

School Age Childcare

A step by step Guide to Developing a School Age Childcare Service



**Compiled by County Childcare Committees
Development Workers Network**

“Working Together for Continuity within our Counties”



Contents	Page No
Introduction/Overview	2
Definition of School Age Childcare	3
Section 1 Defining Type of After School Business	4
Section 2 Who to Contact for help	4
Section 3 Market Research/Needs Analysis	5
Section 4 Land/premises/planning permission	6
Section 5 Funding	8
Section 6 Business Plan	9
Section 7 Staffing	10
Recruiting, Job Descriptions, Interview, Contract, Induction	
Section 8 Legislation	19
Section 9 Policies & Procedures	20
Sample Policies and Code of Conduct	21
Section 10 Resources	54
Section 11 Planning a programme of Activities	62
Section 12 Games and Activities	65
Section 13 Checklist	72
Appendix 1 Sample weekly plan	
Appendix 2 Sample Tiered Fee Structures	
Appendix 3 Samples of Record Keeping	

Introduction

By reading this manual you have already taken your first Step to the development of a school age childcare service for your community either as an individual or as a group. The following provides you with information about Wicklow County Childcare Committee and how we can assist you in this service:

Wicklow County Childcare Committee was established in 2002 to assist in the development of appropriate local policies and the co-ordination of childcare provision.

Vision

To develop a co-ordinated strategy for quality childcare services that are inclusive, affordable and accessible to all.

County Childcare Committee—Staff

- **Coordinator: Eugene Waters**

Role: To plan and manage all activities of the offices and implement the strategic plan.

- **Administrator: Gráinne Conroy**

Role: To carry out all administration of the offices.

- **Childcare Support and Development Workers:**

- **East: Susan Hill**

- **West & South: Assumpta O'Neill**

- **North: Marie Cuddihy**

Role: To support all existing and developing childcare providers in the county.

- **Childminding Advisory Worker: Miriam O'Regan**

Role: To support childminders caring for children in their own home.

- **Training and Information Administrator: Judy Collins**

Role: To co-ordinate WCCC's training programme and update website and FACEBOOK page.

Remember whether you are setting up your childcare service or developing an existing service, give us a call on 0404 64455. We are here to discuss the various stages involved and offer support throughout this process.

While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of all information published, Wicklow County Childcare Committee cannot accept any liability or responsibility for any errors or omissions.

Definition of School Age Childcare

A School Age Childcare Service takes responsibility for children when they are not in the school setting, i.e., before school, after school and during school holidays. A School Age Childcare Service should operate on the basis of an agreement between parents/carers and staff with on-going structured links with local schools.

School Age Childcare Services occur in a variety of different ways:

- Within childcare services i.e. Crèche / full day care either privately owned or community based
- Relative or Childminder in their own home.
- Those that are extensions of playgroup sessional services
- Purpose built school age childcare services, school based After-school care and community based projects.

Advantages for Parents

- Safe in the knowledge that your child is being cared for in a safe and stimulating environment, means you can return to work or training
- A locally based school age childcare service means your child can attend a school in the local community.

Advantages for Children

- A fun and safe place to play and meet children of similar age
- A chance to take part in games, activities, hobbies and to develop life skills
- All children are welcome irrespective of cultural financial or religious background.
- A chance to get started on homework.
- Children will have a say in planning the activities provided, ensuring a choice for each individual child.

Section 1— Defining Type of School Age Childcare Service

Decide on who will manage the service - Will it be community managed or privately managed?

What name and type of business are you going to register with the Companies Registration Office? (form needed CRO1)

It is important to remember that whether you set up as a private enterprise or a community enterprise you are obliged to contact your nearest tax office to register as an employer.

Community run service:

Is generally a committee managed service run by a committee made up of representatives of the community, representatives from statutory bodies if appropriate, perhaps representatives from other community groups. A Community Service is generally not for Profit.

Privately run service:

This type of service is privately owned and managed by individuals. It is expected to make a profit.

Finance for your enterprise can come from a number of sources

Section 2— Who to Contact for Help:

- Your County Childcare Committee can give advice that is free of charge and can help at each Section of the way.
- Fire Officer—A fire certificate is needed before a building can be used or occupied by children,
- Enterprise Board - Offer business advice provide courses on business set-up and provide occasional funding, advice on business plans, basic book keeping,
- Pre-Planning Clinic,- Book an appointment to attend one of these well in advance to receive planners input in relation to particular areas, such as local development plans. Notices of Pre-Planning meetings are generally advertised in local papers.
- National Voluntary Childcare Organisations - Provide nationwide support and group insurance schemes and other Services. (Contact you County Childcare Committee for a list of these organisations)
- Local businesses- Contact these in relation to what support they can offer. E.g. Perhaps they might sponsor some childcare places exclusively for their employees.
- Local schools- Useful for advertising the service, leaflet drops, surveys, researching information in relation to population.
- Youth organisations-Can be used as a medium of advertisement, to form vital community links and local liaisons at events.

Section 3— Market Research/ Needs Analysis:

The main reason for doing Market Research is to prove the commercial viability of your project so here are some things to think about!

- Have you identified a target market?
- Are you aware of your customers needs?
- Talk to other local childcare providers
- Is it likely that your proposed new development will displace any existing service in the area?
- Consider any new developments planned locally such as: Schools, Business or Shopping centres, etc...
- Check parish register and with local primary schools for births and enrolments.
- Check with local authority/county council about new housing developments
- Carry out a traffic survey at proposed service site.
- Carry out a local needs analysis by doing door to door questionnaires.
- Contact the Central Statistics Office for information or regarding: population, age and gender of your local population.
- Consult with local development groups, parents etc...

Fact: Failure in business is due to bad planning and research! Fail to Plan - Plan to Fail.

Section 4— Land/Premises

Find a suitable premises for your needs.

Some options are as follows:

Construction of a Purpose Built Facility

Local Parish Committee, Health Board, Town Councils or Urban District Councils or County Councils could be asked for a green field site.

Schools and Community Buildings within the locality

Use or extend existing premises.

Where a premises is leased, the committee/individual would have to obtain a written lease agreement.

Extending an Existing Premises

This can be carried out by adding a room to an existing facility.

Conversion rather than Renovation

Converting a building or part of a building

Land:

- Contact local authority for sites (cow plots, zoned community land)
- Find out who owns the land (community owned, council owned or privately owned)
- Can it be leased if not available free of charge? How long will the lease be? (If you are looking for funding, a lease will need to be a min. of 4 years 9 months).
- How big is the site (do you have adequate space?)
- Is the site building ready, is the infrastructure in place or how much will need to be done? (gives you an idea of time).
- Is it accessible for what your needs are?
- Contact architect for detailed drawings suitable for your service.

Premises:

It is a requirement of law that you need planning permission, a fire certificate and a disability access certificate to run a childcare service.

Planning Permission is required for all of the following:

- Building a new premises
- Extending an existing premises or childcare facility
- Renovating/Converting a garage/any room(s) of a dwelling
- Change of use of premises

Ensure the premises has the relevant planning, fire certificate and disability access certificate.

When applying for planning include in application:

- Nature of the facility (SAC).
- Number and ages of children being catered for.
- Hours and days of operation
- Floor space available
- Provision and management of outdoor play area
- Number of staff available.
- Parking, set-down and turning space available

Wicklow County Childcare Committee strongly recommends that you contact your relevant Council Planning Section regarding a pre-planning consultation. This involves a planning officer advising on the suitability of the location for building or opening a school age childcare facility.

For further information contact:

Planning Section Wicklow County Council Tel: 0404 20148

Planning /Designing the Premises

Room layout- There should be age appropriate furniture, easy access for parents and children of all abilities, (Ramps for buggies, walking frames, wheelchair access)

Front door should have suitable security measures to prohibit the access of unauthorised people.

There must be adequate indoor space for the amount of children catered for. The room/rooms should have separate areas for each activity.

Toilet area- Male and Female toilets should be identified. Female toilets should include the provision of a sanitary disposal unit. There should be one toilet and one wash hand basin for every ten children.

Kitchen –Must comply with Health and Safety standards and all kitchen staff should have HACCP training. All meals provided should be part of balanced diet. All food must be adequately stored.

Outdoor area- It is recommended that a suitable outdoor area is provided or alternative means of exercise.

Recommended Ratios –

Currently there is no legislation or regulation governing school age childcare services but best practice guidelines would suggest the following ratios of children to adults. (Volunteers should not be included in this ratio.)

The minimum adult/young person ratio in any group should ideally be 1 adult per group of eight plus one other adult and allowing an additional adult for each group of eight thereafter. Safety, ability/disability of young people and the nature of the activities being undertaken may require that these ratios be considerably lower.

(Information sourced from Code of Good Practice—Child Protection for The Youth Work Sector published by the Dept of Education and Science)

Section 5—Source Necessary Funding

Privately Owned

- The Capital required for setting up will come from either private sources, e.g. Savings, Investors or a Loan from a Financial Institution.
- Income will come from fees from parents.

Community Owned

- Income from fees
- Community support and private fundraising e.g. a draw, table quiz
- Charitable foundations and Trusts e.g. AIB Better Ireland awards, Local Partnership companies.
- National Lottery Funding

Section 6—Business Plan

Introduction:

The following section includes details on how to create a structured framework for the development of your School Age Childcare service.

