There is evidence of the [policy on staff absences](#) being implemented.
- » Relevant staff know the requirements, and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy on staff absences.
- » Relevant staff have received training on the policy on staff absences.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 12.

Regulation 13: Pre-School Services in Drop-In Centres

Purpose

The number of children attending the service at any one time and the length of stay by children in the service are limited.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

18. Roles and responsibilities

- » The [registered provider](#) has a clear understanding of the number of children that can attend a Drop-In Centre at any one time, and the length of time a child can attend these services as follows:
 - No more than 24 children attend at any given time.
 - No child attends for longer than 2 hours at a time.

Regulation 14: Review of a Pre-School Service

Purpose

As a [registered provider](#), you must ensure that the quality and safety of the care and service provided to children is reviewed at least once a year in line with the regulations. The review is a formal assessment of the service, including its policies, procedures and statements, with the intention of making changes if necessary.

A review of practice helps you to make informed judgments about the quality and effectiveness of the service, with a view to improving the quality of care and education of the children. You must keep a [record](#) of the review for three years after it was done.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

19. Roles and responsibilities

- » The person responsible for carrying out the review has a clear understanding that their function is to ensure the quality and safety of care provided to the children attending the service.

See Regulation 9.

20. Annual review

- » The annual review of the service examines the quality and safety of care provided, and includes a review of all policies, procedures, statements and care practices.

See Regulation 10.

21. Plan of review

- » A plan of the areas and policies to be reviewed is developed and recorded, with the approval of the registered provider.
- » Relevant management and staff are informed of the planned review.
- » The plan details the following:

- The name of the person or people who will carry out the review – they are the ‘reviewer’.

This could be, for example: the registered provider, or a person nominated by them.

- The contact person for the area being reviewed – they are the ‘reviewee’.

This could be, for example: childcare staff, a room leader, parent or guardian.

- The date of the review.
- The frequency of the review – if a process is identified as high risk, then the review is prioritised and carried out more frequently than once a year.
- The area of service being reviewed, to ensure ongoing quality and safety of care in line with the service’s statements, policies and procedures.
- Any other reviews necessary to ensure the quality and safety of the care provided are undertaken.

Examples: inspection reports, corrective and preventive actions, Health and Safety Authority reports, Fire Officer reports.

22. Carrying out the review

The reviewer must:

- » Consult with relevant staff involved in the area being reviewed.
- » Determine if relevant staff:
 - have access to current policies;
 - have received updated training on the policies, procedures and statements of the service;
 - have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities relevant to their position;
 - know the policies, procedures and statements of the service.
- » Keep a written record of the review.
- » Consider:
 - any feedback and suggested amendments from the staff consultation;
 - any quality improvement activities completed or ongoing in the area being reviewed;

- any trends in the area being reviewed.

Examples: repeated incident reports, repeated complaints.

- Determine if the policies, procedures and statements of the service are being implemented. This includes a walk around the service, observing practices and talking with staff.

Reviewing policies, procedures, statements and practice to determine:

23. The service is being well governed.

The following must be considered:

- » [Statement of purpose and function.](#)
- » [Safety statement.](#)
- » Management and recruitment.
- » Complaint reporting and management.
- » Reporting of [incident.](#)
- » Staff training.
- » [Supervision of staff.](#)
- » Staffing levels.
- » [Record](#) attendance.
- » Authorisation and collection of children.
- » Staff absences.
- » Record management – records of children and service records.
- » Information for parents and guardians.
- » The service has a copy of [Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013](#) and copy of [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016.](#)

24. The health, welfare and development of each child attending is being supported:

The following must be considered:

- » Children's care needs are being met.
- » Relationships are being supported.
- » Children's learning and development is being supported.
- » Positive emotional and behavioural management practices are in place.

- » The environment supports children's wellbeing.
- » Use of the internet and photographic and recording devices is in line with best practice (this may include the use of CCTV where appropriate).
- » Children are supported and helped to settle in.
- » Healthy eating is supported.
- » All children are welcomed.

25. Children are safe in the service:

The following must be considered:

- » Supervision of children.
- » Infection control (including outbreaks).
- » [Accidents](#) and injuries.
- » Administration of medication.
- » Safe sleep.
- » [First aid](#)
- » [Risk](#) management.
- » [Fire safety](#).
- » Insurance.

26. The premises are safe, suitable and appropriate for the care and education of the children:

The following must be considered:

- » space requirements;
- » equipment and materials; and
- » [premises](#) (including access to the service, cleaning, lighting, heating, maintenance, and so on).

27. Reporting and closing out reviews

- » Staff are told about the findings of the review, for example – at team meetings.
- » Any issues to be addressed or areas for improvement are identified and recorded.

Examples: an amendment to a policy, a change in practice.

- » Corrective and preventive actions are put in place to remedy the issues identified.

- » Staff view the review findings and any remedial actions as an opportunity to learn and improve.
- » Reviews are closed when any issues identified are corrected.

28. Retention of records

- » The provider keeps a record of the review in the service for three years from the date on which the review was completed.

See Appendix 20: [Service Record Retention Timeframe](#).

Regulation 15: Record of a Pre-School Child

Purpose

As a [registered provider](#), you must develop, maintain, store and retain [records](#) about children attending the service. The records must contain appropriate information to document and support the care provided by the service to each child. The service controls and protects the information it holds about children.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

29. Roles and responsibilities

- » The registered provider and [relevant staff](#) are aware of their roles and responsibilities in managing children's records under the following legislation:
 - [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016](#).
 - [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#).
 - [Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013](#).

See Regulations 9 and 10.

30. Children's records

- » The records of children enrolled contain the following:
 - The name and date of birth of the child.
 - The name and address of a [parent or guardian](#) and a telephone number where that parent or guardian (or a relative or friend of the child) can be contacted during the hours of operation.
 - Authorisation for collecting the child. This includes:
 - The name(s), address(es) and contact number(s) of the person(s) who is authorised to collect the child.
 - Written authorisation from the parent or guardian allowing the child to be released by the service into the care of the authorised person.

- Photo identification or an agreed password or code for any person not known to the service who has permission to collect the child.
- Proof that the authorised person is aged 16 or over.
- » Details of any illness, allergy or additional need(s) the child has, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention.
- » Entries in the children’s records are factual, consistent and accurate.
- » Each entry in the child’s records is signed by the person making the entry.

31. Availability of records

- » There is a record for each child attending the service.
- » Parents and guardians are told that the service keeps records in relation to their child.
- » Records about individual children are shared with the child’s parent or guardian, except where this would place the child’s welfare at risk.
- » Requests by third parties for information are discussed with parents and guardians, and information is only shared if they give their consent. (An exception to this is when there is a requirement to report concerns about the welfare or safety of the child – for example, in relation to child safeguarding.)

See Regulation 19.

32. Access to children’s records and record confidentiality

- » Children’s records are kept confidential.
- » Children’s personal information is not discussed outside of the service.
- » The records are available for inspection to:
 - parents and guardians, but only for their own child’s record;
 - an [employee](#) who is authorised by the registered provider; and
 - a [Tusla](#) Early Years Inspector.

33. [Electronic records](#)

- » Children’s records held electronically are password protected.
- » Electronic records are accessible and easily retrievable and can be reproduced when needed.

34. Retention of children's records

- » The original records, and any additions such as any written requests and all signed forms, are **kept** by the service.
- » The relevant children's records are kept for 2 years from the date a child **starts** at the service.

See Regulation 16.

See Appendix 20: [Service Record Retention Timeframe](#).

Regulation 16: Record in Relation to a Pre-School Service

Purpose

As the [registered provider](#), you must develop, maintain, store and keep relevant service [records](#). Personal information kept by the service must be appropriately controlled and protected.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

35. Roles and responsibilities

- » The registered provider and [relevant staff](#) are aware of their roles and responsibilities in managing the service’s records under the following legislation:
 - [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016](#).
 - [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#).
 - [Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act, 2013](#).
- » The people within the service with responsibility for records have access to the information they need to carry out their duties and make reasonable and informed decisions.

See Regulation 9.

36. Information in relation to the service

- » A record in writing of the following information is available in the service:
 - The name, position, qualifications and experience of the [parent or guardian](#) and the other [employees](#), [unpaid workers](#) and [contractors](#).
 - Details of the type of service being provided, and the age profile of children the service is registered to provide services to.
 - Details of the adult:child ratio in the service.
 - The type of care or programme provided in the service.
 - The facilities available within the service.
 - The opening hours and fees.

- » The policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain are in line with Regulation 10.
- » The service's record of children's attendance includes the time of arrival to, and departure from, the service.
- » Details of daily [staff](#) rosters are kept.
- » Details are recorded of any medication given to a child attending the service with signed parental or guardian consent.
- » Details are recorded of any [accident](#), injury or [incident](#) involving a child attending the service.

See Regulations 9, 10, 11, 15, 19 and 31.

37. Service record retention

- » All documents and records about references and Garda and Police vetting are kept for 5 years from the date each person started working in the service.
- » The following children's records are kept for 2 years from the date a child attended:
 - The record of children's attendance including the time of arrival to, and departure from, the service.
 - Details of any medication given to a child attending the service with signed parental or guardian consent.
 - Details of any accident, injury or incident involving a child attending the service.

See Regulation 9.

See Appendix 20: [Service Record Retention Timeframe](#).

Regulation 17: Information for Parents

Purpose

As a [registered provider](#), you must provide all relevant information about the service, the type of care provided and the facilities available, to the parents and guardians of children proposing to attend the service. You must provide this information in a way they can understand.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

38. Roles and responsibilities

- » Management and [relevant staff](#) have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities regarding the provision of information to parents and guardians of children planning to attend the service.

See Regulation 9.

39. Information provided to parents and guardians

- » The following information is available to the parents and guardians of children proposing to attend the service:
 - The name, position, qualifications and experience of the [parent or guardian](#) and of every other [staff](#) member.
 - Details of the type of service and the age profile of the children.
 - Details of the adult:child ratio in the service.
 - The type of care or programmes provided within the service and any additional needs or interests provided for.
 - The facilities available.
 - The opening hours and fees.
 - All policies, procedures and statements relevant to the service that are required in line with Regulation 10.

See Regulations 9, 10, 11, 16 and 19.

40. Access to information

- » All information provided to parents and guardians is available, easy to use and accessible.

Examples:

- **notice boards;**
- **leaflets;**
- **webpage;**
- **one-to-one contact with parents or guardians.**

41. Publicly displayed information in the service

- » The following information is publicly displayed within the service for the parents and guardians of children proposing to attend the service, or other relevant parties:
 - The registered provider's name.
 - The service's [Tusla](#) Registration Certificate.
 - A contact name and number for the service.
 - Contact details for [emergency](#) medical assistance.
 - The process to be followed, evacuation routes and procedures if there is a fire or other emergency.

See Regulations 9, 25 and 26.

Regulation 31: Notification of Incidents

Purpose

If an [accident](#), injury or [incident](#) occurs, you, as the registered provider, must have policies and procedures in place to identify, document, address, review and communicate the associated information. The accident, injury or incident could relate to either children attending the service or to your [staff](#). You must take the necessary actions to prevent any reoccurrence of accidents, injuries or incidents. You must promote a positive and open culture of reporting to [parents and guardians](#), and you must give feedback to parents and guardians after your investigations.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

42. Roles and responsibilities

- » [Relevant staff](#) are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the [notification of incidents](#) to the Early Years Inspectorate.
- » Relevant staff have received training on how to notify the Early Years Inspectorate about incidents.

See Regulation 9.

43. Managing notifying incidents to the Early Years Inspectorate

- » A consistent and standardised approach is used to notify the Early Years Inspectorate of accidents, injuries and incidents that occur within the service using the [Notification of Incident Form](#), available on the [Tusla website](#).
- » The [registered provider](#) has notified the Early Years Inspectorate within three working days of becoming aware of any notifiable event.
- » All accidents, injuries and incidents notified to the Early Years Inspectorate are investigated, managed and reported in line with the service's accident, injury and incident policy and procedures.
- » All reasonable measures are taken to prevent another accident, injury or incident occurring.

- » The Inspectorate must be notified of the following incidents:
 - The death of a child while attending the service, including the death of a child in hospital after they were transferred from the service.
 - The diagnosis of an [infectious disease](#) in a child attending the service, or the diagnosis of an infectious disease in an [employee](#), an [unpaid worker](#), a [contractor](#) or any other person working in the service. (An infectious disease is defined in the [Infectious Diseases Regulations 1981](#).)
 - An accident or incident that resulted in the service being closed for any length of time (an unplanned closure¹⁰).
 - A [serious injury](#) to a child while attending the service that needed immediate medical treatment by a [registered medical practitioner](#), in hospital or elsewhere.
 - An incident of a child going missing while attending the service.

44. Reporting of incidents to external parties

- » The registered provider knows which accidents or incidents need to be reported to parties other than [Tusla](#) Early Years Inspectorate and ensures that all such reports are made.

Examples of reporting to other parties:

- [Tusla Social Work](#) services - if there is a child safeguarding concern.
- [Garda Síochána](#) - if there is a danger to staff or children, or a criminal offence has been committed.
- [Health and Safety Authority](#) - if the incident is dangerous, or a staff member has been injured as a result.
- The service's insurance company - if appropriate.

¹⁰ Where the service has to close unexpectedly due to unforeseen events or circumstances. This may be for personal reasons (for example - a bereavement), or any other reason (for example - a burst pipe).

Regulation 32: Complaints

Purpose

As a [registered provider](#), you must be open and responsive to people making complaints about the service. You must develop and implement a complaints management process that is consistent, fair, transparent and impartial.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

45. Roles and responsibilities

- » A consistent and unbiased approach is used to manage all complaints within the service.
- » Complaints are investigated, managed and reported in line with the service's complaints policy and procedures.

See Regulation 9.

46. Complaints

Complaints Policy

- » There is evidence of the [complaints policy](#) being implemented.
- » [Relevant staff](#) know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the complaints policy.
- » Relevant staff have received training on the complaints policy.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 2.

47. Access to records

- » The written [record](#) of a complaint is available on the [premises](#) for inspection by the Early Years Inspectorate.

Section 2

Health, Welfare and Development of the Child

The regulations that apply to this area are:

- **Regulation 19:** Health, Welfare and Development of Child.
- **Regulation 20:** Facilities for Rest and Play.
- **Regulation 22:** Food and Drink.

Regulation 19: Health, Welfare and the Development of the Child

Purpose

As the [registered provider](#), you must ensure the health, welfare and development of the child. You achieve this through implementing an appropriate programme or care practices that support the learning, development and wellbeing of each child, taking their individual interests and needs into consideration.

Overview of Regulation 19

This regulation takes account of the health, welfare and development of the child across the service, with specific reference to how the:

- » basic and individual care needs of all children are supported;
- » relationships and interactions around all children are supported;
- » service supports inclusion, diversity and children's transitions;
- » children's positive behaviour is supported;
- » environment supports the learning, development and wellbeing of each child;
- » service ensures the delivery of an effective programme and effective care practices; and
- » service uses technology, including the internet, photographic and recording devices.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

48. Roles and responsibilities

- » [Relevant staff](#) are aware of their roles and responsibilities to support children's health, wellbeing and development within the service.

See Regulation 9.

49. Children's basic and individual care needs

Eating and drinking

- » Healthy eating is promoted within the service.
- » Nutritious snacks and water or milk are available to children when needed.

Example: can be provided by [parents or guardians](#), or the service.

- » Enough time is allowed for bottle-feeding and eating.
- » Infants younger than 12 months are held while bottle-feeding.
- » The crockery, cutlery and drinking utensils used are suitable for the children's ages and stage of development.

Examples: easy-grip forks and spoons, spill-proof cups.

- » Children are not forced to eat or drink.
- » The table and chair are suitable to their age and stage of development.

See Regulation 22.