Market Research

Market research is essential when considering the viability of your business. It will not only form the basis of your grants and funding and your business plan but will also be important in deciding the type of business you open and what childcare service you are going to provide.

For further information on Market Research Please refer to Section 3 of this guide.

Business Plan

A business plan is essential for the running of any venture no matter how big or small. Your business plan should include the following:

Mission Statement

The mission statement is the core message of the organisations purpose and what it stands for. It states the reason why the service exists and the underlying value system.

Your Aims

The aims are the broad general statements of what the service hopes to achieve. The aims set the priorities for the organisation.

The aims should:

- Stem from the mission statement
- Be limited in number
- Show a clear direction
- Be focused on intended outcomes
- Be integrated
- Be realistic and achievable

Your Objectives

Setting objectives means deciding on a structured approach to realising the aims of the service. It gives direction to everyone in the service and should also ensure that the available resources are used as effectively as possible. When the service is being reviewed, the objectives can be used as a standard against which performance can be measured. There are usually a number of objectives related to each aim.

Objectives should be:

- Realistic
- Clear
- Specific
- Timed
- Measurable
- Achievable

The business plan will also include:

- The business (description, background, objective, timeline)
- The people involved (staff details)
- The market research carried out
- The finance behind the project (premises, content, equipment)
- The book keeping details (projected income and expenditure)
- Policies and procedures
- Health and safety statement and
- Managerial and reporting structures.

Costings

At this point it is important to develop a 'Work Plan' which breaks down all the group costings:

- Preliminary costs
- Construction costs and
- Equipment costs (It is important to start costing all the equipment/toys/outdoor toys for the facility. A list of equipment and average cost is available from Border Counties Childcare Network - see contact list)

Section 7—Staffing

When looking to recruit staff for your School Age Childcare Service there are certain procedures as part of the recruitment process

Recruitment Procedure

Job Description: Outline the tasks to be undertaken by this new employee, what they are responsible for, the nature of the position (full-time/part-time)

Salary: Based on the number of children you hope to care for, responsibilities of the position, standard salary guidelines etc. you should budget your salary accordingly.

Advertise: One can advertise locally through your local county childcare committee, local papers and radio stating the title of the position and job description

Shortlist: Once you have received all applications, short listing takes place where the least suitable candidates are eliminated.

Set up an Interview panel and hold Interviews: Candidates for interview should be notified and then interviewed

Offer Contract of Employment: As a result of the Interview a candidate should be selected, offered the position and a contract of Employment drawn up.

Qualifications & Experience

When recruiting staff it is important to pay particular attention to the candidates qualifications and experience.

Recommended areas of qualifications and experience in the area are:

- Childcare (with recognised qualifications)
- Youth work
- Community development
- Social care
- Sports and recreation
- Play worker (Northern Ireland qualification)
- Sports leadership
- FETAC level 2 module in School Age Childcare
- Child protection
- First aid.
- Group work and facilitation skills.

Accredited training in School Age Childcare

Training for school age childcare currently available in Ireland

A large number of training institutions and training providers offer modules of training in school age childcare. However, at present, the range and focus of courses is quite varied and lacks both cohesion and a comprehensive and structured approach to the needs of this emerging element of childcare.

The School of Practical Childcare offers a Certificate of Play work which is accredited by the NCFE, a UK validation body. The course is offered on an outreach basis and comprises a series of workshops and a distance learning component.

FAS, the national training and employment authority, has developed an Traineeship Level 2 Childcare Programme which offered the possibility of taking a module (of 14 training days duration) in After School Childcare. The Traineeship involves childcare providers (both private and community based) and FAS working together in a dual system of occupational training leading to the award of a National Skills Certificate – Childcare. The minimum requirement of the FAS traineeship Programme is that workplace training is supervised and conducted by competent individuals familiar with traineeship, mentoring and skills coaching techniques.

A number of BA courses in Early Childhood Care and Education are now offered by the University Colleges and Institutes of Technology, usually covering care and education for the age range 0 to 8 years. These frequently include courses in relation to the After School childcare sector.

IPPA deliver a Level 2 module on School Age Childcare either as an integrated part of a total award or as an individual module. As an individual module, the course contact time allocated is 40 hours. This training is suitable for those who have previous child development knowledge. The training explores the:

- needs and strengths of the school age child.
- physical and affective environments in which children and staff operate.
- role of the adult in supporting development and learning.
- play, leisure and rest activities which occur within the programme and the child's participation and voice within the planning, implementation and evaluation process.
- operational aspects, both legislative and good practice, of delivering a quality school age childcare service.

The NCNA/NUI Diploma in Nursery Management includes the four divisions of day care: Care of Infants, Toddlers: Pre-school and School Age Childcare. The school age childcare element includes approaches suitable to both integrated School Age Childcare Services and Stand Alone School Age Childcare Services.

The Network for After School Support (NASS) – FETAC module in After-School Support Skills has been developed as an elective module for the FETAC Level 2 in Youth Work. This module may also be used as an elective in a range of appropriate vocational areas for example, childcare, community and health services. The module includes the skills development, activities planning and good practice in after school support services. Candidates undertake practical training with appropriate groups. The course comprises twenty weekly sessions and one residential weekend. Candidates who complete the course will receive a FETAC credit at level two.

Some local initiatives have provided training specifically to address local needs in School Age Childcare. As an example, Action South Kildare delivers a programme for volunteers in local community based after school services.

Job Descriptions

Leader/Manager/Co-ordinator Job Description

Sample 1

After school service – Leader Job Description

- The leader works to provide a quality after-school service for children in the age group 4-12years.
- The _____ Committee/Manager employs the leader.
- The leader will adhere to the policies laid down and any relevant legislation.
- The leader is responsible for the day to day running of the service, where a varied and stimulating programme of activities will be provided.
- The leader, assisted by the assistant leader, will formulate a daily routine for the children, which will include a wide variety of play activities and experiences. The programme will be as flexible as the child or situation demands.
- The leader will ensure that all necessary preparatory work is carried out in time and will be responsible for planning activities.
- The after school session times are from _____ am/pm to _____ am/pm, Monday to Friday, weeks per annum.
- The leaders hours are from _____ am/pm to _____ am/pm to allow time to set up before and clear away after the session.
- The leader is responsible for the safety of the children and hygiene of the premises.
- The leader and committee/manager will organise any outing and special events.
- The leader will encourage the active participation of parents in the service and be available to individual parents on request to discuss any concerns.
- The leader will give frequent progress reports to the committee/manager concerning the after-school activities.
- The leader in consultation with the committee/manager will decide which days the service will close.
- The leader will inform the committee/manager when there are:
 - Problems regarding use/heating/safety of premises
 - Repairs or replacement of equipment or toys

The leader is responsible for-

- Guiding and motivating other staff members in providing a quality childcare service
- Safety and well-being of the children while in the care of the school age Childcare service
- Ensuring a good standard of hygiene on the premises and safe use of equipment
- Providing a caring and stimulating environment for the children
- Providing support and advice for the assistant leader
- Implementing safety policies and procedures

The leader will keep up-to-date records on:

- Daily attendance- a file on each child with relevant information
- An accident book and an incident book
- An inventory of equipment and toys and a waiting list

The leader will keep complete confidentiality on all personal information regarding children, their families and other staff members. Such interest should only be passed on in the interest of the child.

The committee/manager will lay down basic policies, which will be adhered to by the leader.

The leader will report to the committee/manager on a regular basis on the above matters.

Sample 2

Title: Manager/Childcare Co-ordinator

Salary: €22,659-€25,977

Annual leave: 20 days per annum

Reporting to: Management Committee

Professional Qualifications:

Qualification in Childcare – Minimum FETAC Level 2 or equivalent

Experience:

Two years experience working in a Childcare service

Principal Duties and Responsibilities

- Supervise all activities in the Service
- Keep all records as required
- Ensure ongoing planning, monitoring and evaluation of the Service
- Maintain the service in a safe and hygienic state
- Support childcare workers in their activities
- Ensure all policies and procedures for the service are adhered to

- Liaise with the Management Committee and give monthly reports to same
- Work hands on as a childcare assistant
- Create a positive approach to children so that each child is encouraged and supported in the service
- To liaise with parents/guardians of the children and ensure they are welcome at the service
- Attend and participate in meetings/training as required
- To support other childcare workers in the service
- To maintain strict confidentiality with regard to all aspects of the service both inside and outside working hours
- Any other duties which may be reasonably requested by the Management Committee

Assistant Leader Job Description

Sample 1

After school service – Assistant Leader Job Description

- The assistant leader will work in co-operation with and under the guidance of the leader to provide quality childcare services for children from the ages of 4-12years.
- _____ employs the assistant leader.
- The Assistant leader will assist the leader in the day to day running of the service where a varied and stimulating programme of activities will be provided.
- The Assistant leader will work in co-operation with the leader in formulating a daily routine for the children, which include a wide variety of play activities and experiences. The programme will be as flexible as the child or situation demands.
- The Assistant leader will assist the leader in preparatory work for the children and will also assist in forward planning activities.
- The after school session times are from _____ am/pm to _____ am/pm, Monday to Friday, _____ weeks per annum.
- The leaders hours are from _____ am/pm to _____ am/pm to allow time to set up before and clear away after the session.
- The Assistant leader will attend committee meetings as requested.
- The Assistant leader is responsible for-
 - Safety and well-being of the children in the care of after – school service
 - Providing a caring and stimulating environment for the children
 - Ensuring a good standard of hygiene on the premises and safe use of equipment
 - Providing support and advice for the assistant leader
 - Ensuring a good standard of hygiene on premises and safe use of equipment
 - Co- operating with the leader to provide a quality childcare service in a stimulating environment
 - Assisting the leader in implementing safety policies and procedures

- The Assistant leader will assist the leader in keeping up – to – date records of:
 - Daily attendance – a file on each child with relevant information
- An accident book and an incident book
 - An inventory of equipment and toys and a waiting list
- The Assistant leader will keep complete confidentiality on all personal information regarding children, their families and other staff members. Such interest should only be passed on in the interest of the child.
- The committee will lay down basic policies, which will be adhered to by the leader.
- The Assistant leader will report to the leader on a regular basis.