Nappy changing and toileting

- » The privacy and dignity of each child is respected at all times.
- » The [staff](#) respond to children's individual personalities, sensitivities and needs in relation to nappy changing and toileting.
- » Nappy changing and toileting is a positive experience for children.

Examples:

- **Talking to the child and explaining in advance that their nappy will be changed.**
- **Giving the child one-to-one attention and responding to their communication cues - verbal and nonverbal.**

- » Staff respond to children's cues quickly.
- » Children have unrestricted access to the toilet, and don't have to wait to use the toilet.
- » Children are allowed to take their time during toileting.
- » Nappies are changed as necessary and in a timely manner.
- » Staff use the correct language surrounding toileting and nappy changing.
- » Setbacks and toileting accidents are treated in a sensitive and supportive way. Children are not made to feel embarrassed, ashamed or made to feel inadequate, or be punished about any aspect of using the toilet.

Personal care

- » Children are encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence.

Examples: brushing their teeth, wiping their nose, putting on clothes and shoes.

- » Staff guide and support children who need more help.
- » Children are encouraged and supported to develop self-help and personal hygiene skills.

Examples: showing how to wash hands properly, and supervising children's hand-washing before and after snacks, after toileting, after blowing their noses and after messy play.

Sleep, rest, quiet time

- » Staff provide for each child's comfort and each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation is met.
- » The service works with parents and guardians in relation to children's sleep patterns and sleep needs.
- » Staff recognise children's individual cues of tiredness indicating their need for sleep and rest.

See Regulations 20 and 23.

Mobility

- » Children have opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment.
- » The service has safe and comfortable spaces for infants, toddlers, or children not walking, to lie, roll, creep, crawl, pull themselves up, learn to walk, and to be protected from children who are more mobile.
- » If an infant or child is in a high chair or other piece of equipment that constrains their movement, they are not in it for longer than fifteen minutes.
- » Infants are not placed in equipment until they are developmentally ready.

Example: highchairs.

50. Relationships and interactions around children

Relationships support a sense of belonging, connectedness and wellbeing

- » The service supports children to engage in positive interactions with other children.

Examples: inviting another child to join in their play, opportunities to participate in group activities.

- » The service supports children in forming and sustaining positive relationships with adults.

Examples:

- **showing respect for each unique child and developing their trust;**
- **being actively involved in children's play, where appropriate (initiating games, joining in when invited to by children);**
- **behaving in a way that creates a positive atmosphere (having frequent social conversations, joint laughter and showing affection);**
- **nurturing and comforting children;**
- **using soft tones, the child's individual name, and getting down to their level and making eye contact.**

The service works with parents, guardians and families

- » The service respects and values parents, guardians and families of all diversities.

Examples:

- **communicating with parents and guardians in a sensitive, supportive and confidential manner;**
- **providing parents and guardians with information, including significant events or activities involving their child.**

A strong ethos of teamwork is evident

- » A team spirit is evident in the service.

Examples: daily informal discussions, regular formal meetings, mentoring programme in place.

51. Inclusion, diversity and transitions

Inclusion Policy

- » There is evidence of the [inclusion policy](#) being implemented.
- » Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the inclusion policy.
- » Relevant staff have received training on the inclusion policy.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 8.

The service is inclusive, recognises diversity and is accepting of other cultures

- » The service uses a child-centred approach, creating an inclusive and diverse learning environment.
- » Staff adjust the level of support provided to children depending on the child's abilities.

Settling-in Policy

- » There is evidence of the [settling-in policy](#) being implemented.
- » Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the settling-in policy.
- » Relevant staff have received training on the settling-in policy.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 16.

Supporting children's transitions

- » Transition of children into the service – for example, on their first day – is made as easy and comfortable as possible.

Example:

- **The child is given time to settle into their new setting and allowed to bring tangible reminders of home with them (their favourite toy, for example).**

52. Children's positive behaviour

Policy on Managing Behaviour

- » There is evidence of the [policy on managing behaviour](#) being implemented.
- » Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy on managing behaviour.

- » Relevant staff have received training on the policy on managing behaviour.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 5.

The social and emotional wellbeing of all children is fostered

- » Children are supported to recognise, express and cope positively with emotions.

Examples:

- **Listening to children in a caring, gentle way when they express emotions, and reassuring them that it is normal to experience positive and negative emotions at times.**
- **Acknowledging and accepting children's feelings (positive and negative) and the relationships between children's actions and other's responses.**

- » Children are supported to demonstrate self-confidence.

Example: choose activities that foster children's feelings of competence.

- » Staff respond to infants in a timely and appropriate way when they cry or become upset.

Children are supported to develop self-regulation and pro-social behaviour

- » The social and physical environment is stimulating and interesting for children, and is focused on their active engagement and involvement.
- » Staff help children to recognise and understand the rules for being together with others.

Examples: waiting for their turn, listening to each other, solving problems together, sharing.

- » A climate is fostered where children know the boundaries and know how they're expected to behave within the service.
- » Staff encourage and praise children for specific, positive and appropriate behaviours.
- » Children are supported in preventing, managing and resolving conflict.

Examples:

- **creating conditions that minimise conflict between children (providing enough popular equipment and materials);**
- **acting to prevent potential conflicts and encouraging the children to resolve conflict if it exists;**
- **responding promptly to children who are giving signals or cues expressing or indicating needs.**

Prohibited practices

- » Practices or the threat of any practices that are disrespectful, degrading, humiliating, exploitative, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are not carried out on any child while attending the service.

Example: isolating a child in a room, hallway or confined space.

- » Corporal punishment is prohibited.
- » Staff do not use any form of physical intervention.

Examples: physically restraining a child to manage their behaviour – unless it is necessary to prevent injury to the child, to another child or to an adult, or to prevent serious damage to property. Any such incident is recorded and the parents or guardians are informed of the incident on the day.

53. The environment supports each child’s learning, development and wellbeing

The design, organisation and resourcing of the environment supports each child’s wellbeing, learning and development

- » The environment is comfortable, inviting and laid out to accommodate the needs of all children and adults in the setting.
- » The environment provides a range of challenging, diverse, creative and enriching experiences for all children.
- » Materials and equipment are arranged so they are visible and readily accessible to promote independent access by children.
- » There are different interest areas provided, where equipment and materials of similar use are arranged or grouped together.

Examples: a literacy area, a sensory area, a dramatic play area.

- » The materials and equipment available within the service encourage both active physical play and quiet play activities.
- » Staff encourage children to interact and to engage with a range of materials and activities.

Examples: clay, puzzles, objects from nature, dramatic play props, mark making materials, (colours, paper, chalk).

54. The service ensures effective programme delivery and quality of care.

The care or programme in the service takes into account:

- » The Service's [Statement of Purpose and Function](#).
- » Play as the primary mode of learning for children.
- » The age and stage of development of the children attending the service.
- » The length of time the child spends in the service (maximum 2 hours).
- » The children's health and safety requirements.
- » The care and programme supports necessary for children's wellbeing, development and learning.

Examples:

- **Promoting independence, but giving support when required.**
- **Providing a range and variety of child-initiated and adult-led activities for children to explore individually and as part of a group.**
- **Helping children to learn through active, hands-on experiences; playing, exploring, experimenting and discovering.**
- **Providing opportunities for children to take part in a variety of creative activities (music, dramatic play, science and stimulation of the senses).**

55. Technology, including the internet, photographic and recording devices

Policy on Using the Internet and Photographic and Recording Devices

- » There is evidence of the [policy on the use of the internet and photographic and recording devices](#) being implemented.
- » Relevant staff know the requirements, and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy.
- » Relevant staff have received training on the policy on the use of the internet and photographic and recording devices.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 13.

Technology usage

- » Technology is only used within the service to enhance and support children's learning and development.
- » Where the service provides access to technology, it must ensure the software is suitable for the child's age and stage of development, and supports the programme to enhance critical thinking, problem solving and reasoning skills.
- » Children with additional needs are accommodated to use technology independently, as required.
- » There is a defined retention period for all images and recordings taken within the service with parents' and guardians' consent, including CCTV recording and images posted on social media.
- » Images and recordings of the child are only kept or displayed in line with the policy's retention period.

Regulation 20: Facilities for Rest and Play

Purpose

As a [registered provider](#), you must provide appropriate, safe facilities to meet children's needs for rest and sleep.

You must recognise that appropriate indoor facilities within services are important for the developmental health and wellbeing of children. These facilities should be organised so that they engage every child in the learning environment, and promote safe physical play and activity for children of different age groups and capabilities.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

Facilities for Rest and Sleep

56. Roles and responsibilities

- » The management and [relevant staff](#) are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to required facilities for rest and sleep.

See Regulation 9.

57. Supporting individual sleep requirements for children under 2 years

- » There is rest and sleep equipment in the service for an early years child to sleep or rest, if needed.
- » The linen (sheets and blankets) is laundered after each use.
- » The sleep area can be in the early years room, if the sleep area is quiet and restful, away from activity, movement and noise.
- » A child under 2 years requiring a sleep has access to and sleeps in a standard cot, unless the child has a history of climbing out over a cot – in which case, a floor bed or mat is safer.
- » A cot used by the service:
 - is in good condition;
 - has a recognised safety standard;
 - has cot bars less than 6cm apart (round), or less than 7.5cm apart (flat);

- has at least 50cm between the top of the mattress and the top of the cot;
- has no footholds in the sides, or cut-outs in the end of the cot;
- is positioned away from potential risks.

Examples: windows, curtains, blinds, direct sunlight, heated radiators.

- » The cot mattresses used by the service are:
 - clean;
 - laid flat and not elevated;
 - the correct size and fit;
 - firm;
 - covered with waterproof material;
 - in good condition;
 - easy to clean and disinfect;
 - well aired and dry;
 - have a gap between the mattress and the sides of the cot that is less than 2.5cm;
 - have a recognised safety standard.

58. Children aged 2 years and over

- » Children have a quiet space to enjoy unstructured, quiet activities of their choice or have a rest (if required) with soft seating and matting areas to sit or lie down.

Examples: look at a book, listen to music, guided meditation.

59. Items prohibited for sleeping children

- » The following items are not used as a sleep facility by the service:
 - car seats, buggies, strollers and infant carriers;
 - inflatable mattresses, inflatable beds or waterbeds;
 - beanbags;
 - couches, sofas, settees and chairs;
 - travel cots or portable cribs;
 - bunk cots or stackable cots;
 - pillows and cushions as a base to sleep on.

See Regulations 19 and 23.

Facilities for Play

60. Roles and responsibilities

- » The management and relevant staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the facilities required for play.

See Regulation 9.

61. Play

- » The play space is designed and arranged to:
 - maintain a space that is clean, organised and free of clutter;
 - accommodate children individually, in small groups and in a large group;
 - divide the space into areas that are supplied with materials organised in a way to support children's play and learning;
 - provide children with additional needs full access (making adaptations as necessary) to the indoor space.

See Regulation 19.

Regulation 22: Food and Drink

Purpose

As the [registered provider](#), you must ensure that all children attending the service can have nutritious snacks and drinks if required, taking their individual needs and preferences into consideration.

Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

62. Roles and responsibilities

- » [Relevant staff](#) have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to ensuring that adequate, suitable and nutritious snacks and drinks are available for each child.

See Regulation 9.

63. Healthy eating

Policy on Healthy Eating

- » There is evidence of the [policy on healthy eating](#) being implemented.
- » Relevant staff know the requirements, and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy on healthy eating.
- » Relevant staff have received training on the policy on healthy eating.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 11.

64. Food and drink

- » Children can have snacks and drinks suitable for the age and stage of development of the child.
- » Clean and safe drinking water is available and accessible to children at all times.
- » Water used for infants under 1 year is boiled and cooled before use.
- » Water and milk are the only drinks offered.

- » Breastfeeding supports are provided where required.

Examples: provide storage for breast milk, and facilities for mothers to breastfeed.

- » Powdered infant formula is managed appropriately in the service¹¹
- » Food safety provisions include:
 - safe facilities to store food, including a fridge for perishable foodstuffs;
 - a system where all food and drinks brought from the child's home are identifiable to the child.

See Regulation 27.

¹¹ PIF is managed in accordance with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's Guidance Note no. 22, available at: www.lenus.ie/hse/bitstream/10147/227213/1/GN+22+REV+2+FINAL.pdf.

Section 2

Safety

The regulations that apply to this area are:

- **Regulation 23:** Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child.
- **Regulation 24:** Checking In and Out and Record of Attendance.
- **Regulation 25:** First Aid.
- **Regulation 26:** Fire Safety Measures.
- **Regulation 27:** Supervision.
- **Regulation 28:** Insurance.

Regulation 23: Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child

Purpose

The protection and welfare of the children in your service is paramount, and the children's safety and wellbeing is the priority. As a [registered provider](#), you must be committed to safeguarding the children in your care, and to providing a safe environment where they can play, learn and develop.

The scope of this regulation addresses the following:

- » General Safety
- » Safe Sleep
- » Administration of Medication
- » Infection Control
- » [Risk](#) Management
- » [Accident](#) and [Incident](#) Prevention
- » [Fire Safety](#).

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

65. Roles and responsibilities

- » The registered provider and each person working in the service has a clear understanding of their own role and range of responsibilities in the service to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children attending the service.

See Regulations 9 and 29.

See Appendix 21.

General Safety

The following points listed may not address all safety issues. New issues and [hazards](#) can emerge over time. Therefore, the registered provider must ensure that all aspects of their service are reviewed and assessed to ensure the safety of all the children attending.¹²

¹² Competition and Consumer Protection Commission – Child Safety: www.ccpc.ie/consumers/product-safety/child-safety.

Health Service Executive – Child Safety: www.hse.ie/eng/health/child/childsafety/.

66. Infant formula

- » If [staff](#) heat up infant formula or breast milk, the milk is warmed using a bottle warmer or by standing the feed in a container of warm water, for no more than 15 minutes.¹³
- » No milk or other infant foods are warmed in a microwave oven.

67. Choking hazards¹⁴

- » The following foods are not included in meals or offered as snacks:
 - whole nuts; and
 - popcorn.
- » All fruit and vegetables must be quartered or halved.

Examples: grapes, cherry tomatoes.

- » Hazardous small parts that may become detached during normal use, (or that could break off if the equipment was treated roughly), and that present a choking, breathing, or swallowing hazard to a child, are always out of reach and are only used under supervision.

Examples:

- **strangulation hazards (straps, strings and cords);**
 - **flaking paint;**
 - **small items in a sensory table.**
- » The use of amber beads is prohibited.
 - » Children are not allowed to blow up balloons, suck on, or put balloons in their mouths, or have access to un-inflated or under-inflated balloons.
 - » Nappy sacks used for disposing of soiled nappies are kept out of children's reach.

¹³ PIF is managed in accordance with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's Guidance Note no. 22, available at: www.lenus.ie/hse/bitstream/10147/227213/1/GN+22+REV+2+FINAL.pdf.

¹⁴ Examples of other choking risks are included at: www.hse.ie/eng/health/child/childsafety/choking.html.

68. Toxic substances

- » The following items are stored in the original labelled container in a safe and secure way, separate from stored medications and food, and are inaccessible to children:
 - cleaning and sanitising materials;
 - detergents;
 - automatic dishwasher detergents;
 - aerosol cans;
 - pesticides;
 - health and beauty products;
 - medications.
- » Shaving cream or foam is not used as play material.
- » Toys and other products using button-cell batteries, such as small electronic devices, have lockable battery compartments.
- » Natural materials used in sensorial play are non-toxic.

69. Furniture, equipment and materials

Nappy changing mats and units

- » The nappy changing tables are sturdy and stable to prevent tipping over.
- » Nappy changing tables are at a height suitable for the staff to use.

Example: at waist level.

- » Nappy changing supplies are within arm's reach of the changing unit before a nappy change, and staff do not step away while the child is on the unit or table.

Equipment for snack time

- » [High chairs](#) used during snack time conform to safety standards.
- » Equipment used during snack time meets the following requirements:
 - Equipment is used according to manufacturers' instructions, and is appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child.
 - The service provides furniture and utensils that are age appropriate and developmentally suitable to encourage children to be involved in and enjoy snack times.

Blind cords

- » Internal blinds are safe and fitted correctly.
- » Beds, high-chairs, and so on, are positioned away from blinds.

Finger pinch protectors

- » Finger-pinch protection devices are only installed where a [risk assessment](#) identifies a risk to children, and any devices installed are purpose made and comply with fire safety regulations.

Examples: Flexible plastic and rubber devices, adjustable door closing devices, other types of covering for door gaps.

Portable heaters

- » Where used, portable heaters:
 - are attended while in use and are turned off when unattended;
 - are not accessible to children;
 - have protective covering to keep hands and objects away from the heating element;
 - bear the safety certification mark;

Example: CE Mark.

- are at least three feet from curtains, papers, furniture, and any flammable object;
- are used in line with the manufacturer's instructions;
- are not used with an extension cord;
- are placed so the electrical lead is out of children's reach.

Indoor equipment

- » Furniture, toys and equipment on the premises conform to CE or EN safety standards or the [European Communities \(Safety of Toys\) Regulations 2011](#), as applicable.
- » Daily inspection of play equipment takes place in the service.
- » A monthly review of the up-to-date list of products recalls and products withdrawn from use by the [Competition and Consumer Protection Commission](#) is done.
- » Equipment, materials and furnishings are safe and do not carry the following safety hazards:
 - openings that could trap a child's head or limbs;

- elevated surfaces and structures that are poorly guarded;
 - insufficient spacing between equipment;
 - components that can pinch, cut or crush skin and flesh.
- » Equipment, materials and furnishings are placed to help prevent collisions and injuries.
 - » Equipment is not placed on uneven surfaces, near the top of stairs or within reach of a safety hazard, such as a window.
 - » Large pieces of furniture, including televisions, have stable bases and are securely anchored.
 - » Chairs and other furnishings that children can easily climb are kept away from cabinets and shelves.
 - » Stationary activity centres are used with the stabilising legs down in a locked position.
 - » Hazardous equipment is inaccessible to children or removed until it is made safe or replaced.
 - » ‘Jumpers’ (bouncing equipment attached to a door frame or ceiling) and infant and baby walkers are not used.
 - » Safety straps are used on all equipment or furniture if provided by the manufacturer of the equipment.

Ride-on toys

- » Ride-on toys (such as tricycles) and wheeled equipment (such as scooters) used in the service:
 - are assembled and maintained in line with the manufacturers’ instructions;
 - are capable of being steered;
 - are of a suitable size for the child;
 - have a low centre of gravity – that is, that the balance point is near the ground to make it stable and less likely to topple;
 - are in good condition, work properly and are free of sharp edges or protrusions that could injure a child;
 - are not motorised.

Sand area

- » Sand used in the sandbox is free of toxic or harmful materials and is replaced as necessary.

Examples: animal excrement, waste, and so on.

- » Sand play area covers are properly secured when they are lifted or moved to allow children to play in the sandbox.

Water play tables

- » The service adheres to the following requirements for communal water tables:
 - The basin and toys are washed and sanitised at the end of the day.
 - Staff ensure that no child drinks water from the water table.
 - The floor and surface areas under and around the water table are dried during and after play.

Stair gates

- » Stair gates forming a barrier for children under 24 months used by the service to restrict access to dangerous places:
 - comply with fire safety;
 - are properly fitted;
 - conform to the required safety standard (EN 1930:2011).

Trampolines

- » Trampolines, both full and mini-size, are prohibited from being used, both on site and during outings.
- » Trampolines, if prescribed as a therapeutic intervention, should only be used for that purpose.

70. Structural

Walkway surfaces

- » Walking surfaces, such as footpaths, ramps and decks:
 - have a non-slip finish;
 - are free of water and ice and loose material;
 - are free of holes and flaws in the surface.
- » Safe pedestrian walkways, drop-off and pick-up points at the service are:
 - clearly identified;
 - have been pointed out to all children, parents, guardians, staff, [unpaid workers](#) and [contractors](#).

Stairways and ramps

- » Guardrails are provided at open sides of external stairs, ramps, and other walking surfaces.
- » Inside and outside stairs, ramps, porches and other walkways to the service's building are safe to use and are kept in good repair and are well lit.

- » Damaged or worn carpet is repaired.
- » Railings are strong, and do not have any footholds for climbing on, or gaps to fall through, crawl under or over.

71. Safe sleep

Policy on Safe Sleep

- » There is evidence of the [policy on safe sleep](#) being implemented.
- » [Relevant staff](#) know the requirements, and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy on safe sleep.
- » Relevant staff have received training on the policy on safe sleep.

See Regulations 10, 19 and 20.

See Appendix 6.

72. Administration of medication

Policy on Administration of Medication

- » There is evidence of the [policy on administration of medication](#) being implemented.
- » Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy on administration of medication.
- » Relevant staff have received training on the policy on administration of medication.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 3.

73. Infection control

Policy on Infection Control

- » There is evidence of the [policy on infection control](#) being implemented.
- » Relevant staff know the requirements and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy on infection control.
- » Relevant staff have received training on the policy on infection control.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 4.

74. Risk management

Risk Management Policy

- » There is evidence of the [risk management policy](#) being implemented.
- » Relevant staff know the requirements, and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the risk management policy.
- » Relevant staff have received training on the risk management policy.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 15.

Retention of risk management [records](#)

- » The risk management documentation, including all risk assessments completed, is kept by the service.

75. Accidents and incidents

Policy on Accidents and Incidents

- » There is evidence of the [policy on accidents and incidents](#) being implemented.
- » Relevant staff know the requirements, and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy on accidents and incidents.
- » Relevant staff have received training on the policy on accidents and incidents.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 9.

76. Fire safety

Fire Safety Policy

- » There is evidence of the [fire safety policy](#) being implemented.
- » Relevant staff know the requirements, and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the fire safety policy.
- » Relevant staff have received training on the fire safety policy.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 7.

Fire drills

- » Fire drills are carried out by setting off the fire alarm every month and more frequently if necessary.

Examples:

- following an ineffective fire drill practice;
 - following a fire drill that identified risks.
- » Fire drills are carried out on different days of the week and at different times of the day.
 - » Fire drills include a complete evacuation of the service to a pre-arranged, designated assembly point.

Fire extinguishers

- » The fire extinguishers used are suitable and appropriate for use in the type of service being operated.
- » A qualified fire safety person approved the requirements for the service, and this approval is documented.

Fire training

- » The people using the equipment are trained in its use, and were trained by a qualified person.
- » Fire training is undertaken at least every 2 years.

Fire alarms and smoke alarms

- » A fire alarm is in place in every [premises](#) used for early years services.
- » Fire alarms in the service are maintained in line with the requirements set out in [Fire Safety in Pre-Schools 1999](#).
- » All alarms are checked every year by a [competent](#) person with appropriate training. Records of this testing are kept by the service.
- » [Self-contained smoke alarms](#) (mains powered) are tested at least once a month by using the test button on the units to ensure the alarm is sounding. This testing is documented.

General fire safety

- » Fire doors are not obstructed or propped open.
- » Fire exits are clearly identified and easily opened from the inside.
- » If window restrictors are in use, they are able to be opened in case of fire using a child-resistant catch.

See Regulation 26.

Regulation 24: Checking In and Out and Record of Attendance

Purpose

As a [registered provider](#), you must only release children into the care of people who have been authorised by the [parents and guardians](#), and who have been advised to the service. You must ensure that appropriate measures are in place to record the children's attendance at the service and that suitable resources are in place to do this effectively. You must also ensure that all people entering the [premises](#) are authorised to enter and their details are documented.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

77. Roles and responsibilities

- » Each [relevant staff](#) member understands their role and responsibilities in relation to the checking in and out and recording the attendance of children in the service.

See Regulation 9.

78. Authorisation to collect children

Policy on Authorisation to Collect Children

- » There is evidence of the [policy on authorisation to collect children](#) being implemented.
- » Relevant staff know the requirements, and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the policy on authorisation to collect children.
- » Relevant staff have received training on the policy on authorisation to collect children.

See Regulations 10 and 15.

See Appendix 10.

79. Record of attendance: check-in and check-out record for children

- » Each child attending the service is checked in and out by a relevant staff member ([employee](#) or [unpaid worker](#)).
- » A [record](#) of each child's attendance is kept on a daily basis, and is available and readily accessible to relevant staff.
- » The record of attendance kept includes the following:
 - The full name of each child attending the service.
 - The date and time each child arrives and leaves.
 - A record of the name of **one** of the following people at the time that the child arrives and leaves:
 - the person who delivers the child to the service and collects the child from the service.
 - the employee or unpaid worker responsible for checking the children in and out.
 - The record of attendance for each room accurately reflects the children in the room, and is updated when a child leaves or enters.
- » If there are more than 15 children attending, the registered provider ensures that one employee or unpaid worker is assigned responsibility for checking the children in and out. This person is not included in the adult:child ratio.

80. Check-in and check-out register for other parties

- » A daily check-in check-out register is in place for people entering the premises **other than**:
 - a child attending the service;
 - a person dropping off or collecting a child;
 - an employee;
 - an unpaid worker.
- » The following information is recorded in the check-in check-out register for other parties:
 - the date;
 - the person's name;
 - their contact number;
 - the reason for their entry;

- the name of the person who approved access (employee or unpaid worker details);
 - the check-in time;
 - the check-out time.
- » Access to the service is restricted until the check-in register is completed by the person requesting access and their details authenticated by an employee or unpaid worker.
 - » Other parties recorded in the check-in check-out register do not have unsupervised access to children in the service.

81. Retention period

- » The check-in check-out register is retained for one year from the date on which it was created.

See Appendix 20: [Service Record Retention Timeframe](#)

Regulation 25: First Aid

Purpose

As a [registered provider](#), you must ensure the service has enough staff appropriately trained in [first aid](#) for children and are available in case of any injury or sudden illness. The number of [staff](#) with this training will depend on the number and needs of children attending the service and the rosters applied.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

82. Roles and responsibilities

- » Each [relevant staff](#) member understands their role and responsibilities in relation to providing first aid to children in the service.
- » Children with additional healthcare needs that need first aid are managed in line with [parents or guardians'](#) instructions.

Examples: diabetes, epilepsy, allergies.

See Regulation 9.

83. Roster requirements for people trained in first aid

The [First Aid Responder \(FAR\)](#) Education and Training Standard established by the [Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council \(PHECC\)](#) is recognised by [Tusla](#) as being inclusive of content and instruction relating to first aid for children.

- » The number of people trained in first aid for children (FAR) and available for first aid response is based on the service's [risk assessment](#), including the size of the service and the hazards identified.
- » A least one person trained in first aid (FAR) is available to the children while the service is in operation.
- » A list of people trained in first aid (FAR) is available.
- » In-date certification for each trained FAR is available.

84. First aid equipment

- » First aid boxes are restocked as required by designated staff member after each use.
- » A list of supplies that the first aid box must have is included in the first aid box.
- » The first aid box contains appropriate first aid supplies for minor injuries to be treated within the service.
- » Medicines, creams or ointments are kept out of the reach of children and not stored in the first aid box.

85. Recommended contents of first aid box and kits:

Materials	First Aid Travel Kit Contents	First Aid Box Contents	
		1 - 10 people	11 - 25 people
Adhesive plasters	20	20	20
Sterile eye pads (No.16 – bandage attached)	2	2	2
Individually wrapped triangular bandages	2	3	6
Safety pins	6	6	6
Individually wrapped sterile, unmedicated wound dressings Medium (No. 8) 10 x 8 cm)	1	2	2
Individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings Large (No. 9) 13 x 9 cm)	1	2	6
Individually wrapped sterile, unmedicated wound dressings Extra-large (No. 3) 28 x 17.5 cm)	1	2	3
Individually wrapped disinfectant wipes	10	10	20
Paramedic shears	1	1	1
Examination gloves (pairs)	3	5	10
Sterile water where there is no clear running water ¹	2 x 20mls	1 x 500mls	2 x 500mls
Pocket face mask	1	1	1
Water-based burns dressing ² - small (10 x 10 cm)	1	1	1
Water-based burns dressing – large	1	1	1
Crepe bandage (7cm)	1	1	2

¹ If mains tap water is not readily available for eye irrigation, sterile water or sterile normal saline (0.9%) in sealed disposable containers should be provided. Each container should hold at least 20mls and should be discarded once the seal is broken. Eye baths, eye cups and refillable containers should not be used for eye irrigation due to risk of cross infection.

² Where mains tap water is not readily available for cooling burnt area. The water-based burns dressing container should be CE marked.

86. Accessibility of first aid equipment

- » First aid equipment is marked, easily recognisable and accessible to adults, but inaccessible to children.
- » A fully equipped first aid box is available within the service on each floor with early years children.

See Appendix 3.

87. Emergency contact details

- » [Emergency](#) medical assistance contact details are publicly displayed within the service.

Examples: a local doctor's number, a nearby hospital.

88. Recording of first aid care and responses provided

- » Care given in a first aid situation is documented in line with the [policy on accidents and incidents](#).

Regulation 26: Fire Safety Measures

Purpose

As the [registered provider](#), you must ensure that the fire safety [records](#) are available and kept in the service for the defined period required. Also, these records must be open to inspection by the parents, guardians, [employees](#) and authorised people.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

89. Roles and responsibilities

- » Each [staff](#) member understands their role and responsibilities in relation to the [fire safety](#) measures in the service.

See Regulations 9 and 23.

90. Record of fire drills

- » Each fire drill that has taken place in the premises is recorded.
- » The record shows that fire drills are carried out every month the service is in operation.
- » The record shows that all children attending the service are included in the drill – that is, the fire drill is carried out at different times of the day and on different days of the week to include all groups.
- » The fire drill record includes the following details:
 - date of drill;
 - time of drill;
 - how many children and staff are present;
 - length of drill;
 - routes of escape used.

91. Record of firefighting equipment and [smoke alarms](#)

- » The number, type, location and maintenance of records relating to fire equipment, including fire extinguishers and smoke alarm systems, is available and includes:

- the maintenance certificate from a [competent contractor](#) or company;
 - the service details on the labels of portable fire extinguishers, fire safety blankets, and so on.
- » Records showing self-contained smoke alarms are tested at least once a month to ensure the alarm tone is working.
- » Records detailing all alarms are checked once a year by a competent person with appropriate training.

92. Access to records

- » File records are stored securely.
- » The fire drill and maintenance records are available to:
- [parents and guardians](#) of children attending the service;
 - parents and guardians of children proposing to attend the service;
 - employees;
 - any authorised person.

93. Record retention period

- » Records of fire drills and maintenance records of fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms are kept for 5 years after their creation.
- » See Appendix 20: [Service Record Retention Timeframe](#).

94. Fire notice

- » There is a notice setting out the procedures to be followed if there is a fire.
- » The fire notice is displayed in a prominent place in the service.
- » See Regulations 10 and 23.

See Appendix 7.

Regulation 27: Supervision

Purpose

As the [registered provider](#), you must ensure that all children are appropriately supervised at all times while attending the service. This supervision **must not** compromise the child's right to privacy.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

95. Roles and responsibilities

- » Each [relevant staff](#) member understands their role and responsibilities in relation to supervising children at all times in the service and maintains the rights and dignity of each child.

See Regulation 9.

96. Appropriate supervision

- » Each child attending the service is under the supervision of a qualified staff member at all times.
- » Children are supervised primarily by sight – that is, observation.
- » Supervision for short intervals by sound (listening) is allowed, as long as relevant staff can talk with children who are out of sight.

Example: children who can use the toilet independently.