School Age Childcare Worker Job Description

Sample 1

Position: Afterschool Worker

Responsible to: Senior Childcare Worker/Service Manager on a day to day basis and ultimately the Management Committee of the service.

DUTIES:

- To create a positive approach to working with primary school children in the After School/Out of Term Time Service and to encourage them to develop to their fullest potential.
- To collaborate with the Senior Worker/Service Manager and the Management Committee to plan, review and monitor activities/programmes appropriate to the individual and group needs of the children.
- To work as part of a team
- To set simple clear limits for children that are consistently followed and encourage a positive approach to discipline. To be vigilant on any areas of concern and seek advice where appropriate.
- To liaise with the parents/guardians who are the prime carers of the children and ensure they are always welcome at the service.
- To collect children at the main door of the school and bring them round via the separate entrance to the After School service.
- To support other childcare staff working in the service
- To keep records as required and contribute to the updating of the children's records
- To set up play activities for the children
- To administer first aid when necessary
- To maintain a safe and hygiene environment
- To attend and participate in meetings and training as required
- To maintain strict confidentiality with regard to all aspects of the service both during and outside of working hours
- Any other duties that may be reasonably requested by the Senior Childcare Worker/Manager and Management.

The Interview

Community Childcare / Afterschool Leader

Possible Interview Questions

1. Could you please go through any past experience or training you feel is relevant to this post?
2. Do you have any previous experience in managing a team or staff?
3. What would you do to develop and expand the School Age Childcare service over the coming year?
4. What would you see as the key priorities over the next six months?
5. What do you think is the main purpose of a School Age Childcare service?
6. Could you provide us with an example of the activities you might organise for a day with a group of 8 children between the ages of 6 and 10?
7. What do you think are the issues for children who have special needs?
8. How can these be addressed?
9. What would you need to think about in organising a day's trip out for the School Age Childcare Service?
10. Could you give an example of a difficult situation or a conflict you had to handle?
11. What do you think are the core priorities in child protection?
12. What involvement do you think parents should have in the service?
13. What supports do you think parents require?
14. As leader of a School Age Childcare Service would you see yourself linking with the teachers in the school in any way?
15. What initiatives might you take to promote the service and target the relevant families?
16. You will be the first point of contact people will have with this service, and you may have to present the project at public settings – how would this influence how you would present yourself?
17. Confidentiality is very important in this project. Why do you think this might be?
18. This service is managed by a voluntary committee. What type of reporting system would you see as effective to ensure effective communication between management and staff?
19. What is involved in preparing for a management committee meeting?
20. Would you be available for ongoing training and evening meetings?
21. The committee will be looking for a reference and for Garda clearance. Are you OK with that?
22. Have you any questions?

Contract of Employment

A contract of employment is considered good employment practice and therefore it is advisable to provide a written contract to include the following

- Name of Address of Employer
- Name and Address of Employee
- Job Title
- Job Description
- Date of commencement and duration of contract
- Nature of employment (length of time of the contract)
- Probation (Is there a probation period set in place)
- Place of employment
- Pay
- Method of Payment (Weekly/ Monthly by cheque/ Direct Debit)
- Hours of work
- Holidays
- Sick Pay
- Termination of employment
- Disciplinary and Grievance Policy and Procedures
- Terms and Conditions of Employment

Sample Staff Induction

Welcome to _____ School Age Child Care Service.

During your first week we will cover the following topics.

You will be asked to keep a record sheet of your induction.

- 1 General Induction to the Service
 - Tour of the building and immediate outside area.
 - Provision of locker for personal use.
 - Introduction to other staff, children and parents
 - Explanation of rota inc Shifts and Meetings

- 2 Policies and Procedures
 - Read through thoroughly- signed and dated individually.

 - Group Contract
 - Care Plans
 - Observations of all children to plan activities/care plans

- 3 Dress/uniform

Confidentiality

Attitude

The role of the role model

Good communication

Telephone Manner

Line Manager

6 Structure of School Age Childcare Service/Nursery

Staff Structure

Services provided

7 Working with Colleagues and Parents

Professionalism

Respect

Support & Supervision

Communication: General communication, Concerns, Difficulties & Complaints

Each staff members role

Designated person in charge, next in line

Welcoming parents / feed-back to parents on child's day / week

Role of the Preschool Inspection Team

Staff Training / Courses

8 Working with Children

Positive thinking

Dealing with challenging behaviour

Individual care plans

Daily Care record keeping and routine

9 Child Protection

Introduction to Named Child Protection officer

Child protection Policy & Procedure

Familiarise all staff with Children First

Reporting Procedure & Documents

10 Health and Safety

Personal and child hygiene

Vaccinations (Importance to adult and child)

Cleaning and Maintenance

First aid supplies and first aid contact

Evacuation routine Fire Drill / Display fire drill Book to record drills which must be carried out at least monthly.

Security routine

Domestic routine and duties / Food safety, Safe handling

Sick leave

11 Equipment

Safe use, care and storage of equipment

Procedures for use of equipment

Safe food storage

Inventory

Section 8— Legislation

To operate a School Age Childcare facility it is a legal requirement to have the following-

1. Planning permission
2. A current Fire Certificate
3. A Disability Access Certificate (for new buildings other than dwellings after 1 Jan 2010)
4. A Safety Statement
5. Garda Clearance for all Staff
6. HACCP Documentation if preparing hot food.

There are currently no childcare regulations governing the operation of a School Age Childcare facility. However, in the interests of best practice, it is prudent to use the Child Care (Pre-school Services) (no 2) Regulations 2006 and Child Care (Pre-school Services) (No 2) Amendment) Regulations 2006.

Section 9—Policies & Procedures

Policies

Policies are a statement of intent or course of action proposed by an individual/organisation on a range of issues related to the childcare service.

Procedures

Are a Step by Step guide to carrying out the actions to meet the intentions and requirements of your policy.

Why have Policies & Procedures?

- Policies & Procedures ensure that parents have accurate information about your Childcare service.
- Help Parents understand the operational management of your service
- Help staff give consistent information to parents
- Give staff the confidence and information to know what, where, when, why and how to do things.
- Give staff clear guidelines as to their terms and conditions of employment

When devising Policies & Procedures consider the following:

- Legislation/Best Practice
- The needs of those who use the service, parents and carers
- The needs of staff and management
- The rights of all children using the service

Developing Policies and Procedures can be a tedious and time consuming exercise but will prove to be invaluable to your service. It is important to note that there is no “standard” policy. Each policy is unique to each service as individual services have individual needs. It can be difficult to get started though, so to help you along, the following pages contain samples of key policies and procedures which should be used as a **guideline only.** You may seek the advice and support of your Local County Childcare Committee when putting your policies and procedures together.

Admission Policy

-----School Age Childcare Service aims to provide quality care / play opportunities for all children of school going age. We aim to make our service a place where everyone irrespective of his or her gender, ethnicity, culture, ability, family structure or social circumstances feels welcome and valued. Priority of places will be given to children whose parent/s are participating in education, training or employment. A number of places will reserved for children referred by the Health Board.

Generally, we will operate on a first come, first served basis. However, in the event that there is a demand for more than ___ full-time places at the Service, the following criteria will be used, in the order set below:-

- Children enrolled in primary schools or resident in thearea
- Children who use the facility 5 days per week and throughout school holidays.
- One parent/guardian (or single parent in single parent families) who have not been in training, education or employment for at least six months and intend to undertake one of these within the next three months.
- One parent/guardian (or single parent in single parent families) who is currently undertaking full-time training, education or who is in full-time employment.
- One parent/guardian (or single parent in single parent families) who is currently undertaking part-time training, education or who is in part-time employment.
- One parent/guardian (or single parent in single parent families) who is intending to undertake education, training or employment.

If over-subscribed after this criteria has been applied, selection for remaining places will be on a basis of numbers of days attended, with preferences to children needing the facility 4 days a week, thereafter 3, 2 and 1 day per week. If still over-subscribed, criteria (3) to (6) will be used on both parents e.g. both parents/guardians in full-time education, training or employment, etc.

A waiting list will operate in the event of over-subscription. This policy will be constantly monitored and reviewed on a regular basis according to interest levels and needs of parents/guardians and children.