- » Constant careful supervision by both sight and sound occurs to ensure children's safety, where risks are higher.

Examples: swimming, water tables, sensory play activities.

- » Supervision is appropriate at all times, including during:
 - indoor activities;
 - snack times;
 - sleep time;
 - toileting and nappy changing;
 - technology use, including internet access.

- » Supervision considers:
 - the required adult:child ratio;
 - the individual children's needs;
 - the activities being engaged in;
 - staffing levels so that supervision of children is not compromised due to unexpected [staff](#) absences.

Examples: late arrivals, unplanned leave (sick leave).

- » No person on the [premises](#) is under the influence of alcohol or any other substance that has a detrimental effect¹⁵ on their functioning or behaviour during the service's hours of operation.

97. Sleep

- » Sleeping children are supervised at all times by:
 - a staff member remaining in the room where children are sleeping; or
 - a staff member going into the sleep room at least every 10 minutes and observing each child.
- » Physical checks of sleeping children (at least every 10 minutes) are recorded in accordance with the service's [policy on safe sleep](#).
- » Where used, sound monitors increase supervision, but these monitors do not replace direct visual and auditory supervision.

98. Food and drink

- » Children are supervised while eating and drinking.

99. Toileting

- » Children who are able to use toilet facilities independently are supported to do so.
- » Staff are within hearing range of children, in case help is needed.

¹⁵ The result of a wrong action or a failure to follow correct procedures that has a damaging or harmful effect. The [person in charge](#) must be satisfied and have documentary medical advice for relevant staff members taking medication, confirming that the medication will not impair that staff member's ability to care for children properly.

100. Quiet play

- » Spaces where children choose or have the opportunity for alone time or quiet play, are designed with visibility in mind that allows constant adult supervision in an unobtrusive way.
- » Equipment and furniture are arranged to ensure effective supervision, while also respecting children’s wishes for alone time and space.

Regulation 28: Insurance

Purpose

As a [registered provider](#), you must ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

101. Roles and responsibilities

- » The service is adequately insured, evidenced by a current certificate of insurance relevant to the type of service being operated.

See Regulation 9.

102. Insurance cover

- » The service's insurance includes the following, where appropriate:
 - public liability insurance;
 - insurance against fire and theft;
 - buildings insurance;
 - any other insurance requirements depending on the services provided as identified by the registered provider or the Inspectorate.

103. Insurance certificate

- » The insurance certificate for the service is available and in date on inspection.
- » The information provided on the relevant insurance certificate includes:
 - the contact details for the insurance provider;
 - the name and address of the service insured;
 - the categories of insurance cover for the service;
 - the number of children covered by insurance within the service;
 - the start date and end date of current insurance cover.
- » The number of children in the service at any time does not exceed the number for which the insurance is provided.

Section 2

Premises and Facilities

The regulations that apply to this area are:

- **Regulation 21:** Equipment and Materials.
- **Regulation 19:** Premises.
- **Regulation 30:** Minimum Space Requirements.

Regulation 21: Equipment and Materials

Purpose

As the [registered provider](#), you must ensure that there is enough suitable furniture, play and work equipment, and materials available on the [premises](#) of the pre-school service.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

104. Roles and responsibilities

- » [Relevant staff](#) have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities relating to the availability, use, management and safety of the furniture, equipment and materials utilised in the service.

See Regulation 9.

105. Availability of and access to equipment and materials

- » A wide variety of age and developmentally appropriate equipment is available for children.

Examples: natural and sensorial materials (treasure basket, wooden materials, clay, dramatic clay props.

- » There is access to a sufficient quantity of safe, well-maintained, high-quality materials and equipment, toys and furniture for all children.
- » Equipment and materials engages all children and keeps them active and involved.

See Regulation 19.

106. Equipment and materials are inclusive

- » Materials, equipment and toys provide a rich and varied environment with regard to gender, race, culture, ethnicity and additional needs, to encourage respect for diversity, equality and inclusion.
- » If the service provides outdoor play equipment and materials, they are of suitable design and size for early years children.

See Regulation 19.

107. Furniture and equipment

- » There is enough furniture that is durable and child-sized, or adapted for children's use.

Examples: child-sized chairs and tables, low level shelving holds and displays children's toys and equipment.

- » Adults have a comfortable place to sit, hold, and feed infants, and to read with, interact with and comfort children.
- » The adult seating is suitable for use by adults.
- » Materials are organised and grouped on open storage units at the children's level to encourage children to use them independently.
- » Equipment, furnishings, toys, and play materials have smooth, non-porous surfaces or washable fabric surfaces that are easy to clean and sanitize, or are disposable.

108. Personalised equipment

- » Specially adaptive equipment is correctly used, if required by the children.

Examples: special toys, wheelchairs, and augmentative communication devices like picture boards or writing tablets.

See Regulations 10 and 23.

109. Maintenance

- » Toys, equipment, materials and furniture are:
 - clean;
 - in good condition;
 - regularly checked for damage and wear and tear;
 - appropriately maintained.
- » A cleaning schedule and programme is available and documented.
- » Risk Management requirements are implemented as set out in Regulation 23.

Regulation 29: Premises

Purpose

As a [registered provider](#), your service's [premises](#) must be safe, suitable for their purpose, and provide an appropriate environment for the children attending the service and the [staff](#). The premises must comply with relevant statutory provisions and be clean and hygienic.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

110. Roles and responsibilities

- » The registered provider and [relevant staff](#) have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the management of premises.

See Regulation 9.

111. Sound and stable structure

- » The service's exterior walls, roof and foundation appear to be structurally sound, weather-tight and water-tight to ensure protection from weather.
- » Each interior floor, wall and ceiling appears to be well finished with no evidence of toxic fumes or mould.
- » Each window, exterior door and basement or cellar hatchway appears to be weather-tight and water-tight when closed.
- » Drainage and septic tanks are inaccessible to children.

112. Safety and security of the premises

- » Appropriate security systems are in place to protect the premises from any unauthorised entry, and unsupervised exit of children from the service.

Examples: a bell entry system, keypad entry, glazed panel at side of door.

- » Exits are clearly identified and visible at all times during service hours.
- » Childcare areas in the service are not used for any business or purpose unrelated to providing child care when children are present in these areas.
- » The physical environment is safe, secure, and suitable for purpose. This includes the following:
 - passageways are free of obstacles;
 - electrical sockets are safe;
 - floor coverings are secured;
 - floor coverings are non-slip;
 - choking hazards are removed;
 - safety devices are used on windows and doors (including visibility strips at a child's height);
 - no trailing flexes are in children's reach;
 - safety glass is used (BS6206);
 - appropriate [safety symbols](#) are used.

See Regulation 23.

113. Storage

- » Equipment, including equipment not in use is stored safely and in an organised and hygienic way.

114. Adequate lighting

- » The service is an inviting bright environment with both natural and glare-free artificial lighting that provides enough light and comfort for activities.
- » There is a balance between natural and artificial lighting.
- » Natural light can be controlled.
- » The stairwells and corridors are well lit. There is emergency lighting with unobstructed and visible paths for entering and exiting, as well as clearly marked exits and emergency exits.
- » Outside artificial lighting is provided at entrances and exits used by children and their parents and guardians to ensure good visibility if children are being dropped off or collected outside of daylight hours.

115. Adequate heating

- » There is enough suitable heating to ensure a room temperature of 18 - 22°C.
- » Radiators have a surface temperature up to but no higher than 50°C, or radiators with a surface temperature higher than 50°C are guarded.

Example: radiator covers.

- » Heating and boiler systems are certified as being maintained by an approved [contractor](#), and this certification is up-to-date.
- » Systems are in place to minimise the risk of exposure to carbon monoxide in the service.

Examples: adequate ventilation, chimneys regularly cleaned, carbon monoxide alarms in place.

116. Adequate [ventilation](#)

- » Fresh air can circulate in rooms occupied by children.
- » Each room within the service, particularly sanitary and nappy-changing areas, are adequately ventilated, either naturally through windows that can be opened, or by mechanical ventilation, such as fans, air conditioners and so on.
- » If mechanical ventilation systems are used, they are maintained and a record of the maintenance is held.
- » Areas that have been recently painted, carpeted, tiled, or otherwise renovated are ventilated before they are used by children.

117. Cleaning of premises

- » The premises are kept in a clean condition in line with the [Management of Infectious Disease in Childcare Facilities and other Childcare Settings](#).
- » A detailed Cleaning Programme is in place within the service setting out:
 - the items and areas to be cleaned;
 - the frequency of cleaning;
 - the person responsible for doing the cleaning;
 - the cleaning fluids and materials to be used;
 - the equipment to be used.

- » Scheduled cleaning is carried out in a way, and at a time, that does not interfere with the care or welfare of the children.
- » The cleaning programme includes the following items for routine cleaning: walls, floors, windows, windowsills, ceilings, light fittings and covers, doors (including handles), toilets, wash-hand basins, cupboards, shelving, radiators and radiator covers, cots, cot mattresses, sleep mats, refrigerator, food storage facilities, sinks, tables (including underside and legs), work and play surfaces, furniture, chairs, crockery, cutlery, toys, and so on.
- » Where a cot is required, the cot(s) is cleaned between each child's use. If the cot is soiled with blood or body fluids, they are cleaned first and then disinfected with a chlorine-based disinfectant, then rinsed and dried.
- » Play surfaces are cleaned, rinsed and dried before use or when visibly soiled.
- » Whenever possible, disposable materials are used for cleaning.

Examples: paper towels, disposable cloths.

- » Sponges are not used for cleaning and sanitising.
- » If disposal cloths are not used, separate colour-coded, microfiber cleaning cloths and cleaning equipment are available for kitchen areas, children's areas and toilets. In the toilet areas, separate cloths are used for cleaning the toilet and wash-hand basin.
- » Mop heads and buckets are not cleaned in a sink that is used for food preparation. Mop heads are not left soaking in dirty water.
- » Buckets are emptied after use, washed with detergent and warm water and dried before storing.
- » All cleaning equipment is stored clean and dry.
- » Cleaning agents, disinfectant and detergents are used correctly and as instructed by the manufacturer.

See Regulation 23.

118. Cleaning requirements for sanitary equipment

- » Toilets, sinks, wash-hand basins and surrounding areas are cleaned as needed, but at least twice a day.
- » Where used, potties are emptied immediately and carefully into the toilet, cleaned then wiped over with a disinfectant and dried thoroughly using disposable paper towels. They are then stored appropriately.

- » Gloves and equipment designated for cleaning and disinfecting toilet-training equipment and toilets are used for each cleaning, and are not used for other cleaning purposes. Utility gloves are washed with warm soapy water and dried after each use.

119. Cleaning requirements for play materials and equipment

- » Toys and play equipment are washed and disinfected in line with the manufacturer's instructions and the cleaning programme.
- » Cloth or soft toys are machine washable on a hot cycle following manufacturer's instructions.
- » Toys can be washed and disinfected.
- » All toys that are visibly dirty or contaminated with blood or body fluids are taken out of use immediately for cleaning or disposal. Toys waiting to be cleaned are stored separately.
- » Soft modelling materials and dough are replaced regularly.
- » Dressing-up clothes are washed in line with the cleaning programme.
- » Sensory equipment, including ball pools, soft play areas or sand boxes, are cleaned once a week, or more often if required or contaminated.

120. Maintenance and repair

- » The service is decorated appropriate to an Early Years Service.
- » Flooring is smooth, hard-wearing, easily cleaned and non-absorbent.
- » Carpets are kept to a minimum and used only in small designated areas.

Example: a book corner.

- » Carpets are not used in toilet rooms, nappy-changing areas, and areas where food handling occurs. Carpets are maintained in a hygienic condition.
- » Floor coverings are secured to keep staff and children safe from tripping or slipping.
- » Walls and floors are kept in good repair, and are safe with no sharp edges, splinters, protruding nails or missing parts.
- » All joints and crevices are sealed.
- » Pathways are cleared and maintained during bad weather to prevent falls.

121. Waste disposal

- » Rubbish is removed from rooms occupied by children and staff every day. It is removed from the premises regularly.
- » Waste, both indoors and outdoors, is inaccessible to children.
- » Waste bins are foot-pedal operated.
- » Soiled nappies are stored in a way that will not give rise to bad smells or cause a risk of infection. That is, they are stored in sealed airtight containers that are not accessible to children. The containers are removed from the premises at least once a day.
- » Bins are maintained in good repair and in a clean condition, and there are enough bins to contain all waste.
- » Outside, waste is stored in rigid, lidded containers and fenced off from the outdoor play area.
- » Bins and waste storage areas are regularly cleaned and disinfected.

122. Adequate and suitable sanitary facilities

- » There is one toilet and one wash-hand basin for every 11 toilet-trained early years children¹⁶.

Children's toilets

- » Individual toilet cubicles are provided for children.
- » Suitable, adequate, hygienic and soundly constructed sanitary accommodation (bathrooms with toilets, wash-hand basins and so on) is provided for toilet-trained children.
- » Children can easily open every toilet door from the inside, and relevant staff can easily open toilet doors from the outside if adult assistance is needed.
- » Toilet cubicles are sealed off from playrooms if the bathroom opens directly into playrooms or any occupied rooms.

Wash-hand basins

- » Each wash-hand basin is equipped so that the user has access to:
 - running cold and hot water. The hot water temperature should be no more than 43°C;
 - a supply of hand-cleansing liquid soap;
 - disposable, single-use drying cloth or paper towels.

¹⁶ There is no requirement for separate boys and girls toilets in an Early Years Service.

- » Step-ups are available for children if needed.
- » Wash-hand basins are not used for rinsing soiled clothing, for cleaning equipment that is used for toileting, or for disposing of any waste water used in cleaning the service.

Nappy changing

- » The service has one nappy-changing unit, including a wash-hand basin and changing mat, for every 11 children in nappies.
- » The nappy-changing unit and mat is smooth and easy to clean.
- » Nappy-changing areas are separate from occupied rooms, including sleep rooms.
- » Appropriate storage is provided for all necessary nappy-changing equipment

Examples: gloves, nappy supplies.

Protective clothing

- » Single-use disposable gloves are available at the nappy-changing unit and are used by the relevant member of staff during nappy changes.
- » Disposable gloves are used on both hands during nappy changing.
- » Single-use disposable aprons are available at nappy-changing unit and are used during nappy changing.

Disposal of sanitary waste

- » A leak-proof, cleanable and sealable airtight container is available for disposing of used nappies, gloves and aprons.
- » A pedal bin is provided for disposing of paper towels.

Adult toilet and wash-hand basin

- » Separate, adequate, hygienic and soundly constructed toilet facilities are provided for staff.
- » A minimum of one toilet and one wash-hand basin is provided for every 8 staff.

See Regulation 23.

Regulation 30: Minimum Space Requirements

Purpose

As the [registered provider](#), you must provide enough clear space indoors to meet the needs of all children.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

123. Roles and responsibilities

- » [Relevant staff](#) are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the provision of clear floor space relevant to the service type, and the number of children in any room of the service.
- » The service has enough space to accommodate different types of play and activities, and the number of children who want to take part.
- » The minimum amount of usable [clear floor space](#) per child is a minimum of 1.818 square metres of clear floor space per child.

See Regulation 9.

Section 3

Policies, Procedures and Statements

These are the core requirements for each policy,
procedure and statement

Index	Appendix Number	Theme
Statement of Purpose and Function.	1	Governance
Complaints Policy.	2	Governance
Policy on Administration of Medication.	3	Safety
Policy on Infection Control.	4	Safety
Policy on Managing Behaviour.	5	Health, Welfare and Development of the Child
Policy on Safe Sleep.	6	Safety
Fire Safety Policy.	7	Safety
Inclusion Policy.	8	Health, Welfare and Development of the Child
Policy on Accidents and Incidents.	9	Safety
Policy on Authorisation to Collect Children.	10	Safety
Policy on Healthy Eating.	11	Health, Welfare and Development
Policy on Staff Absences.	12	Governance
Policy on the Use of the Internet and Photographic and Recording Devices.	13	Health, Welfare and Development of the Child
Recruitment Policy.	14	Governance
Risk Management Policy.	15	Safety
Settling-In Policy.	16	Health, Welfare and Development of the Child
Staff Training Policy.	17	Governance
Staff Supervision Policy.	18	Governance
Safety Statement.	19	Governance

Appendix 1: Statement of Purpose and Function

The Statement of Purpose and Function for a Drop-In Early Years Service is a description of the service reflecting the day-to-day operation of the service, including the following core elements:

It is available and communicated to [staff, parents and guardians](#).

It states who the service is aimed at.

It states the class or type of service provided.

It gives the hours of the service.

It sets out the age range of the children catered for in the service.

It sets out the number of children that can be catered for in the service.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Appendix 2: Complaints Policy

The Complaints Policy for a Drop-In Early Years Service is a policy setting out the procedures for both making and dealing with complaints about any aspect of the service, including the following core elements:

It is available and communicated to all [parents and guardians](#).

It sets out the procedures as to how a person can make a complaint – that is, how to make your complaint and who to make it to.

It gives the name of the person in the service who receives complaints. This information includes who to complain to if the complaint is about a service run by just one person, or if the registered provider is the subject of the complaint.

It states that complaints are treated in a confidential manner.

It states how complaints are dealt with in a consistent way including statements about how complaints are:

- » managed – informal resolution or formal processes of resolution;
- » reported;
- » handled – without fear, favour or prejudice;
- » investigated – promptly, taken seriously and handled appropriately and sensitively.

It also:

- » states how [staff](#) are involved;
- » describes the progress of a complaint;
- » states how the person making the complaint is to be kept informed of progress;
- » gives the anticipated timeline for dealing with the complaint.

It describes how:

- » a complaint **not** within the scope of the service will be dealt with, for example – Gardaí;
- » child safeguarding concerns (child abuse, neglect) are passed on to the designated liaison person in the service, and how they are managed in line with the service’s child protection and welfare policy.

It describes the process for closing the complaint by the service including:

- » recording the outcome of the complaint;
- » details of any recommendations;
- » details of any changes to practice, policy or statement;
- » information about the appeals process.

It requires that an accurate and detailed [record](#) of each complaint is kept.

It states the storage location of complaint information, together with the names of the people who have access to it.

It states that the complaint records are kept for 2 years from the date the complaint has been dealt with¹⁷.

The policy also details the role of [Tusla](#) in the complaints process.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks:

Tusla: Are you concerned about the operation of an Early Years' Service?

www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/concerned-about-the-operation-of-a-eyes

Tusla: New Registrations

www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/new-providers/

Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement: A Guide for Early Years Services in Ireland

www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Developing_a_Child_Safeguarding_Statement_-_A_Guide_for_Early_Years_Ser....pdf

¹⁷ This is without prejudice to keep this record under any other enactment or rule of law.

Appendix 3: Policy on Administration of Medication

The Policy on Administration of Medication for a Drop-In Early Years Service sets out the specific procedures to be followed to ensure the safe storage and administration of medication to child.

Childcare staff must take appropriate actions to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children in their care. This includes administering medication, if required, especially in an [emergency](#) situation. The policy on administration of medication for the service sets out the procedures to ensure that this is carried out in a safe way, and that a child’s care is not compromised, or that they have to leave the service if the administration of medication is refused or delayed.

The policy includes the following core elements:

It is available and communicated to all [parents and guardians](#).

It sets out the procedure for dealing with children’s prescription medication.

It includes a medication consent form.

It states that a parent’s or guardian’s consent is required to give medication.

It sets out the [relevant staff](#) who have the [competency](#) (knowledge, skills and training) to administer medication, and includes the procedures to follow before, during and after administering medication.

It describes the procedures for managing a medication emergency – for example – an allergic reaction – including notifying parents and guardians and emergency services.

It states what children’s medication [records](#) will be kept – for example, the dosage, time, and so on.

It describes how medications will be labelled with the child’s name and other details.

It describes the procedures for storing medications, including that medicines, creams and ointments are not stored in the first aid box.

It sets out the procedures for the storage of medications, in line with manufacturer’s instructions.

It details when anti-febrile medication is required (to reduce temperature).

It provides information about recording a temperature and the procedures to be followed when the body temperature of a child rises beyond a safe limit (38°C or higher).

It sets out procedures for dealing with an individual care plan if one is provided for a child. The individual care plan includes any specific information about medication requirements – for example, diabetes.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks:

Irish Cancer Society

www.cancer.ie/

Appendix 4: Policy on Infection Control

The Policy on Infection Control for a Drop-In Early Years Service specifies the procedures to be followed in the service to protect [staff](#) (paid and unpaid) and early years children attending the service from the transmission of infections.

The infection control policy is reflective of the [Management of Infectious Disease in Childcare Facilities and other Childcare Settings](#) and includes the following core elements:

It is available and communicated to all parents and guardians.

It sets out hand-washing procedures to ensure that:

- » the correct hand-washing technique using a cleaning agent is practised;
- » the guidelines on hand-washing are displayed;
- » children’s hand-washing and drying is supervised; and
- » requirements for staff hand-washing and drying are in place.

It sets out respiratory hygiene (coughing and sneezing) practices and procedures for staff and children.

It sets out specific requirements about preventing cross-contamination.

It also sets out general infection controls – for example:

- » there is a cleaning programme in place;
- » protective clothing is used (gloves and aprons);
- » blood and body fluid spillages procedures are in place;
- » toys and other play materials are not allowed into the toilet area;
- » individual combs, hairbrushes, toothbrushes, personal clothing, bedding and towels are labelled and not shared;
- » sterilisation procedures (infants feeding equipment and soothers);
- » cots, sleeping mats and beds are at least 50cm apart;
- » detergents and disinfectants are used correctly.

It describes the safe management of perishable food and includes:

- » that perishable food is kept in a refrigerator or cool place at temperatures between 0 - 5°C;
- » that perishable food is not left at room temperature for more than two hours;
- » that perishable food left at room temperature for two hours or longer is discarded.

Child immunisation requirements, as in the immunisation guidelines, are set out in the policy and include the safe management of children who are not immunised if there is an infectious disease outbreak.

It describes procedures for managing outbreaks.

It sets out the procedures for exclusion from the service due to illness.

It details infection control and safety requirements for nappy changing and toileting of children, for example:

- » children's hands are washed and dried after nappy changing or toileting;
- » staff wash their hands before and after nappy changing or toileting;
- » nappy changing procedures;
- » changing mats in the nappy changing unit are waterproof, have an easily cleanable cover and are in a good state of repair – that is, no breaks or tears;
- » nappy changing mats and units are cleaned after each nappy change.

It states the procedures for reporting notifiable infectious diseases to [Tusla](#), Early Years Inspectorate.

It includes procedures for risk management in relation to infection control.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks:

National Childhood Network: Healthy Ireland Smart Start – Health and Safety
www.ncn.ie/index.php/2-ncn/203-healthy-ireland-smart-start-health-safety-3

National Primary Childhood Immunisation Schedule
www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/pubinfo/pcischedule/immschedule/

Health Service Executive: Immunisation Guidelines for Ireland
www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/guidelines

Appendix 5: Policy on Managing Behaviour

The Policy on Managing Behaviour for a Drop-In Early Years Service, is a policy that:

- » supports positive behaviour by the early years children attending the service;
- » sets out approaches for managing challenging behaviour by an early years child attending the service, which helps them to manage their behaviour in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development.

The policy includes the following core elements:

It is available and communicated to all [parents and guardians](#).

It sets out how children’s positive social, emotional and behavioural wellbeing is supported and promoted, reflecting up-to-date professional practice.

It states how children are supported in preventing, managing and resolving conflict.

It states how children with challenging behaviour are supported.

It states that the following are prohibited practices in the service:

- » the use of corporal punishment;
- » the use of, or threat of, any practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitative, intimidating, isolating, emotionally or physically harmful to the child or neglectful of the child.

If child abuse or neglect is suspected, it is managed in line with the service’s child protection and welfare policy.

It states how support is offered to [staff](#) on behaviour management and supporting children’s emotional needs.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks

National Childhood Network: Healthy Ireland Smart Start – Emotional Wellbeing
www.ncn.ie/index.php/2-ncn/199-healthy-ireland-smart-start-emotional-well-being

Aistear Síolta Practice Guide

aistearsiolta.ie/en/

Appendix 6: Policy on Safe Sleep

The Policy on Safe Sleep for a Drop-In Early Years Service is a policy specifying the way safe and suitable sleeping arrangements are provided for pre-school children attending the service.

The policy is developed in line with best practice guidance from [First Light](#) (formerly Irish Sudden Infant Death Association (ISIDA)) and [Safe Sleep for your Baby - Reduce the Risk of Cot Death](#) (HSE 2017) and includes the following core elements:

It is available and communicated to all [parents and guardians](#).

It describes the correct sleep positioning of children, according to up-to-date professional practice, including:

- » 'Baby on their Back'.
- » 'Feet at Foot of Cot'.
- » Head uncovered.

It describes the children's comfortable sleep environment, including:

- » All objects, toys and hanging items are removed (clear cot).
- » Overheating is avoided.
- » Bottle-propping is prohibited.
- » Soothers are used appropriately.

- » It sets out how children are supervised at all times while sleeping:
 - a staff member remaining in the room where children are sleeping; or
 - a staff member going into the sleep room at least every 10 minutes and observing each child.
- » Physical checks take place at least every 10 minutes, including completing a sleep record: The sleep record details:
 - the time of the check;
 - who carried out the check;
 - the sleep position of each child (as above);
 - any change in the child's normal skin colour;
 - any change in the child's normal breathing pattern;
 - the sleep room temperature for children aged under 2 years (16°C-20°C).
- » Using a viewing panel and listening devices.

It describes the sleep facilities for children under 2 years of age.

It describes the sleep facilities for children over 2 years of age.

It describes how slings – if they are used – are used safely.

It states the [prohibited equipment for sleeping children](#) – for example, buggies, waterbeds, and so on.

It sets out the procedures for managing an [emergency](#) if a sleeping child is found to be unresponsive.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks:

First Light: Safe sleep for under 2s

firstlight.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Safe_Sleep.pdf

HSE: Safe Sleep for your Baby – Reduce the Risk of Cot Death

www.healthpromotion.ie/hp-files/docs/HPM00078.pdf

Tusla: Safety Alert – Cots

www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/4th_July_2016_Briefing_Note_Safety_Alert_Cots.pdf

Tusla: Adequate and suitable rest facilities

www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/27th_July_Updated_-_Interpretation_of_safe_sleep_requirements_pre_school_regs_2016.pdf

The Lullaby Trust: Safer Sleep for Babies, Support for Families

www.lullabytrust.org.uk/

Scottish Cot Death Trust: Reduce the Risks of Cot Death

www.scottishcotdeathtrust.org/skyblucms/resources/early-years-guide-a5-sept-2013.pdf

Appendix 7: Fire Safety Policy

The [Fire Safety](#) Policy for a Drop-In Early Years Service is a policy specifying:

- » how often and at what times fire drills are to be carried out in the service; and
- » the way the written record referred to in Regulation 26 is to be kept.

The policy also specifies the way the [registered provider](#) ensures that all [employees](#), [unpaid workers](#) and [contractors](#) are:

- » made aware of and are trained in the procedures to be followed in case of a fire in the service; and
- » made familiar with the location of any fire-fighting equipment and are trained in the use of this equipment.

The policy is developed with reference to [Fire Safety in Preschools 1999](#), available at www.housing.gov.ie/ and includes the following core elements:

It is available and communicated to all [parents and guardians](#).

It specifies the way [staff](#) are:

- » made aware of and trained in the procedures to be followed in case of fire, with particular awareness of the layout of the premises and the ages of the children;
- » made familiar with the location of fire-fighting equipment;
- » trained in the use of this equipment; and
- » trained at least every 2 years.

It states how often and at what times fire drills are to be carried out.

It states that fire drills will be practised by setting off the fire alarm.

It specifies the [record](#) keeping requirements, including:

- » recording in writing the fire drills that take place;
- » recording in writing the number, type and maintenance records of fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms;
- » how records are to be stored;
- » the retention of records for 5 years after they have been created;
- » who has access to records.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks:

Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government: Technical Guidance Document B – Fire Safety

www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/migratedfiles/en/Publications/DevelopmentandHousing/BuildingStandards/FileDownload%2C1640%2Cen.pdf

Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government: National Directorate Fire and Emergency Management

www.housing.gov.ie/community/fire-and-emergency-management/national-directorate-fire-and-emergency-management

Keeping Communities Safe: A Framework for Fire Safety in Ireland

www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/migratedfiles/en/Publications/Community/FireandEmergencyServices/FileDownload%2C32381%2Cen.pdf

Appendix 8: Inclusion Policy

The Inclusion Policy for a Drop-In Early Years Service is a policy specifying the way the service ensures that the needs (including the physical, emotional and intellectual needs) and the religious beliefs (if any) of all children attending are addressed.

This inclusion policy is developed in line with Department of Children and Youth Affairs: [Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Care and Education](#) and includes the following core elements:

It is available and communicated to all [parents and guardians](#).

It sets out how the service ensures equality of access into the service for all children.

It describes how the service creates a culture of inclusion and acceptance.

It describes how the physical environment (including equipment and materials) in the service supports inclusion and reflects diversity.

It details how the service recognises and responds to bias or discrimination.

It sets out how discriminatory incidents are recorded and dealt with.

It states how reflective practice, training and development opportunities are available to staff.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks:

Department of Children and Youth Affairs: Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Care and Education

aim.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Diversity-Equality-and-Inclusion-Charter-and-Guidelines-for-Early-Childhood-Care-Education.pdf

Report of the Inter-Departmental Group: Supporting Access to the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme for Children with a Disability

www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/publications/20151118ECCEAccessSpecialNeedsReport.pdf

Access and Inclusion Model

www.aim.gov.ie/

Equality and Diversity Early Childhood National Network

edenn.org/

National Disability Authority

nda.ie/

Ask Me: Guidelines for Effective Consultation with People with Disabilities

nda.ie/nda-files/-Ask-Me-Guidelines-for-Effective-Consultation-with-People-with-Disabilities1.pdf

National Disability Authority: Make your websites more accessible

nda.ie/Resources/Accessibility-toolkit/Make-your-websites-more-accessible/

National Disability Authority: eLearning

nda.ie/Resources/eLearning/

Health Service Executive & National Disability Authority: National Guidelines on Accessible Health and Social Care Services www.hse.ie/eng/services/yourhealthservice/access/natguideaccessibleservices/natguideaccessibleservices.pdf

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform & National Disability Authority: Customer Communications Toolkit for the Public Service

universaldesign.ie/Products-Services/Custom-Communications-Toolkit-for-the-Public-Service-A-Universal-Design-Approach/Custom-Communications-Toolkit-for-the-Public-Service.pdf

Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training

www.decet.org/

Department of Justice and Equality: National Traveller and Roma Inclusion Strategy

justice.ie/en/JELR/National%20Traveller%20and%20Roma%20Inclusion%20Strategy,%202017-2021.pdf/Files/National%20Traveller%20and%20Roma%20Inclusion%20Strategy,%202017-2021.pdf

Aistear Síolta Practice Guide

aistearsiolta.ie/en/

Appendix 9: Policy on Accidents and Incidents

The Policy on Accidents and Incidents for a Drop-In Early Years Service is a policy specifying:

- » the measures to be taken to prevent [accidents](#) and [incidents](#);
- » the procedures to be followed when an accident or incident involving an early years child occurs while the child is attending the service, including the steps to take to contact the [parent or guardian](#) of the child or the emergency services if necessary;
- » the way to keep a [record](#) of the accident or incident;
- » the way a record should be shared with the parent or guardian of the child involved in the accident or incident.