We aim to support parents who are experiencing financial difficulties therefore we have developed a reduced fee structure which is based on a range of criteria which will be discussed with you individually and in confidence on receipt of your completed application. Please arrange appointment with the leader to discuss our reduced fee structure.

- Fees must be paid in advance, weekly or preferably monthly. There is no charge for days when the centre is closed. There will be no refund for fees paid should your child fail to attend.
- If your child will not be attending on any day, we request that a parent inform the service otherwise we will assume the child is missing and put in place our policy for a missing child.
- Any behaviour difficulties will be handled according to our behaviour management policy. We would ask parents to co-operate fully with this policy which will only work in partnership with you.
- Because we have a waiting list for our service, places can only be held for a period of one week if a child does not attend, unless a prior arrangement has been made with the parent.
- The service will operate according to our written Policies & Procedures which have been developed to incorporate mutual respect and encouragement. All parents will be provided with the opportunity to discuss these and any queries will be explained/ discussed with parent and the child at the time of registration. Prior to being admitted the parent and child will be required to sign a contract which states you understand and are in agreement with these Policies & Procedures.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Anti bias Policy

Our School Age Childcare Service endeavours to take into account the ethnicity, backgrounds and needs of all children attending this service.

Each area of the curriculum is planned to incorporate the principles of equality and to promote positive attitudes to diversity. Children are helped to develop knowledge, understanding, respect and appreciation of their own and other's beliefs and cultures.

Staff members are responsive to take into account all children's cultural backgrounds and are conscious of their own attitudes and values and how they can influence their practice.

Discriminatory Behaviour or Remarks

- These are unacceptable in the Service. The response to discriminatory behaviour or remarks will aim to be sensitive and supportive to the feelings of the victims and to help those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices.
- We will challenge any statements or behaviour by anyone in the service, which are sexist, or racist or which re-enforce stereotyping or which are in any other way derogatory to an individual.

Resources

We will regularly check our books, posters and other materials to ensure that they challenge stereotyping and that they positively and accurately reflect a cultural and racial diversity. Boys and girls will have the opportunity to be actively involved in all the activities.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Anti- Bullying Policy

It is the policy of _____ childcare service not to tolerate bullying (verbal or physical) and to inform all children and parents of this policy.

- We will discuss bullying with the children, what it is and what to do if they are bullied or know of any incidents of bullying occurring in the service.
- Children will be told to tell the staff if they have any concerns about bullying.
- The children will be involved in preparing a simple code of conduct for their group, following on from our Policies & Procedures behaviour management/ code of conduct.
- We will also work with the children on possible solutions/ ways of dealing with this problem should it arise.
- We will teach the children assertive behaviour strategies as part of their personal development programme.
- If we discover that there are incidents of bullying we will:
 1. Find out the facts
 2. Talk to the person/s responsible for the bullying and the victims individually
 3. If the bullying is about a particular issue i.e. travellers, race, marital status etc., we will endeavour to provide an educational programme on the subject. focusing on the issue and not the individual children involved.
 4. Should the behaviour continue, we will inform the parents and ask for their support and suggestions in dealing with the problem.
- We will teach the children that differences should be celebrated and never a cause for bullying.
- We will acknowledge, reward and encourage positive, inclusive behaviour.
- We will follow the procedure for writing a report of the incident.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Behaviour Policy

We believe that children and adults will flourish in an environment in which everyone knows what is expected of them and where the children are free to develop and learn without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else. We aim to work towards a goal where children will develop self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.

- Positive behaviour such as kindness, tolerance, respect and willingness to share will be encouraged through activities, projects, role play and games.
- Adults will not shout or raise their voices in a threatening manner.
- Physical punishment, such as smacking, or shaking will neither be used nor threatened.
- Techniques intended to single-out or humiliate individual children will not be used.
- Certain behaviour will not be considered appropriate within the service and will be actively discouraged. These include: bullying, stealing, hitting, name calling/ abusive language, damaging property, etc.

- As a group activity, the children coming to the service will be involved in developing their own code of behaviour with support from the staff.
- Following this activity the staff will support the children in looking at what happens in the event of misbehaviour and appropriate sanctions will be agreed and clearly displayed alongside the group’s code of behaviour. All parents will be provided with a copy of this.
- In a case of misbehaviour it will always be made clear to the child / children in question that, it is the behaviour and not the child, which is unacceptable.
- To counter this we will endeavour to work with the children on activities to promote a better, positive understanding of difference in an age appropriate, developmentally appropriate manner.

It will bepolicy to carry out the following actions to manage unacceptable and harmful behaviour:-

- The leader will work with the child to address the unacceptable behaviour and will try to find a solution to the problem.
- If the unacceptable behaviour continues, the leader will address the problem with the parents of the child and the Project Co-ordinator. They will work in partnership to resolve the problem over a period of two weeks.
- If the unacceptable behaviour continues, the parents will be asked to remove the child from the club for a fortnight. After this period, the child will have the opportunity to rejoin the club and the child’s behaviour will be observed.
- If there is a repeat of unacceptable behaviour the parent’s will be contacted immediately and asked to remove the child permanently from the club.
- All the above actions will be kept confidential, recorded and filed away in a lockable cabinet

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Child Absence Policy

It is in the interest of your child’s safety and essential to the service that you inform the leader or any other member ofstaff that your child is unable to attend the service and follow up with a telephone call to inform the service when the child will be returning to the service. Failure to do so wastes valuable time and causes undue concern for staff collecting the child from their school.

If the service does not receive notification that the child will not be attending, we will initiate our missing child procedure.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Child Protection Policy

Statement

If we have concerns about your child's safety and welfare or believe that your child is at risk of harm we will discuss this with you. If after having discussed this with you, we remain concerned we are obliged to report our concerns to _____ (Area Health Board). You will be informed if we decide to do this. We intend to create in our Service an environment in which Children are safe from all forms of abuse and in which any concerns about the children in our care are promptly and appropriately responded to. In order to achieve this we will:

Policy

- Strictly adhere to the services Staff Recruitment Policy
- Have written guidelines drawn up about duties and responsibilities of all staff.
- Have on going supervision of all staff.
- Strictly adhere to the services Confidentiality Policy
- Have a solid management structure and clear reporting and recording procedures in place
- Ensure that whenever worrying changes occur in a child's behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a separate confidential record will be set up.
- Ensure such records will be kept in a secure place and will not be accessible to anyone other than those who need to know this information. (see Reporting and Recording procedures)
- Provide appropriate training for all staff to ensure that they recognise the possible signs of physical, neglect, sexual and emotional abuse.
- Strictly adhere to the service's Code of Behaviour for staff
- Strictly adhere to the service's Bullying Policy.
- Encourage and facilitate a Code of Behaviour drawn up by the children themselves in order to establish boundaries and respect for both children and staff. (Displayed on wall of After School Service)
- Strictly adhere to our Use of Mobile Phones Policy.
- Strictly adhere to our Use of Cameras and taking pictures Policy
- Ensure that all staff understand and are clear about the Service's Child Protection Policy and it's related documents. All staff will be asked to sign a copy of this policy to confirm this.
- Follow the Service's Disciplinary Policy and Procedures should any staff member be found to be in breach of this Child Protection Policy and it's related documents.

Child Protection Policy - Reporting and Recording Procedures

If you are concerned regarding any aspect of a child’s welfare, the following Sections must be taken:

Concern

Note the exact details of incident/concern*

Inform Supervisor only

Name of Supervisor inserted here

Supervisor Informs Designated Officer

Supervisor chats with parent (remains objective)

If explanation is inconsistent or if supervisor is still concerned

Supervisor Informs Designated Officer

Designated Officer discusses with parent of need to inform Health Board

Designated Officer informs Duty Social worker

Precise details of all Sections taken will be recorded

In case of emergency out of regular hours, the unavailability of the above personnel and you fear for a child’s immediate safety on return to parent/guardian/home, contact the local Gardaí directly.

Tel Number: _____

*As stated in the Child Protection policy, whenever worrying changes occur in a child’s behaviour, physical condition or appearance, a separate confidential record will be set up. This record will include name, address and age of child, timed and dated observations, describing the child’s behaviour/appearance without comment or interpretation, where possible the exact words spoken by the child, the date, name and signature of the recorder.

A child should never be questioned further in relation to the incident/concern.

Staff should ensure that they do not express their own feelings or emotions in relation to the incident/ concern.

We have a duty to care, under the “Children’s First” national guidelines for the protection and welfare of children. *Therefore, in the event of suspicion or concern with regard to a child’s safety and welfare we will consult with the relevant people in the Health Board or the Gardaí. This duty over-rides all statements in our Policies & Procedures documents.*

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

School Age Childcare Code of Conduct

The children using the service should play an active part in drawing up the code of conduct for their group. This can be done as a group activity where the children suggest ideas for the code and following on from this you can help the children clarify or simplify and prioritise their ideas.

Following drawing up the code the group can in the same way come up with what happens if the code is broken i.e. how many chances the person breaking the code has, what privileges the loose etc.

This code of conduct has been developed to incorporate mutual respect and encouragement by all children and staff in the service. To ensure all children enjoy the time spent in the service and to ensure the environment is maintained in a safe manner, it is necessary to have some basic rules. These rules are intended to benefit everyone involved.

A common sense approach should be adopted by all which will allow the service to achieve its full potential.

- Violent or aggressive behaviour against another child or staff member will under no circumstances be tolerated. Children attending the service will be encouraged not to react / hit back but to report the incident immediately to a staff member.
- Abusive Discriminatory or Bad language will not be tolerated.
- Children attending the service will be expected to treat other children, staff or individuals or groups with respect.
- Children are asked to respect the premises and equipment and to treat toys and equipment only as its intended use.
- During activities Children are required to observe the instructions of the staff, if you are not sure of anything just ask.
- Any damage to toys, equipment or the premises should be reported to a member of staff as soon as possible, this is vital in the interest of everyone's safety.
- Any breach of this code will incur sanctions as described in the behaviour management policy.

Collection Policy School Age Childcare Service

From School

- It is the responsibility of the parent to make the necessary arrangements to get the child/children to the service and to inform the service in writing of these arrangements.
- Where the service agrees to collect the children from the school. **Signed consent will be sought from the parent / carer.** The children will be escorted by a know staff member who will always carry proof of identity. Prior contact will be made with the children and the school for new staff members.
- The children will meet the staff in an arranged place and a register will be taken.
- Should a child be missing, the staff member will confirm with the school if the child was absent from school that day. This will cause delays for the staff and other children therefore we would request that the parent informs the service by telephone if a child will not be attending on any day.
- The children will go in a group directly from the school to the service by the safest most direct route.
- In the interest of child protection and to comply with legislation child / staff ratios will be adhered to at all times.

From the Service Home

Please collect child/children on time

- Children may be collected only by the adult/s named on the registration form, should the person responsible be unable to collect the child, a letter of explanation must be presented signed and dated by the parent / guardian with a contact telephone number, the staff member will then telephone the parent prior to allowing the child leave the service. If the parent personally arranges this with the staff the telephone call may not be necessary, but signed consent will be required at all times.
- Where custody of a child is granted to one parent, we would ask you to clarify the circumstances with us. This information will remain confidential and will only be made known to the relevant staff. If there is any legal documents i.e. custody order, barring order we would ask you to provide us with a copy to keep on file.
- In order to comply with childcare legislation which determines the staff / child ratios and in the best interest of the children (children can become distressed when no-one comes for them when all the others have been collected) it is important that children are collected on time from the service.
- If the older child is to walk home unaccompanied, the parent will be required to sign a statement accepting full responsibility for their child/children’s safety.
- It is the policy of the service not to allow children less than 10 years old to walk home unaccompanied.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Complaints Policy and Procedure

If for any reason any child or parent feels they have cause for complaint, then the following procedure should be followed.

- The parent or child should consult the staff member in charge.
- If unhappy with the response or it is a member of staff that is the cause of the problem, then the parent or child should make arrangements to meet with the staff liaison member of the management committee. (Name and contact details will be displayed on the parents notice board).
- If this meeting fails to produce a settled result, providing you have allowed time and a further meeting, the next course of action will be to request a meeting with the chairperson of the management committee.
- If none of the above Sections produce a satisfactory outcome, the parent can contact the Health Board.
- We hope you will be happy with the quality of care our service offers you and your child and that any difficulties that do occur will be sorted out immediately and to the satisfaction of all concerned.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Confidentiality Policy and Procedure

Working with children and families through the School Age Childcare Service will inevitably bring us into contact with confidential information. To ensure that all those using and working in can do so with confidence, we will respect confidentiality in the following ways:-

- Parents will have ready access to the files and records of their own children but will not have access to information about any other child.
- Staff will not discuss individual children, other than for the purpose of curriculum planning/group management, with people other than the parents/carers of the child or relevant healthcare professionals or except in exceptional circumstances as outlined in our Child Protection Policy.
- Information given by parents/carers to the staff will not be passed on to other adults without permission.
- Issues to do with the employment of staff, whether paid or unpaid, will remain confidential to the people directly involved with making personnel decisions.
- Any anxieties/evidence relating to a child’s personal safety will be kept in a confidential file and will not be shared within the group except with the child’s key worker, Service Leader, or Designated child protection officer.
- Students helping out or observing in the Club will be advised of our confidentiality policy and will be required to respect it and sign a contract on confidentiality.

Contract of agreement for membership of School Age Childcare Service

..... **School Age Childcare Service** will operate according to our written Policies & Procedures, which were developed to incorporate mutual respect and encouragement. I have been provided with the opportunity to discuss these and have any queries explained/ discussed with a staff member and my child at the time of registration. I agree to sign a contract which states that I understand and am in agreement with these Policies & Procedures.

Registration meeting held on _____

With staff member _____

Position on staff _____

I (Signed Parent / Guardian) _____ understand and am in agreement with

the Policies & Procedures of _____ School Age Childcare Service

Signature of Child Registered _____

Equal Opportunities Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

The equal opportunities policy of the service is to recognise and respect the rights of all adults and children associated with the service, to develop an effective programme of action to promote equal opportunities and to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of culture, race, gender, religion, disability and social background in all of its procedures and practices.

This After School Service will comply with all relevant legislation, including:

The Employment Equality Act 1977

The Employment Equality Bill 1996

The Equal Status Act 2000

The U.N. Convention of the Rights of the Child 1989

The Refugee Act 1996

This policy will be reviewed regularly.

ADMISSIONS

The service is open to all families in the community

The waiting list is operated as per guidelines for admission procedures (on a first come, first served basis).

FAMILIES

The service recognises that:

All families should be encouraged to be involved in their children's activities, in whatever way is possible for them.

The input of all families in relation to the service is valued equally.

There are many different types of families.

MEETINGS/INFORMATION

The time, place and tone of meetings must ensure that all families have an equal opportunity to attend and be involved.

Information, spoken and written, will be communicated in as many methods as possible.

CURRICULUM

The individuality of each child is respected and nurtured.

A wide range of play and activities is provided in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. The curriculum should present positive images of children and adults in society.

Children are encouraged at all times to appreciate similarities and value differences.

A range of materials (e.g. books) will be chosen to reflect cultures, gender and ability difference.

Non-stereotypic intercultural materials and posters will be displayed in the service and those which are stereotypical will be removed.

SPECIAL NEEDS

The service recognises that all children have special needs but that some have more needs than others.

Every effort will be made to meet the special needs of children and families using the service.

Where appropriate, every endeavour will be made to meet the medical needs of children.

FOODS AND FESTIVALS

Children and adults will be encouraged to experience a range of different festivals, i.e. through stories, celebrations, special food and clothing. Appropriate advice and input will be sought from those people who celebrate the different festivals.

Dietary and cultural needs of children and adults in the service will be met.

STAFF AND TRAINING

The service will deal with all job applicants in a fair manner and allow correct procedures.

In-service training will be provided for all staff in the area of equal opportunities in order to raise awareness of discriminatory behaviour or remarks.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Fee Payment Policy

**It is the policy of this service to collect fees weekly on
in the envelope provided. The service relies on fees collected on time in order to meet our overhead costs.**

If a parent has missed two weekly payments then an invoice with a gentle note, e.g.

"checked our records and notice that you have fees outstanding – please settle as soon as possible" is posted to the parent or given to them.

If after another week we receive no payment then a letter would come from the Manager outlining the amount owing and gently reminding them we are a Community crèche and have charitable status and rely on fees to meet the overheads. Also in the letter is an invite for the parent to meet with the Manager to discuss the situation and maybe work out a payment plan

Parents are never asked/may be asked to take their child out of the service due to late payments

Other options such as arranging a standing order through the Post Office on family allowance day making an appointment with an officer from the Money Advice and Budgeting Service or referral to Health Board Community Welfare Officer to see if they can possibly either assist in helping the parents manage their income or that the Health Board might be in a position to pay for their child’s place are also explored or approaching The Society of St. Vincent De Paul to ask them to support the costs.

Note: the services feel that in the event of non-payment issues the families are probably those that need the service most. They all feel that on most occasions when a parent and the manager sit down they work out a stage payment plan that works and all are happy.

If the difficulty of continued non-payment of fees continued, the Leader would again meet with the parent and ask them if they cannot pay the fees, or at least attempt to meet the payment plan put together for them. If there is no other alternative option available then the matter is referred back to the designated liaison person from the management committee for their consideration and decision, as often the service have a waiting list of very needy families.

On no account should any staff member request a parent to remove their child from the service.

To date no service has had to ask a parent to remove their child due to non- payment of fees – they have in all cases come to some arrangement either themselves or via other alternatives.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____
 And witnessed by _____
 Position on committee _____
 This policy was reviewed on _____
 Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Fire Safety Policy and Procedure

- Fire drills are held at least once a month at a variety of times to ensure all children are familiar with the procedure.
- They are organised by the Leader of theService.
- The other members of staff and children are not alerted beforehand so that the practice can be as realistic as possible.
- When the alarm sounds, the children line up with their leader and are lead out of the building through the emergency exit. All children are made aware of where all fire exits and fire-fighting equipment are located.
- A head count will take place as they leave the building.
- Once outside the building the children are led to the fire assembly area where the register is called.
- A record of all fire drills will be maintained recording the time taken to evacuate the building, the number of children and staff who participated and any difficulties arose while participating in the drill will be recorded.
- Fire extinguishers are located in relevant places. All staff and children will be familiarised with the location of fire safety equipment and the reason why drills are necessary.