The policy includes the following core elements:

It is available and communicated to all parents and guardians.

It sets out the measures the service will take to prevent accidents and incidents, including:

- » how children are adequately supervised;
- » how the service ensures adequate staff-ratios at all times;
- » that [staff](#) have a clear understanding of each child and their stage of development;
- » how the service undertakes a review of any [risk assessment](#);
- » assessing the environment to minimise [hazards](#);
- » ensuring the appropriate use of equipment and materials in the service;
- » ensuring the [safety statement](#) is documented and implemented.

It sets out the procedures to be followed when an accident or incident involving an early years child occurs while the child is attending the service, including information about:

- » staff awareness of their roles and responsibilities if there is an accident or incident;
- » the [first aid](#) requirements – for example, a trained first aider carries out assessment;
- » the administering of immediate first aid (if required);
- » the supervision and management of an injured child;

- » contacting parents and guardians and the emergency services (if necessary);
- » completing an accident or incident form, including documenting the first aid care and response provided;
- » how parents will be communicated with following an accident or incident;
- » [notifying Tusla](#) (if required).

It sets out what records of the accident or incident need to be kept.

It states the period of time the accident or incident records are kept for.

It states how accidents and incidents are reviewed to effect a change in practice, policy or procedure (if required).

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks:

Tusla: New Registrations

www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/new-providers/

Health Service Executive: Child Safety

www.hse.ie/eng/health/child/childsafety/

Injury Observatory for Britain and Ireland

www.injuryobservatory.net/

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents

www.rospa.com/

Health and Safety Authority

www.hsa.ie/eng/

Poisons Information Centre of Ireland

www.poisons.ie/

National Standards Authority of Ireland

www.nsai.ie/

Child Accident Prevention Trust

www.capt.org.uk/

Eurosafe: European Association for Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion
www.eurosafe.eu.com/home

National Childhood Network: Healthy Ireland Smart Start: Health and Safety
www.ncn.ie/index.php/2-ncn/203-healthy-ireland-smart-start-health-safety-3

Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement: A Guide for Early Years Services in Ireland
www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Developing_a_Child_Safeguarding_Statement_-_A_Guide_for_Early_Years_Ser....pdf

Appendix 10: Policy on Authorisation to Collect Children

The Policy on Authorisation to Collect Children for a Drop-In Early Years Service is a policy specifying the rules of the service in relation to collecting children attending the service.

The policy includes the following core elements:

It is available and communicated to all [parents and guardians](#).

It sets out the routine for pick-up and drop-off.

It describes how children are supervised during collection times, and when entering and leaving the service.

It sets out who is authorised to collect a child.

It sets out the procedure for when a non-authorised person arrives to collect a child.

It sets out the procedures for unusual circumstances, including:

- » late collections;
- » when a child is not collected;
- » when a parent or guardian or nominated person arrives in an unfit state to collect a child.

It states how long [records](#) should be held for.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Appendix 11: Policy on Healthy Eating

The Policy on Healthy Eating for a Drop-In Early Years Service is a policy specifying the way the service will ensure that the food and drink provided to the early years children attending the service is nutritious, and complies with the dietary or religious requirements of the child.

The Healthy Eating Policy is developed in line with the [Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Pre-School Services](#)¹⁸ and the [serving size guide](#) for pre-schools.

The policy includes the following core elements:

It is available and communicated to all [parents and guardians](#).

It sets out how suitable and nutritious snacks and drinks are available to each child depending on their age, development and needs, covering information about:

- » specific dietary requirements;
- » appropriate serving size;
- » the food and drinks children bring to the service;
- » the availability of drinking water at all times.

It states that parents' and guardians' choices are supported, for example - bottle feeding.

It states how breastfeeding will be supported.

It states that parents and guardians are informed of what their child has eaten.

It states how powdered infant formula is managed in the service.

It describes how food is safely stored, prepared and served.

It states the requirements when outside catering companies are used.

It describes how special occasions are celebrated.

Specific dietary requests are managed, for example - [hypersensitivities](#), religious requirements, and so on.

It details how children are supervised while eating and drinking.

¹⁸ The Department of Health are developing healthy eating guidelines for 1-5 year olds.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks:

Health Service Executive: Babies and toddlers

www.mychild.ie

Safefood: START

www.makeastart.ie

Safefood: Little Bites (ROI)

[www.safefood.eu/Education/Pre-school/Little-Bites-\(ROI\).aspx](http://www.safefood.eu/Education/Pre-school/Little-Bites-(ROI).aspx)

Food Safety Authority of Ireland: Allergens

www.fsai.ie/allergens/

National Childhood Network: Healthy Ireland Smart Start – Nutrition

www.ncn.ie/index.php/2-ncn/201-healthy-ireland-smart-start-nutrition

Irish Food Allergy Network

ifan.ie/

Appendix 12: Policy on Staff Absences

The Policy on Staff Absences for a Drop-In Early Years Service is the arrangements in place in the service to ensure that the required adult:child ratios are in place when an [employee](#) working directly with children is absent.

The policy includes the following core elements:

It states how the adult:child ratio is maintained.

It states how the service responds to [staff](#) absences, for example – the procedure for contacting relief staff who meet the qualification requirements and are vetted.

It describes how staff absences are notified to the service, including:

- » when the service is to be informed (as soon as possible);
- » who is to be informed ([parent or guardian](#));
- » how they are to be informed (phone, email, and so on).

It outlines how the staff roster shows staff absences and substitutions.

It states the procedure for staff about advising the service about returning to work.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks:

Aistear Síolta Practice Guide

aistearsiolta.ie/en/

Appendix 13: Policy on the Use of the Internet and Photographic and Recording Devices

The Policy on the Use of the Internet and Photographic and Recording Devices for a Drop-In Early Years Service is a policy specifying:

- » when, and in what circumstances and for what purpose, early years children have access to the internet while attending the service;
- » when, and in what circumstances and for what purpose, the use of photographic or recording devices is permitted in the service;
- » who, and in what circumstances, can view, listen to or retain a photograph or recording of an early years child attending the service;
- » the way consent is to be given by the parent or guardian of an early years child before the child may be given access to the internet or be photographed or recorded.

The policy includes the following core elements:

It is available and communicated to all [parents and guardians](#).

It describes access to the internet by early years children, including:

- » when they can have access;
- » in what circumstances they can have access; and
- » what the purpose of the access is.

It describes the procedures for when [staff](#) (and any other person) can photograph or record a child or children in the service. It sets out how photographic or recording devices are used and permitted in the service, including:

- » when a person can have access to a recording and photographic devices;
- » in what circumstances; and
- » for what purposes.

It sets out procedures for the viewing of, the listening to, or keeping of a photograph or recording of an early years child including:

- » who can view, listen, or retain;
- » in what circumstances they can do this; and
- » for what purpose.

It states that consent is needed from a parent or guardian before a child is allowed access to the internet or before the child is photographed or recorded.

It includes a consent form.

It sets out how images and recordings are stored.

It sets out the period of time that images and recordings are kept in the service, and how these images and recordings are returned to a parent or guardian, or how they are destroyed.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks:

General Data Protection Regulation

www.dataprotection.ie/docs/GDPR/1623.htm

Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement: A Guide for Early Years Services in Ireland

www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Developing_a_Child_Safeguarding_Statement_-_A_Guide_for_Early_Years_Ser....pdf

Appendix 14: Recruitment Policy

The Recruitment Policy for a Drop-In Early Years Service is a policy specifying the procedure to be followed by the [registered provider](#) when hiring [employees](#) and [unpaid workers](#), including the steps to be taken to check and verify references, qualifications and vetting documentation.

It is the responsibility of the registered provider to ensure that all recruitment is in line with employment and equality legislation. The provider must also ensure that recruitment and selection processes are informed by evidence-based human resource practices.

The policy includes the following core elements.

It sets out the procedures and effective systems to be followed when hiring employees and unpaid workers, including:

- » drawing up a job description; and
- » terms and conditions of employment.

It sets out how the post is to be advertised.

It details the application process – for example:

- » method of application – application form, letter of application, and so on;
- » application documents – up-to-date and comprehensive CVs, and so on.

It describes the interview process.

It sets out the vetting requirements and how these are validated, including:

- » references;
- » Garda vetting;
- » Police vetting (if required).

It sets out the procedures for Garda re-vetting.

It sets out the requirements for [Boards of Management and Directors](#), if applicable.

It sets out the qualification requirements.

It describes the process for checking and [verifying](#) qualifications.

It details the process in place to confirm a person's identity, in the form of a current passport or current driving licence.

It details the procedures for managing of vetting [disclosures](#).

It gives details of the probationary period of the post.

It sets out the requirements for [students](#).

It states there will be a contract of employment.

It sets out how the [records](#) relating to the recruitment process for each individual will be stored, and for how long these records will be retained.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks:

Tusla: New Registrations

www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/new-providers/

Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement: A Guide for Early Years Services in Ireland

www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Developing_a_Child_Safeguarding_Statement_-_A_Guide_for_Early_Years_Ser....pdf

Department of Health and Children: Our Duty to Care – The Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People

www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/publications/ODTC_Full_Eng.pdf

An Garda Síochána: National Vetting Bureau

vetting.garda.ie/

National Police Chiefs' Council: ACRO Criminal Records Office – International Child Protection Certificate (UK)

www.acro.police.uk/icpc/

UK Government: Disclosure and Barring Service

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service

Barnardos Vetting Service

www.barnardos.ie/what-we-do/our-services/specialist-services/vetting-service.html

Early Childhood Ireland Garda Vetting

www.earlychildhoodireland.ie/work/operating-childcare-service/garda-vetting/

Equal Status (Amendment) Act 2012

www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/41/enacted/en/print.html

Department of Children and Youth Affairs: Early Years Recognised Qualifications

www.dcy.gov.ie/viewdoc.asp?fn=/documents/earlyyears/20170223DCYAEarlyyearsQualifications.pdf

National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012

www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2012/act/47/enacted/en/html

Department of Children and Youth Affairs: Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Care and Education

aim.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Diversity-Equality-and-Inclusion-Charter-and-Guidelines-for-Early-Childhood-Care-Education.pdf

Children First Act 2015

www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2015/act/36/enacted/en/pdf

Workplace Solutions: The National Employment Rights Agency

workplacesolutions.ie/nera/

Workplace Relations

www.workplacerelations.ie

Appendix 15: Risk Management Policy

The Risk Management Policy for a Drop-In Early Years Service is a policy on the way the [registered provider](#) assesses any potential risks to the safety of the early years children attending the service. It also covers the steps taken to either eliminate those risks or reduce them.

The policy includes the following core elements:

It is available and communicated to all [parents and guardians](#).

It sets out how each [risk assessment](#) gives details of the following:

- » the potential [hazards](#) or [risk](#) being assessed;
- » the current controls in place to address the risk;
- » assessing the risk;
- » additional controls needed to eliminate or reduce the risk;
- » the person or people responsible for implementing the additional controls, where appropriate.

It describes how risk assessments are completed to identify any potential hazards which may pose a risk to:

- » the service being well governed;
- » the health, welfare and development of each child attending being supported;
- » the safety of the children in the service;
- » the [premises](#) being safe, suitable and appropriate for the care and education of the children.

It sets out that a risk assessment for an individual child will be developed, where required.

It sets out how all relevant parties will be involved in developing risk assessments, including the child and their parents or guardians, if appropriate.

It states that risk assessments completed by the service are documented.

It states that the risk management strategy will be included in the service's [safety statement](#).

It states that the risk assessment record must show who is involved in the risk assessment process.

It sets out how long risk management [records](#) will be kept.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks:

Health and Safety Authority: Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005

www.hsa.ie/eng/Topics/Managing_Health_and_Safety/Safety,_Health_and_Welfare_at_Work_Act_2005/

Health and Safety Authority: A Guide to Risk Assessments and Safety Statements

www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/Publications/Safety_and_Health_Management/Guide_to_Risk_Assessments_and_Safety_Statements.pdf

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aistearsiolta.ie/en/

Appendix 16: Settling-in Policy

The Settling-in Policy for a Drop-In Early Years Service is the procedures in place to facilitate the integration into the service of an early years child when they first attend the service, their progression within the service and their transition to primary school.

The policy includes the following core elements:

It is available and communicated to all [parents and guardians](#).

The policy sets out how children's transitions are supported into the setting – for example, from home.

It details how parents and guardians are involved in transitions, as appropriate.

It sets out how [staff](#) are supported to enable effective transitions.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks:

Aistear Síolta Practice Guide

aistearsiolta.ie/en/

Appendix 17: Staff Training Policy

The Staff Training Policy for a Drop-In Early Years Service is a policy specifying the way the [registered provider](#) must identify and address the training needs of [employees](#) and [unpaid workers](#).

The policy includes the following core elements:

It sets out how staff training needs are identified and addressed.

It details the training required for the [person in charge](#), for example – the manager.

It sets out what resources are provided for training.

It describes the induction training.

It sets out the availability of ongoing training and professional development.

It details the staff training [records](#) kept in the service.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks:

Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement: A Guide for Early Years Services in Ireland

www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Developing_a_Child_Safeguarding_Statement_-_A_Guide_for_Early_Years_Ser....pdf

Children First Act 2015

www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/2015/a3615.pdf

Department of Health and Children: Our Duty to Care – The Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People

www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/publications/ODTC_Full_Eng.pdf

Appendix 18: Staff Supervision Policy

The Staff Supervision Policy for a Drop-In Early Years Service is a policy specifying the way [employees](#), [unpaid workers](#) and [contractors](#) are supervised and supported in the service in relation to their work practices.

The policy includes the following core elements:

It states that employees, unpaid workers and contractors, are supervised and supported in the service in relation to their work practices in line with this policy.

It sets out what [staff supervision](#) is and its purpose, namely:

- » any communication between two or more [relevant staff](#), one of whom is a line manager;
- » to support and develop the knowledge, skills and values of an individual through an evaluation process to examine professional thinking, actions and decisions.

It states the objectives and format of supervision.

It details how staff are supervised and supported in relation to their work practices.

It includes induction and ongoing supervision.

It details the way supervision needs are identified.

It sets out the provision of the resources required for supervision.

It states how and where supervision is undertaken.

It states the frequency of supervision.

It states how staff will be appraised and how this appraisal will be used.

It sets out what [records](#) will be kept for supervision, where the records will be stored and how long they will be kept for.

It includes the supervision of relevant staff, contractors or trainees where appropriate.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks:

Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement: A Guide for Early Years Services in Ireland

www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Developing_a_Child_Safeguarding_Statement_-_A_Guide_for_Early_Years_Ser....pdf

Appendix 19: Safety Statement

The Drop-In Service has a written Safety Statement that meets the requirements of Section 20 of [The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005](#) with particular reference to [Health and Safety Authority: A Guide to Risk Assessments and Safety Statements](#).

Safety Statement:

A safety statement is a written commitment to managing safety and health in your service, and how this is to be done. The statement includes the following:

- » The service's health and safety policy. See example of Health and Safety policy on page 21 of [A Guide to Risk Assessments and Safety Statements](#).
- » The results of the service's [risk assessments](#).
- » The names and job titles of the people responsible for any safety and health matters.
- » The duties of the [registered provider](#) and the [person in charge](#), including the co-operation required from [employees](#) on safety and health matters.
- » A commitment to employee consultation and participation, including arrangements for appointing a safety representative.
- » The service's welfare arrangements – for example, the provision of toilet facilities, rest and eating facilities, drinking water.
- » The service's plans and procedures for dealing with [emergencies](#) – for example, a [Critical Incident Plan](#).
- » The service's arrangements to ensure the safety of children, all employees and visitors to the service, or anyone else who may be affected by the service's work activities.
- » The personal protective equipment policy and register of equipment.
- » The [first aid](#) and [fire safety](#) procedures and details about the equipment and facilities available.
- » The procedures for accident reporting and investigation.
- » The training records.