In the event of a FIRE the following procedure will be followed.

FIRE DRILL

Raise Alarm

Leader blows whistle (never used for anything else) 3 blasts to alert staff and children of a fire in building. Then leader collects the child register and staff rota.

Whistle stored

Evacuate Building

With staff member at front and staff member at rear, children and staff walk to designated fire assembly point – outside. Leader checks all children and staff are present against register.

Call Fire Brigade

the appointed person goes to call the Fire Brigade from the nearest phone. The leader stays with the children.

Putting out Fire

if it is safe to do so without risk to oneself, a member of staff, not needed for the children, may fight the fire with appropriate extinguishers until the Fire Brigade arrives.

Parents will be contacted to take the children home following de-briefing from the Leader to reassure the children.

REMEMBER – DO NOT RE – ENTER THE BUILDING UNTIL THE FIRE OFFICERS SAY IT IS SAFE TO DO SO

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Health and Safety Policy and Procedure

.....are registered with the Health Board and aim to maintain a healthy, safe environment for all children at all times.

Health

In working towards this, we ask parents to note the following:

- Please do not send your child if he/she is unwell. If your child will not be attending the Service due to illness, please inform the Leader or other member of staff
- If a child is not well enough to participate, it will be our policy to provide a quiet place to lie down or to encourage him/her to participate in a quiet activity. The child will be observed for any worsening symptoms and the parents will be informed.
- We promote a no-smoking policy and will address this issue with children where
- Possible making children aware of the dangers associated with smoking.

Safety

Accidents will be handled in accordance withSchool Age Childcare Service Accident Procedure

Hygiene

To prevent the spread of infection, adults in the service we will ensure that the following good practices are carried out:-

- Hands are washed after using the toilet and before eating.
- Children with pierced ears are not allowed to try on, share or swap each other’s earrings.
- A box of tissues is made available and children are encouraged to blow their nose when necessary.
- Children are encouraged to shield their mouths when sneezing and coughing.

Clearing and Cleaning

- Any spills of blood, vomit or excrement are wiped up and flushed away down the toilet.
- Rubber gloves will always be used when clearing away body fluids. Floors and other affected areas will be disinfected. Fabrics contaminated with body fluids must be washed thoroughly in hot water.
- Spare laundered pants and clothing will be available in the case of an accident, and all soiled clothes will be put into a polythene bag and tied.
- All surfaces will be cleaned daily with an appropriate cleaner.

Food

.....will observe current legislation regarding food hygiene, In particular, each adult will:

- Always wash their hands under running water before handling food and after using the toilet.
- Not be involved with the preparation of food if suffering from any infectious/contagious illness or skin trouble.
- Never smoke in the kitchen or any room that stores food. A no smoking policy is promoted.
- Never cough or sneeze over food.
- Use different cleaning cloths for kitchen and toilet area.
- Prepare raw and cooked food in separate areas.
- Keep food covered and either refrigerated or piping hot.
- Dispose of waste properly and out of reach of children. Keep a lid on the dustbin at all times
- Wash fresh fruits and vegetables thoroughly before use.
- Any food or drink that requires heating will be heated immediately prior to serving and will not be left standing. No food or drink will be reheated.
- Tea towels will be kept scrupulously clean and washed between each session.
- All utensils will be kept clean and stored appropriately. Cracked or chipped crockery will not be used.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Healthy Eating Policy and Procedure

Eating habits are developed when the children are young and therefore School Age Childcare Servicehave an important role to play in providing the children with a healthy snack each day and promoting healthy eating habits within the club.

We do this by:-

- Providing the children with healthy food, snacks and drinks and help them to understand and enjoy the value of a healthy diet.
- Involving the children in healthy food related activities, e.g. tasting foods from different parts of the world.
- Supporting parents who are trying to ensure that their children follow a healthy diet.
- Encourage parents to support our healthy eating policy, e.g. by requesting that parents do not send sweets, crisps or sugary drinks with their children and suggesting healthier alternatives.
- When food is provided we will display meal menus in advance for parents information.
- We also ask that parents help us in our role by providing their children with healthy snacks and to remember that we may not have the facilities to refrigerate food.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Homework Policy

- It is the policy of the After School Service to provide a period of time each day for Homework. This session will be scheduled to take place directly after children have had their snack/meal. Snack/Meal time is relaxed and leisurely to enable children to unwind, socialise and discuss daily events.
- The Homework session will be for _____ (length of time) each day. Depending on your child or the class your child is in this may or may not be sufficient time to complete homework. This will be explained and discussed with you the parent at time of registration.
- Staff will contribute to a quiet relaxed atmosphere during homework sessions and encourage children to do the same.
- Children will be supervised at all times and assisted where necessary.
- The After School Service recognises the importance of the parent’s role in homework support and encourages them to check work completed, hear reading again etc... and play an active role in the homework supervision and support of their child.
- Staff, are not permitted to sign a child’s homework diary in place of the parent.
- On the occasional days that a full afternoon outing is arranged, it will not be possible to schedule the daily homework session. Activity schedules however will be planned _____(weekly, monthly etc...) so that parents will be aware of when this may occur.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Internet Safety Policy

Policy Statement:

The Internet is an essential element in 21st century life for education, business and social interaction. This after school service wishes to provide children with quality internet access as part of their learning experience. In line with our other policies that protect children from other dangers, we will provide the children with as safe an Internet environment as possible and will teach them to be aware of and respond responsibly to the risks. Our policy is based on limiting access to inappropriate sites, developing responsibility and guiding children towards suitable activities.

Our service will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that the children access only appropriate material. However, due to the international scale and linked nature of Internet content, it is not possible to guarantee that unsuitable material will never appear on the service's computer. The service cannot accept liability for the material accessed, or any consequences of Internet access.

INTERNET SUPERVISION

- The computer will always be located in a busy part of the service where the screen can always be seen.
- Children will be informed of what Internet use is acceptable and what is not and given clear objectives for good Internet use.
- The service will keep a record of all children who are granted Internet access.
- Parents will be asked to sign and return a consent form.
- Levels of access and supervision will vary according to a child's age and experience. Children under the age of ___ years will be accompanied by an adult when accessing the Internet
- Regular checks will be made on records of accessed sites in the browser log and history folders.
- All incoming and outgoing e-mail will be checked after each use.
- The duration of Internet use by each child will be (put time in here) and will be monitored.
- Children in the service will be made aware of the fact that all sites visited by them will be logged.
- All personal floppy discs will be checked for viruses and inappropriate materials.

FILTERING SYSTEMS

The service will work in partnership with parents and the Internet Service Provider to ensure

systems to protect children are reviewed and improved. The service will employ a variety of the following technical strategies to restrict access to inappropriate material:

Blocking Strategies – prevent access to a list of unsuitable sites.

A Walled-Garden or Allow List provides access only to a list of approved sites.

Dynamic Filtering – examines the content of Web pages or e-mail for unsuitable words.

Rating systems – give each web page a rating for suitability.

Monitoring – records Internet sites visited by individual user. Access to a site forbidden by the filtering policy will result in a report.

CHAT ROOMS

The service will not allow access to any chat rooms, regardless of educational benefits.

E-MAIL

- Only the service e-mail address can be used, under supervision, no individual e-mail addresses are allowed.
- Incoming and outgoing e-mails will be monitored after each individual use.
- Children attending the service must not reveal details of themselves or others in any e-mail communication, such as addresses or telephone numbers, or to arrange to meet anyone.
- Children will be informed that they must not open an e-mail from people that they do not know.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

A partnership approach with parents will be encouraged. Partnership may enable parents to plan appropriate, supervised use of the Internet at home.

All staff and parents will be provided with the service’s Internet Safety Policy, and its importance explained.

COMPLAINTS

Complaints of a child protection nature will be dealt with in accordance with the service’s child protection procedures.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Policy in the event of a Child Going Missing

In the event of a missing child, the following procedure must be carried out:

- On discovering, a child is missing immediately gather all children into one area and do a roll call.
- When the missing child is identified all the children present should be asked, particularly the children who the child would normally hang round with if they know where the missing child is or might be. This should be carried out in a manner that will not frighten or worry the children present unduly.

- While this is happening another staff member should check the facility and surrounding areas.
- If the child is not located, the child’s school should be contacted to check if the child was present at school on the day. The child’s parent / carer should be informed, if the child is not at home or the parent has no knowledge of where the child is then the Garda should be notified.
- An incident report should be prepared while waiting for the parent/ carer and Garda to arrive so all information is available for them.
- A full report should also be made to the Manager/Line Manager and Management Committee of a community service.
- A follow up evaluation should be carried out involving all staff for future incidents.
- The incident and outcomes should be discussed with all children as soon as possible to reassure them and raise awareness of the difficulties and worry caused if children do not inform an adult if they are not attending and where they are going. This could be explored further by a child friendly activity on staying safe.

In the event of a missing child while out on a field trip:

The same procedure should be followed gathering the remaining children together in one place. The Leader/Manager of the site, premises or service being visited should also be informed.