The safety statement (including the risk assessments) must be brought to the attention of all employees and others in the service that may be exposed to any [risks](#). This should be done at least once a year, and whenever it is changed or updated. All employees, parents, guardians, and others should also be made aware of this safety statement, especially the sections that may affect them directly. The statement must be in a form and language that can be understood. Ready access to an [electronic copy](#) is also acceptable.

See: Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide.

See: Samples and Templates for Policies, Procedures and Statements.

Useful Weblinks:

Health and Safety Authority: Legislation

www.hsa.ie/eng/Legislation/

Safety, Health and Welfare Act 2005 (No. 10 of 2005)

www.hsa.ie/eng/Legislation/Acts/Safety_Health_and_Welfare_at_Work/

Health and Safety Authority: A Guide to Risk Assessments and Safety Statements

www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/Publications/Safety_and_Health_Management/Guide_to_Risk_Assessments_and_Safety_Statements.pdf

Galway City and County Childcare Committee: Critical Incident Plan – Toolkit for Childcare Providers

www.earlychildhoodireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Critical-Incident-Plan_English_Feb2012.pdf

Appendix 20: Service Record Retention Timeframe

Regulation	Document	Retention Period
Registration of Pre-School Service: Regulation 6(6)	Safety Statement of the Service.	While the service is registered as an Early Years Service.
Management and Recruitment: Regulation 9 (1)(c)	Management Structure Record.	While the service is registered as an Early Years Service.
Review of Pre-School Service: Regulation 14(b)	Yearly review of policies/procedures/statements and practice.	3 years from the date the review is carried out.
Record of Pre-School Child: Regulation 15(5)	Record of an early years child in the service.	2 years from the date on which the child starts attending the service.
Copy of Act and the 2016 Regulations: Regulation 18	Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013. Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.	While the service is registered as an Early Years Service.
Record in relation to a Pre-School Service: Regulation 16(2)(a)	References, Garda Vetting, Police Vetting.	5 years after the person starts working in the service. Includes current staff and staff who are no longer working in the service.
Record in relation to a Pre-School Service: Regulation 16(2)(b)	Record: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » child's attendance on a daily basis; » any medication administered to an early years child attending with parents' consent; 	2 years from the date on which the child starts attending the service.

Regulation	Document	Retention Period
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » any accident, injury or incident involving an early years child. 	
<p>Checking In and Checking Out and Record of Attendance: Regulation 24(3)(b)</p>	<p>Daily written record of check-in of people other than:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » an early years child; » a person dropping off or collecting a child; » an employee; » an unpaid worker. 	1 year from the date to which it relates.
<p>Fire Safety Measures: Regulation 26(3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Record of fire drills; » Number, type and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms. 	Retained for 5 years after its creation.
<p>Fire Safety Measures: Regulation 26(4)</p>	Fire evacuation procedure.	While the service is registered as an Early Years Service.
<p>Insurance: Regulation 28</p>	Insurance Certificate.	While the service is registered as an Early Years Service.
<p>Complaints Record: Regulation 32(4)</p>	Record in writing of a complaint made to a provider about the service.	2 years from the date on which the complaint has been dealt with (completed).

Appendix 21: Inspection in Context of Other Legislation

Building Regulations

Building Regulations and the related Technical Guidance Documents – for example:

- » Heating requirements as set out in the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (2014) Heat Producing Appliances Technical Guidance Document J.
- » Lighting requirements as set out in the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government: Technical Guidance Document M: Access and Use: Building Regulations 2010.
- » Ventilation requirements as set out in the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government 2009 Technical Guidance Document F on Ventilation.
- » Fire safety requirements as set out in the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government 2006 Technical Guidance Document B on Fire Safety.

Further information available at: www.housing.gov.ie/.

Child Safeguarding

- » Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017.

Fire Safety

- » Fire Safety Legislation, fire certification and associated technical guidance documents issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government 2006.

Food Safety and Hygiene, including Water Supply, for example:

- » Food Hygiene Regulations 1950-89, the European Communities (Hygiene of Foodstuffs) Regulations 2006 (SI No 369) Regulation, EC 178/2002 and Regulation (EC) No 852/2004.

Further information available on Environmental Health Services at:

www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/1/envIRON.

Tobacco Control

Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2002.

Note: These are examples of the current potential referrals that can be made when the Inspectorate considers that there is a real and potential risk to children. It may be added to as necessary, however you will be made aware of this in advance.

Section 4

Explanatory Notes

There are some words and terms used in this document that have a particular meaning within the context of the statutory regulatory requirements in the Early Childhood Education and Care sector. We have, therefore, compiled these explanatory notes as a guide. We define the terms in alphabetical order, and, in some instances, we have given additional information about the term as well as its definition.

Accident:

An unpredictable and therefore, unavoidable event. Also known as an unintentional injury.

Access and Inclusion Model (AIM):

A model of supports designed to ensure that children with disabilities can access the [Early Childhood Care and Education Programme \(ECCE\)](#). This is a child-centred model of supports which makes it possible for service providers to deliver an inclusive early years experience that all children can be part of, including children with disabilities.

Act of 2012:

The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 (No. 47 of 2012). The Act commenced on 29 April 2016 and provides for the protection of children and vulnerable persons. It also provides for the establishment and maintenance of a national vetting bureau (children and vulnerable persons) database system. This provides for the establishment of procedures that are to apply to people who wish to undertake certain work or services or activities relating to children or vulnerable persons.

Aistear:

The early childhood curriculum framework for children from birth to six years in Ireland. Aistear is the Irish word for journey.

Better Start National Early Years Quality Development:

A national initiative established by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) to bring an integrated national approach to developing quality in Early Years Education and Care (ECCE) for children aged from birth to six years in Ireland.

Blind cords:

Window blinds that are opened and closed by means of a long pull-cord or continuous chain loop.

Children can injure, or even strangle themselves with window blind cords and curtain cords. When a child is exploring or playing, they can become entangled in hanging cords and, if the child then tries to sit or if they fall, they can hang themselves in the loop. The cord or chain loop used to open and close vertical blinds can also strangle children. Internal blinds manufactured since 2014 are safer than older blinds.

All steps should be taken to ensure blinds are safe. The National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) advises that:

- » Cords of blinds and curtains are inaccessible.
- » Looped blind cords are out of the reach of children.
- » Cords ending in a loop are particularly risky. Cut the cord to get rid of the loop and install tassels.
- » Cords and tassels should end at least 1.6 metres above the ground so children cannot reach them. Replace cords with curtain or blind wands.
- » Where a service cannot cut the cords cannot be cut, a tie-down or tension device can be used to pull the cord tight and secure it to the floor or wall.
- » Never put a cot, bed, high chair or playpen near a window or patio door where a child can reach a curtain or blind cord.
- » Keep sofas, chairs, tables, shelves or bookcases away from windows to prevent children climbing up and reaching curtain or blind cords.

A service must take all steps to ensure the safety of children from the risks associated with blind cords.

Internal blinds, fitted after 2014, are certified to EN13120:2009+A1:2014.

Internal blinds fitted after 2014; include a safety device for keeping the cord out of the reach of children, and come with documentary evidence that the safety device meets the safety standards EN 16434:2014. Further information available from the [National Standards Authority of Ireland](#).

Carbon monoxide monitors (CO):

Monitors that are used when organic fossil fuels such as oil, gas, timber, turf, briquettes or coal, and so forth are in operation. Regular inspection and maintenance of appliances, vents, flues and chimneys is required to protect occupants of the service from the danger of carbon monoxide. Advice from a qualified expert should be sought prior to the purchase and fitting of CO monitors.

Certified copy:

A true copy of a certificate or document.

In the case of a hard copy of a certificate or document:

- » The [registered provider](#) has seen and inspected the original hard copy of the certificate/document and can verify that the copy is “a true copy “or an “authentic copy” of the original. The registered provider notes on the copy that it is a true copy of the original.

- » If it is not possible for the registered provider to see the original hard copy of the document, they verify that the copy of the certificate of document bears the stamp of the relevant organisation or college.

In the case of **e-vetting**, the relevant organisation forwards the email from the [National Vetting Bureau](#) to the registered provider stating that the vetting disclosure received by email is a true copy of the original. In forwarding email, the disclosure can be password protected.

Certified copies are sent to the registered provider with the consent of the person being vetted.

Child Safeguarding:

[The Children First Act 2015](#) and the updated requirements of [Children First: National Guidelines \(2017\) for the Protection and Welfare of Children](#) place new responsibilities on registered providers to ensure children in their services are safeguarded. A statement setting out the Early Years Service's commitment to safeguarding the children in their care and the processes in place to ensure a safe environment for each child attending the service where they can play, learn and develop. [Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement: A Guide for Early Years Services in Ireland](#) provides support and guidance for early years services in developing their Child Safeguarding Statement and accompanying Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures. More information is available at: www.tusla.ie/children-first/.

Clear floor space:

Space that is available in the service for the children to work, play and move. Areas such as kitchens, toilets, hallways, sleeping and other service areas are **not** included in the space measurement and are **not** considered clear floor space.

When calculating the space requirement, the following are examples of furniture that **can** be included in the clear floor space:

- » Furniture and play equipment used by the children – for example, children's tables, chairs, sand and water play, child-accessible low-level shelving that holds and displays children's toys and equipment, easels, dress-up racks, home corner and library area.
- » Furniture that is used directly in relation to the care and education of children attending the service.

The following are examples of elements that **cannot** be included in the clear floor space:

- » Permanent fixtures, such as storage cupboards for use by relevant staff or other purposes – for example, cleaning materials or furniture surplus to the needs of the children.
- » Storage space.
- » Excess storage of stacked chairs and tables in a part of the room.
- » Equipment and furniture stored in the early years room which is not required for use by the early years children is deemed surplus to requirements.

Competent:

The necessary ability, knowledge or skill to do something successfully.

Also defined by the [Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005](#) as “a person is deemed to be a competent person where ... the person possesses sufficient training, experience and knowledge appropriate to the nature of the work to be undertaken”.

Contractor:

In relation to an Early Years Service, a contractor is a person who carries out work in the service under contract – a formal agreement. This means that contractors have access to, or contact with, children attending the service – for example, people who carry out a workshop with the children, or people who carry out work in the service not directly involving the children (for example, repairs). Contractors must always be supervised when with children. Unsupervised access is unacceptable.

Deputy:

A person appointed to undertake the duties of another (usually a superior) in the other’s absence. If a sole operator chooses to have a deputy, this person must comply with the qualification and vetting requirements, and be capable of running the service in the absence of the sole operator. A deputy is not an emergency person.

Disclosure:

The action of making new or secret information known. The information is usually sensitive, personal information. Disclosure is required in line with the [National Vetting Bureau \(Children and Vulnerable Persons\) Act 2012](#).

If the service receives a processed disclosure from a relevant organisation (for example – Barnardos, Early Childhood Ireland) that indicates a recorded conviction in regard to an ‘applicant’, the employer will consider the contents

and undertake a comprehensive [risk assessment](#) of the processed Garda vetting disclosure before any decision is made to employ the person. The risk assessment is documented.

Disclosure procedures are different in the United Kingdom. Some types of disclosure – ‘basic’ disclosures – do not give enough detailed information.

The [International Child Protection Certificate](#) (ICPC) is now considered to be a more valid document than a basic UK disclosure, as it is more comprehensive.

The ICPC is a criminal records check against police and intelligence databases in the UK that reveals any convictions or reasons as to why someone should not work with children. [ACRO Criminal Records Office](#) will check police information and decide whether or not to issue an ICPC based on that information. It is advisable to update information from the UK by obtaining an ICPC, where a basic disclosure was previously obtained.

Director:

A member of the board of people that manages or oversees the affairs of a business.

A director, in relation to a registered provider that is a corporate body, means a director as defined in the [Companies Act 2014 \(No. 38 of 2014\)](#) and, in the case of a board of management established under [Section 14 of the Education Act 1998 \(No. 51 of 1998\)](#), means each member of the board.

Effective management:

A way of running a service to the highest possible standards of care and safety, and making the best use of resources. Effective management in an early years setting provides a child-centred, effective and safe service by:

- » continuously planning, following up, evaluating and developing the service;
- » developing ways of working in the service that are influenced by the interests, preferences and needs of the children;
- » structuring the learning environment of the service so the child has access to a good environment and materials for development and learning;
- » organising the service so children receive the support, help and challenges they need;
- » providing all service functions in line with good management practices, relevant legislation, regulations and national policies to protect each child and promote their welfare.

Effective management should aim to achieve the following staff behaviours:

- » All individuals involved in the service of every culture, class or belief are treated with respect and without discrimination within the service.
- » Use and follow all relevant ethical standards and professional guidelines.
- » Work as part of the team within the service, and take part in open, collaborative discussion to generate ideas and solve problems.
- » Are professional in their work, by for example upholding standards in confidentiality, sensitivity and respect for children, parents and guardians and colleagues.
- » Are committed to ongoing growth and learning.
- » Show leadership skills appropriate to the roles.
- » Keep professional boundaries in relationships with relevant staff, children and parents and guardians.
- » Implement effective governance to ensure that the service complies with the relevant legislation and regulations.

Emergency:

A serious, unexpected, or dangerous situation requiring immediate action.

Employee:

In relation to an Early Years Service, an employee is a person who has entered into, or works under, a contract of employment with the [registered provider](#).

Fire safety:

A set of practices intended to eliminate or reduce the [risk](#) of fire, and to ensure the safety of occupants and limit damage if a fire occurs. [Fire Safety in Preschools 1999](#) states the fire alarm requirements for the various types of pre-school service. Please refer to the document for full information.

In summary:

- » Every [premises](#) used for Early Years Services must have a fire alarm system to give early warning of an outbreak of fire, and to ensure that the escape routes can be safely used.
- » Self-contained alarm units are mains powered smoke detectors with the smoke detection and alarm sounder housed in one unit. A battery-powered smoke detector (not wired) is not a self-contained unit and is inadequate for any category of pre-school service including a childminding service.

- » A fire alarm system based on self-contained units will be sufficient for a single-storey premises where less than 20 children are accommodated.
- » A fire alarm system must meet certain requirements depending on the size and complexity of the building. See the required requirements in Technical Guidance Document B – Fire Safety at: www.housing.gov.ie/housing/building-standards/tgd-part-b-fire-safety/technical-guidance-document-b-fire-safety.
- » Services must have a fire alarm system that incorporates manual call points for raising the alarm, alarm sounders, automatic detection of smoke or heat by suitably located detectors, control and indicating equipment and cabling, are required for the following:
 - a single-storey building where more than 20 children are accommodated; and
 - a multi-storey premises.
- » Sleeping infants and children are given high priority when you have to evacuate a building because of a fire.
- » The service’s sleep and rest areas (where applicable) must comply with the local authority’s fire safety requirements.

First aid:

First aid is provided where help is required to:

- » preserve life or minimise the consequences of illness or injury until medical assistance arrives; and
- » treat a minor injury, which does not require medical assistance.

[Parent or guardian](#) written consent is not needed to administer first aid in the service.

Medicines, creams or ointments are not stored in the first aid box as they may contaminate bandages, plasters and soon, and create a risk of infection.

First Aid Response (FAR):

First Aid Response and First Aid Responder.

The Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) has established the First Aid Response standard. It offers training to individuals and groups who require a first aid skill set, including ‘cardiac first response’ – that is, providing first aid to someone having a heart attack or other heart-related issue. The PHECC standard is designed to meet first aid and basic life support (BLS) requirements that a person known as ‘First Aid responder’ may need in [emergency](#).

circumstances. Further information available at: www.phecit.ie/Images/PHECC/Career%20and%20Education/Education%20Standards/STN006%20First%20Aid%20Response%20V1.pdf.

[Tusla](#) recognises PHECC's First Aid Response Education and Training Standard **when** delivered by a training provider approved by PHECC. It sees it as meeting the required standard for compliance with the revised regulation in Early Years registered services. All successful course participants are given joint PHECC/Recognised Institution FAR certificates. The certificate expires after two years. Candidates may then re-certify if they wish.

From the 1 June 2020, to meet the regulatory requirement for Regulation 25, there must be at least one person who is FAR certified (**First Aid Response**) available to the children at all times. The number of people trained in FAR and available for first aid response is based on the service's [risk assessment](#), including the size of the service and the hazards identified. Where a service provides evidence of a person certified in FAR and being available to the children at all times, the regulatory requirement will be deemed to be met.

The Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC):

PHECC is the regulator for emergency medical services (EMS) in Ireland whose role is to protect the public. PHECC is an independent statutory agency with responsibility for standards, education and training in the field of pre-hospital emergency care. PHECC also maintain a statutory register of emergency medical services (EMS) practitioners. Further information available at: www.phecit.ie/.

Growbags:

Wearable sleeping bags for infants and small children. Growbags are suitable for sleeping children under 2 in a childcare setting, provided bags are:

- » the correct size for the children wearing them, and
- » worn in line with their design – that is, arms through the armholes and head out the head holes.

Growbags come in varying thicknesses for different seasons. If growbags are used, they must be of suitable weight to keep a child warm while sleeping without overheating. Manufacturers' instructions must be followed. If a baby sleeping bag is used, it is without a hood, should be very lightweight and the right size around the neck so the baby won't slip down inside the bag.

Hazard:

Anything with the potential to cause injury or ill health – for example, chemical substances, dangerous moving machinery, or threats of violence from others.

Herd Immunity/Population Immunity:

Vaccination protects people from infection, and, in turn, they become less likely to be a source of infection to others. In this way, individuals who have not been immunised, or those who cannot be immunised, get some benefit from the immunisation programme.

High chairs:

High chairs provided must:

- » have a safety harness when a child is placed in high chair, the protective belt is fastened securely;
- » have a wide base and a secure locking tray, along with a crotch bar or guard to prevent a child from slipping down and becoming trapped between the tray and the seat;
- » be able to fold and have a locking device that prevents the high chair from collapsing;
- » be assembled and maintained in line with manufacturer's instructions. (This includes respecting the restrictions based on age and weight of children.);
- » be kept far enough away from a table, counter, wall or other surface so that the child cannot use them to push off, or to grab potentially dangerous cords or objects; and
- » be cleaned after each use.

Immunisation:

Making a person resistant to infection by vaccination. In Ireland, the law does not require that children be immunised (vaccinated) in line with the [National Immunisation Schedule](#). This is a parent's and guardian's choice. However, it is highly desirable that children are vaccinated in line with the schedule unless there is a medical reason preventing it. Children who are not vaccinated are dependent on [herd immunity](#) to protect against disease. The [registered provider](#) must be aware of which children attending the service have been vaccinated and which haven't. This is important, so that those children who are not vaccinated can be best protected if an infectious disease occurs within the service.

Incident:

An unusual, unplanned event that may result in injury, illness or damage or disruption of normal service operations.

Individual risk assessment:

An evaluation of the potential [risks](#) that might occur in relation to a child and their individual needs.

An individual risk assessment is completed if the individual needs of a child warrant it – for example, children with allergies, medication requirements, behaviour management issues, and so on. An individual risk assessment is part of a child's Individual Care Plan and is kept in the child's individual record.

Items prohibited as sleeping facilities for children (aged 2 years and under):

The following information sets out the items that are not suitable for children under 2 years to sleep in, and explains why they are unsuitable.

The following are **not used** as a sleep facility by the service:

Car seats, buggies or strollers and infant carriers: These are intended for a short period of time only. They are not suitable as a regular sleeping environment for infants and children because:

- » they limit a child's natural movement;
- » sleeping in a (semi) seated, upright position can cause a child's head to fall forward, restrict their airways and make it difficult for them to breathe;
- » a child may slide down and become tangled in the straps.

Inflatable mattresses and beds or waterbeds: Due to the potential for a child to get trapped or suffocating, these items are not allowed in services. They are not stable, offer no body support and do not allow for ease of movement.

Pillows, cushions and beanbags: These items are prohibited as a base to sleep on. These items pose a suffocation risk. A child should sleep on a firm, flat surface, free of [hazards](#).

Couches, sofas, settees and chairs: An infant's physical safety, comfort and support are not ensured with these items – for example, an infant could slip off a pillow into the gap at the back of a couch, or become trapped between a couch and a wall.

Travel cots and portable cribs: These items pose a risk of collapsing and trapping a child. These are designed for occasional use only and have a maximum weight restriction. Most travel cots have mesh sides that are difficult to clean and maintain, creating a potential risk of germs. The mesh sides can stretch outside the cot and hold a child's body part (a leg or an arm) in a potentially dangerous position. Mattresses for travel cots do not provide a comfortable surface for children to sleep on regularly.

Bunk cots or stackable cots: are not suitable for use for the following reasons:

Safety Issues:

There is no known safety standard for bunk cots in Ireland or the UK. Without a known standard for a bunk cot, a consumer cannot be sure it is safe to place a child to rest or sleep in. There is no evidence of any manufacturer or retailer of bunk cots in Ireland, and it appears there is only one manufacturer of bunk cots in the UK. That company states in a video on their website that the cot adheres to the European Standard EN 716/1. Whilst the European standard for cots is EN 716-1:2008+A1:201 and the European standard for bunk beds is EN747:2012, there is no known standard for bunk cots.

If a child falls asleep in any of these devices, they must be moved immediately to a cot or other approved sleeping surface.

Manual Handling:

Under the Manual Handling of Loads regulation in SI 299 of 2007, employers must take appropriate measures, or use the appropriate means, to avoid manual handling which involves risk. There are other duties which require the employer to carry out risk assessment of manual handling tasks, and to put appropriate measures in place to avoid or reduce risk taking account of the factors in Schedule 3 of the Regulation. The task of lifting children in and out of cots is an example of an activity that would need to be assessed. It is likely that there are high levels of risk if the employee has to reach over into a cot which does not have a variable height adjustment to allow good access to the cot.

Risks of Fall and Overturning:

A child in a top bunk is at risk of falling. Infants who fall from a height of several feet can sustain an intracranial haemorrhage – that is, a serious bleed inside the skull. A child in the lower bunk could sustain an injury if they bang their head on the base of the cot above. There is also a risk of a bunk cot overturning if a child climbs on it, or plays in it or pulls at it.

Infection Control:

The recommended space of 50cm (half a metre) between cots is not possible when 2 bunk cots are attached to each other, and this increasing the risk of cross-contamination (spread of bacteria). See Management of Infectious Disease in Childcare Facilities and other Childcare Settings.

Items in a Cot:

Unnecessary and potentially harmful items in a baby's cot can increase the risk of an accident. Cots should be clear of all items such as toys, sleep positioners, pillows, bumpers and loose bedding. The infant may unconsciously pull loose bedding over their head, or roll underneath the pillow or soft toy and suffocate while sleeping. Cotton cellular blankets are most suitable. See 'Safe Sleep for your Baby: Reduce the Risk of Cot Death' - www.healthpromotion.ie/hp-files/docs/HPM00078.pdf.

National Vetting Bureau (NVB):

The National Vetting Bureau provides vetting (checking and screening) on behalf of organisations employing people to work in a full-time, part-time, voluntary or student-placement capacity with children or vulnerable adults. The potential employee must make a written application through the organisation to which their area of work is affiliated – for example, Barnardos, Early Childhood Ireland. The NVB provides vetting disclosures for both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Early Years Services and childminders who are members of the Early Childhood Ireland Association (ECI) should make contact directly to process vetting applications.

www.earlychildhoodireland.ie/work/operating-childcare-service/garda-vetting/.

Early Years Services and childminders who are not members of an organisation can make contact with Barnardos. Applicants accessing vetting through Barnardos' Vetting Service will have the process explained to them by Barnardos:

www.barnardos.ie/what-we-do/our-services/specialist-services/vetting-service.html.

Notifiable disease:

Any disease that, by law, must to be reported to authorities. A notifiable, infectious disease is one that is on the list of diseases (and their causes) contained in the Infectious Diseases Regulations 1981 and subsequent amendments. A list of the [notifiable disease](http://www.hpsc.ie/notifiablediseases/) is available at: www.hpsc.ie/notifiablediseases/. The [registered provider](#) will notify [Tusla](#) of the infectious

disease when the service has been contacted by the Department of Public Health Medicine, HSE, and advised that the service has a confirmed case as listed. The Department of Public Health Medicine will advise you about what to do regarding precautions to be taken in your premises and follow-up of contacts and procedures.

Notifications of Accidents and Incidents:

Reporting an [accident](#) or [incident](#) to the authorities.

Registered providers must notify [Tusla](#) in writing of any accident or incident that occurs using the [Notification of Incident Form](#), available on the Tusla website. This must be done within **three working days** of the service becoming aware of any of the following accidents or incidents occurring in the service:

- » The death of a child while attending the service, including the death of a child in hospital following their transfer to hospital from the service.
- » An accident or incident that occurs in the service and that results in the service being closed for any length of time.
- » An unplanned closure where the service has to close due to unforeseen events. That is, the service has to close unexpectedly. This may be for personal reasons (for example – bereavement), or any other reason – for example, a burst pipe in the service, external factors, and so on).
- » A serious injury to a child while attending the service that requires immediate medical treatment by a [registered medical practitioner](#) in hospital or otherwise.
- » An incident resulting in a child attending the service going missing.
- » A diagnosis that a child attending the service, an [employee](#), an unpaid worker, a [contractor](#) or any other person working in the service is suffering from an infectious disease listed as notifiable in the Infectious Diseases Regulations 1981 and subsequent amendments.
- » The [registered provider](#) will notify Tusla at ey.registration@tusla.ie of the infectious disease when the service has been contacted by the Department of Public Health Medicine, HSE, and advised that the service has a confirmed case as listed. The Department of Public Health Medicine will advise you about what to do regarding precautions to be taken in your [premises](#) and follow-up of contacts and procedures.

Open Door Policy:

A ‘no appointment necessary’ policy to encourage good communication. An open door policy, in general, means that an appointment is not needed to visit the service. The children’s [parents and guardians](#) can call in at any time while

the service is operating. An open door policy is a matter and decision of the registered provider.

Parent or Guardian:

A parent is the child's natural or adoptive mother or father. A guardian is another person – not the natural or adoptive parents – who has legal rights and responsibility for the child. Married parents are automatically joint guardians of their children – separation or divorce **does not** change this. If custody of a child is granted to an individual (parent, guardian or other legally responsible person), they may need legal documentation as evidence – for example, a custody or guardianship order. A custody or guardianship order issued is in line with the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015 and the Guardianship of Infants act 1964.

Person in charge:

The person who has day-to-day charge of the service. This may include the [registered provider](#), or the manager, or another named person as being the person in charge. If a service is one of multiple services, there must be a person in charge in each premises.

Premises:

Buildings, grounds, gardens and so on. In relation to an Early Years Service, premises includes a building or part of a building and any out-offices, yards, gardens or land that is adjacent to the buildings and owned by the premises (but not used for gain).

QQI:

[Quality and Qualifications Ireland](#) is a State agency whose functions include those previously carried out by:

- » the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC);
- » the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC);
- » the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB); and
- » the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI).

QQI is responsible for maintaining the 10-level [NFQ](#) (National Framework of Qualifications). QQI are also an awarding body and set standards for awards QQI make in the NFQ.

QQI validate education and training programmes and make extensive awards in the Further Education and Training sector, including in the Education and Training Boards. QQI also make awards in Higher Education, mainly to learners

enrolled on courses offered by private providers. The universities and institutes of technology largely make their own awards. QQI also provide advice on recognition of foreign qualifications in Ireland and on the recognition of Irish qualifications abroad. Part of QQI's functions is also to publish a directory of providers and awards in the NFQ.

Record:

Usually a written or electronic log of information and events.

'Record' under Regulation 2 means any record kept or retained in under Regulations including any electronic record, book, card, form, tape, film, note or any record in permanent form, including a record that is not in a legible form, but which is capable of being reproduced in a legible form (for example, voice recordings that can be transcribed into text).

In addition, a record is defined by the [Freedom of Information Act 2014](#).

Any record held electronically must be available, accessible, retrievable and capable of being reproduced if required. An electronic record is defined by the Oxford English dictionary as a record accessed or kept by a means of a computer or other electronic device.

Register:

The list of registered Early Years Services established and maintained in line with [Section 58C of the Childcare Act, 1991](#).

Registered medical practitioner:

A medical doctor or specialist registered with the Irish Medical Council.

Registered medical practitioner has the same meaning as it has in the [Medical Practitioners Act 2007](#).

Registered provider:

The person whose name is entered in the register in line with section 58C of [Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013](#) as providing an Early Years Service. The registered provider is the person who has signed the registration application form and is legally responsible for operating the service in compliance with the legislation under the 2016 Regulations and the Act.

Relevant staff:

Paid and unpaid staff, [contractors](#) or any person who needs to have information about the service appropriate to their role and responsibilities.

Risk:

The chance or possibility of danger, loss or injury.

Risk assessment:

A written document that records a three-step process:

1. Identifying the [risks](#) presented by [hazards](#).
2. Assessing the risks presented by hazards.
3. Putting control measures in place to reduce the risk of the hazards causing harm.

Room:

A part or division of a building enclosed by walls, floor and ceiling.

Serious injury:

Injury to a child while attending the service that requires immediate medical treatment by a [registered medical practitioner](#) in hospital or otherwise.

[Síolta](#):

Síolta is the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education, and was developed by the Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills.

Staff:

A group of people who work for an organisation or business.

Staff supervision:

A process where one worker, usually more experienced, is given responsibility to work with another worker (or workers) to ensure they meet certain organisational, professional and personal objectives. These objectives are competency, accountable performance, continuing professional development and personal support.

Student:

In the context of Early Years Services, the term 'student' applies to any person who is taking part on courses offered by organisations providing validated programmes leading to QQI awards at Level 5 or higher on the NFQ, or a comparable equivalent award. This can include programmes offered by:

- » private and public providers; and
- » third-level education sector.

Transition Year students taking part in an approved Transition Year in a Department of Education and Skills approved secondary school are also considered students.

See also: [unpaid workers](#).

Subject Access (UK):

A Subject Access request is a person's right under Freedom of Information (UK) to request the information (if any) that is held about them in the Police National Computer (PNC). A Subject Access report is not acceptable as police vetting from the UK. Section 56 of the UK Data Protection Act is designed to protect individuals against Enforced Subject Access. This section makes it a criminal offence in the UK to ask someone to obtain a Subject Access report for anything other than their own personal use. This closes loopholes of prospective employers requesting relevant staff to get Subject Access instead of formal vetting routes which would disclose information to them that they were not legally entitled to see.

Subject Access includes personal information, non-conviction data, not guilty verdicts and other information which could have an impact on those individuals' prospects.

In summary, Subject Access is for an individual to get information held about them and not for third party use. An [ICPC](#) is the documentation required for UK police vetting purposes and not a Subject Access.

See also: [disclosure](#).

Tusla - The Child and Family Agency:

The dedicated State agency responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children. Tusla was established under the [Child and Family Agency Act 2013](#).

Unpaid workers:

In relation to an Early Years Service, unpaid workers are people who work in the service but who are not paid for their work by the [registered provider](#) – for example, [students](#) and volunteers.

Validation:

A process to check or prove the legality or accuracy of a document. The [registered provider](#) dates and signs the document being validated. The terms validating, verifying, confirming, checking and vetting are terms that are used interchangeably.