In the event of the child not found when the group are due to return one staff member should remain at the field trip location until advised otherwise.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY and PROCEDURE

..... will aim to provide the children with a opportunity to play outside in a safe, stimulating and challenging environment. All due care will be taken by the staff to keep each individual child safe and free from harm while at the same time will encourage children through

the activities to explore and challenge the environment and its surroundings which will aid the development of their skills

Through our outdoor play we at will aim to

- Keep all our toys & equipment maintained to a high standard. Any broken toys or equipment, which will cause danger or harm, will be removed.
- We will encourage the children not to disturb the natural habit
- Develop the child’s imagination and skills and give them the opportunity to assess risks for themselves
- Let children explore and challenge the environment for themselves
- Supervise the outdoor activities but will give the children the opportunity to explore and assess the environment on their own and staff will only intervene if or when the activities are becoming hazardous.
- A first-aid kit will always accompany staff for outdoor play sessions.
- Appropriate staff / child ratios will be observed at all times.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

OUTINGS/TRIPS POLICY and PROCEDURE

It ispolicy to safeguard the welfare of the children who attend the Service.

Whenever a trip or outing is planned, information and a consent form will be given to all parents. The letter will inform the parent of the following:

- The destination of the trip
- How the children will be travelling
- What they will need to bring (packed lunch, rain proofs, etc)
- The time of leaving and time of return

The telephone number and who to contact in an emergency

In the event of an accident, emergency or a missing child staff will co-ordinate the incident according to our Policies & Procedures.

All activities demand particular attention when it comes to health and safety and it is responsibility to ensure that the appropriate ratio of staff are adhered to . The requirements set out by this service are as follows:

Off-site 1:6

On-site 1:8

Children will not be permitted on the outing without completed consent form.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Partnership with Parents Policy

We atSchool Age Childcare Service encourage and promote positive working relationships with parents and carers. Our ethos is based on the belief that children attending our service are positively encouraged to develop their own independence. We acknowledge the significance of the central role of the parent / carer in their children’s development. We also recognise the importance of communication with parents / carers and we acknowledge the principles of open communication within the limits and boundaries of confidentiality.

- It is our policy to involve you the parent / carer at every level of your child’s development.
- It is our policy to encourage participation / involvement from parents / carers.
- We respect the rights of all parents from other cultures.
- We ask you to work in harmony with us and will welcome any ideas / skills you may wish to offer for the benefit of the children.
- We ask you to approach us with any concerns or worries regarding your child as early as possible.
- We aim to support parents who are experiencing difficulties.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

PERSONAL CARE POLICY and PROCEDURE

Toileting Policy: It is the policy of our service and in the interest of the children's health and safety, that a high standard of hygiene is promoted.

All children who attend will be encouraged to look after their own personal care. However, should a child have a personal care accident the following procedure will be carried out: -

Parents are requested to sign our Personal Care Policy Form

Parents who have failed to sign the above form shall be contacted and asked to come to change the child if the child needs assistance.

Staff will encourage the child to change themselves but if assistance is required it will be policy to provide the child with the help and support they need when changing. **It is essential for both the safety of the child and staff that the Personal Care Policy Form is signed and on file.**

All accidents will be recorded in the accident/incident book and parents will be asked to sign the book.

All soiled clothes will be sent home with the child in a plastic bag to be washed and returned clean to the club.

In the case of a child with special needs being involved, the Leader will meet with the parents and the child to discuss a procedure which they will follow for the personal care of that child. This procedure will be adhered to by all parties involved, where possible.

Toileting Procedure

- At all times it is important to respect the rights and needs of the children in our care.
- When a child needs to use the toilet, allow him/her the privacy to do so.
- If the child asks you to accompany them to the toilet, do so. Go to the bathroom door; ask the child if she wants the toilet door left open or closed.
- Reassure the child that you will wait outside the door where they can call if they need you.
- If the child asks you to help undo buttons or zippers, give help when requested, encouraging the child to help you and allowing the child to do as much for themselves as they can.
- If the child needs assistance in the toilet cubicle, where possible have another member of staff in the vicinity.
- After using the toilet, allow the child to attend to their own personal hygiene, only helping when the child needs help.
- The staff should treat accidents sensitively.
- To create an awareness and understanding of good hygiene practice, staff members emphasise the importance of self care, for example after using the toilet, encourage the child to flush the toilet and wash their hands.

Consent Form for Assistance with Personal Care

- If the child requires help to undo buttons or zippers, give help when requested, encouraging the child to help you and allowing the child to do as much for themselves as they can.
- If the child needs assistance in the toilet cubicle, where possible have another member of staff in the vicinity.
- After using the toilet, allow the child to attend to their own personal hygiene, only helping when the child needs help.
- The staff should treat accidents sensitively.
- Parents who have failed to sign the above form shall be contacted and asked to come to change the child if the child needs assistance.
- Staff will encourage the child to change themselves but if assistance is required it will be policy to provide the child with the help and support they need when changing. **It is essential for both the safety of the child and staff that the Personal Care Policy Form is signed and on file.**
- All accidents will be recorded in the accident/incident book and parents will be asked to sign the book.
- All soiled clothes will be sent home with the child in a plastic bag to be washed and returned clean to the club.
- In the case of a child with special needs being involved, the Leader will meet with the parents and the child to discuss a procedure which they will follow for the personal care of that child. This procedure will be adhered to by all parties involved, where possible.

I _____ parent / guardian give my consent to staff of _____ School Age Childcare Service to

give _____ assistance with personal care for toileting or in the event of an accident relating to personal care.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

PLANNING AND EVALUATION POLICY and PROCEDURE

..... aim to maintain a high standard in the quantity and quality of play, care and education opportunities offered to all primary school aged children.

To ensure that this standard is met, regular meetings will be held to evaluate activities, equipment and general views of parents and children using the setting.

Programme plans will be made for the month ahead by the leaders, staff and with the input from the children. These programmes will be reviewed, evaluated and the necessary changes will be implemented.

All evaluation is carried out in line with providing maximum opportunities for self-development for the children attending.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Policy on Consultation with Children

It will be the policy ofto develop a children’s sub-committee group to enable all children to express their wishes within the club.

It will be the leader’s responsibility to develop a chaired committee among the children and to help them facilitate the meeting.

The committee will consist of a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer and all other children will be the members.

At the meetings, the children will have the opportunity to discuss any ideas they have for the future running of the clubs and activities they would like to see happening. In addition, it will give them the opportunity to evaluate and feedback to the leaders what they have enjoyed and what they dislike doing in the settings.

The meetings will take place bi-monthly during the service operating hours and the minutes of the meeting will be discussed with the Leader / Co-ordinator. A copy of the minutes will be circulated to all children and they will be invited to comment on any ideas or suggestions planned for the service. A copy of the minutes will be held on file.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Policy on Mobile Phone Use

It is the policy of this service in the interest of child protection, not to allow mobile phones to be used on the premises. This policy applies to staff, parent's visitors and children. If parent / visitors need to receive an incoming call from a mobile, we would ask you to leave the room to answer the phone. The service will not accept responsibility for any loss, damage or theft of a phone. If there is a reason for contact in an emergency you can receive a call on the services land line. Please inform the leader if this may be necessary.

If anyone is found to be in possession of a mobile phone on during the service, the phone will be taken by the staff member in charge and locked in the office where it can be collected at the end of the session. Should the problem reoccur a parent will be required to collect the phone.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Policy on Sickness

Please do not send your child if he/she is unwell. If your child will not be attending the Club due to illness, please inform the Club Leader.

In order to ensure the health & safety of children and staff, Staff / Children who have any of the following conditions will be excluded from the service until such a time as: the condition subsides, it is no longer contagious or a doctor's note states that the condition is no longer contagious. The following may be grounds for the exclusion of children from the service. Some symptoms may be evident individually or may be related:

Any staff member or child suffering from acute symptoms of food poisoning / gastroenteritis.

- Any member of staff or any child who is seriously ill with any contagious infectious /disease. E.g. impetigo, weeping infected rashes
- A child's temperature if it is 38o C or over.
- A severe earache or deep hacking cough.
- Difficulty in breathing.
- An unexplained rash – the extent of the rash or how long the child has had it should be recorded.
- Vomiting (more than once in the last 24 hours)
- Complaints of a stiff neck and headache with one or more of the above symptoms (contact their doctor immediately)
- Untreated head-lice or nits.

Procedure if a child becomes unwell while attending the service:

- If a child is not well enough to participate, it will be our policy to provide a quiet place to sit or lie down or to encourage him/her to participate in a quiet activity.
- The child will be observed for any worsening symptoms and the parents will be informed on collecting the child.

- If the staff are concerned that the child needs immediate medical attention the parent will be contacted by telephone. In the event of staff being unable to contact a parent the accident / incident procedure will be implemented.
- **Head injury:** Any accident / incident involving a fall, with a bang on the head the child’s parent will be contacted. A decision will be taken by the senior staff member present whether the child will be sent home. This will be documented in the accident book and parent will be requested to sign. his policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Recruitment Policy

Statement

In recognising that the welfare of children must always come first regardless of all other considerations it is the policy of _____ to adhere to the following procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers.

- Advertising the position to the widest possible medium ensuring that all interested candidates receive notification.
- All interested parties will be issued an application form which will be accompanied by a job description form.
- Ask all applicant to supply all information in writing, the documentation would be required to confirm the identity if the applicant i.e. drivers license
- Provide a Job Description - The usual format of a job description includes:

Name and Address of the Employer	Job Title
Location	Who s/he will be responsible for
Who s/he will be responsible to	Job Purpose
Key Activities or tasks	Hours and days of work
Salary range	Whether job is permanent / temporary
Full / part time	Annual Leave and Sick Pay
- Processing the Applications
- Planning the Interview Programme
- Interview Process
- The Interview
- References
- Garda Clearance
- Medical Checks
- Contract of employment
- Induction Period

D.A.I.S.E.

Draw up your job description and person specification

Advertise the job. Shortlist your candidates

Interview. Prepare for and interview your candidates

Select your candidate, do those checks and procedures

Employ and retain your chosen candidates

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Registration Policy

It is the policy ofSchool Age Childcare Service that all children **must be registered before they attend the Club.**

Admission to the Club will be in line with our Admission Policy and Procedures, as outlined. All children must have reached compulsory primary school age, before attending the School Age Childcare Service. **Children must have completed one year at primary school before they can attend the summer camp in July and August.**

A member of staff will meet with the individual child and parents to discuss the child’s need and the policies and procedures of the service at the time of registration. . We welcome any queries that you may have regarding your child / children and we will work with you and the children to overcome these concerns.

Parental Involvement

We also appreciate parental contribution within the Service The Club will encourage parents to become involved by making them welcome, by respecting the differences in families, their language and religious cultures and by encouraging them to contribute in whatever way they can. We would ask you to help us maintain our fun and exciting place for your children to be, whether it is through helping us with trips/events, fund-raising or by suggesting how we could improve the service.

CHILDREN IN THE CLUB

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment will offer children to opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY and PROCEDURE

Policy Statement

Wherever possible we will provide for children in the community who have particular or additional needs.service recognises the wide range of special needs of children and families in the community and will help and assist these families in whatever way possible, insofar as staff and resources allow.

SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY and PROCEDURE

It is the policy ofto cater for Children with Special or additional needs to as far as their resources allow. However, as each child’s need is unique and different we will aim to take the following steps in order to assess whether we can met that child’s need so that they will develop and strive within the setting:-

- The Service Leader will meet with the individual child and parents to discuss the child’s need
- The Leader will discuss the matter with their relevant professional i.e. P.H.N., Social Worker and get advise on what equipment and resources the club may need
- The Parent, Leader and Healthcare Professional will meet to discuss if it is viable for the child to attend the service and if additional staff support is required and can be provided via the Health Board. i.e. staff.
- If it is agreed, the child will be appointed a member of staff who will be asked to work with the child, depending on the child’s need, we will endeavour to support the staff member to seek training which will benefit the child
- The parents and Health care professional will be kept informed on the child’s progress within the service and will meet for a review after every three months.
- However, if a child is not accepted into the service, solely on the basis of lack of resources and funding, we will develop a strategy of introducing the child along with the child’s helper to attend the service on a regular basis.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Volunteer Recruitment Policy and Procedure

The management committee is committed to ensuring that the recruitment of parents and other volunteers is open and transparent and at all times gives precedence to the safety and welfare of the children attending the service.

Procedures

Role Description

A detailed description of the role of the volunteer is prepared in advance. This includes:

Overall role of the volunteer

Location of the position

Who the volunteer will report to

Key area of work

Duties and responsibilities

Application Form

Each volunteer is required to complete an application form.

This form includes:

Name, Address and telephone number of applicant

Previous experience

Reason for volunteering

Name, address and telephone number of two referees

Interview/Informal Chat

Each volunteer will have an interview or informal chat with representatives of the staff and management committee as part of the recruitment process.

Declaration/Garda Clearance

Where possible, Garda Clearance is sought for all volunteers. If Garda Clearance is not possible, the volunteer is required to sign a declaration stating that he or she does not have a record of a crime or crimes, which could be deemed to pose a risk to children. All new volunteers must provide documentation confirming their identity and original certificates of qualification.

Induction

An induction period is provided for all new volunteers. Volunteers are provided with:

- Information about the role of the childcare service
- Further information on the volunteer's role
- Information on the role of other volunteers and employees
- Details of codes of behaviour
- Full details of the Policies and Procedures

Volunteers are obliged to familiarise themselves with the Policies and Procedures of the service and to sign up to codes of behaviour as set out by the service.

This policy has been adopted by the childcare service committee/individual at the meeting

Meeting held on _____

And witnessed by _____

Position on committee _____

This policy was reviewed on _____

Signed on behalf of management committee _____

Sample Volunteer Application Form

Confidential

Surname _____

Forename _____

Address _____

Date of birth: _____ Tel No. _____

Are you (please tick)

Employed Unemployed Student

Homemaker Retired Other

Previous work experience: _____

Have you previously been involved in voluntary work? Yes No

If yes, give details

How much time can you commit to voluntary work? (please tick)

	Mon.	Tues.	Weds.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							

Do you have any spare time hobbies, interests or activities?

Any other relevant information?

Please provide names and addresses of two people whom we could contact for a reference (not relatives)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel No. _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel No. _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

DECLARATION FROM ALL VOLUNTERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Confidential

Surname: _____ Forename: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth _____

Any other name previously known as _____

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound Over Order?

Yes No

If yes, please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s):

Nature of offence	Date of Offence
_____	_____
_____	_____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Sample Volunteer Reference Form

Confidential

_____ Has expressed an interest in becoming a volunteer with this early childhood service and has given your name as a referee.

This post involves substantial access to children and as an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children, we are anxious to know if you have **any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in control with children or young people?**

Yes No

If you have answered yes, we will contact you in confidence.

If you are happy to complete this reference, all information contained on the form will remain confidential and will only be shared with the chair of the committee/or manager of the service, should they be offered a volunteer position. We would appreciate your being extremely candid in your evaluation of this person.

How long have you known this person? _____

In what capacity? _____

What attributes does this person which you would consider makes them a suitable volunteer? _____

How would you describe their personality? _____

Resources

This section provides addresses on some websites which may offer useful information, books and publications which may help you when devising programmes, activities and provide more detailed information on some of the topics covered within this pack. It also provides a list of useful telephone numbers of organizations, which may be able to help when setting up or running a School Age Childcare Service.

Resource Books

- Developing School Age Childcare Childcare Directorate,
- Games for Social and Life Skills By Tim Bond
Nelson Thornes, 1990
- Afterschool + A practice Guide for Providers Stephanie Holt with Esther Pugh
- After School: The Way Forward National Children’s Nurseries Association
- Games for Actors and Non-Actors (2001) Augusto Boal
- Gamesters Handbook 140 Games for
Teachers and Group Leaders Donna Brondes & Howard Philips
- Gamesters Handbook Two New Games 1994 Donna Brondes & Howard Phillips

The following are available from the Irish Youth Work Centre

Golden Hours: Games for Groups (2003)

By Thomas Moloney

A collection of 58 tried and tested exercises for group leaders, teachers, club organisers, trainers, counsellors and other advisors and informal educators. It offers a selection of ice breakers, warm-ups, group exercises and fun activities that are designed for groups of all ages and sizes. Most of the activities require no special equipment and can be played with little or no preparation. Play sheets are included, as is guidance on how to become an effective master-of-ceremonies. This book is firmly based on the idea that games are an important learning method for people of all ages. Each game is laid out with helpful headings and diagrams and you will quickly be able to identify the purpose, ideal group size, activity level, age suitability and materials required for each game.

Cost: €20.00

Youth Service Multi Media Handbook (1999)

Edited by Joseph Chalmers, National Youth Federation

Unique Section by Section guide containing 7 modules, designed for volunteers and staff, who wish use multi media with young people in developing teamwork, social skills and self esteem. It incorporates traditional youth work methods with computers to create a learning and fun environment for young people.

Cost: €10.00.

The New Youth Games Book (1994)

by Alan Dearling & Howie Armstrong

Expanded edition of a book that has become a classic. Contains over 2000 practical activities. Includes icebreakers, relationships & team building, literacy, numeracy & communication skills, tension & stress reduction, problem solving, trust & sensitivity, self awareness & confidence and social skills.

Cost: €20.00.

World Youth Games (1995)

By Alan Dearling and Howie Armstrong

Collection offers games and exercises which represent the cultures and games playing traditions of countries throughout the world. The collection is organised into three main chapters:

- World of Youth Games which includes table games, board games and less active sequences from Africa, India, Pakistan, China, European countries and each part of the United Kingdom.
- World of Activities brings together more active games, playground and group recreations including unusual games - Gooly Dunda, Kabaddi, Longy -Della, Ring Games, Jeu de Boules and States' Shuffleboard.

World of Relationship Games offers a wide variety of games and exercises designed for use in groups trying to enhance the self confidence, social, linguistic and numeracy skills of young people. It includes: Wordles, Speakeasy, Human Train, Romania-Bulgaria, Pack Your Bag and Personal Shields.

Cost: €20.00

Creating Magic: Developing Arts-Based Practices with Young People (2003)

By National Youth Arts Programme, National Youth Federation & City of Dublin Youth Service Board

Training resource resulting from a three-year collaboration between the three named agencies above. Sections in the handbook include: The Arts and Young People; Planning an Arts Project (10 phases); ; The Project in Action; and Funding & Costing Your Project. It also includes a very useful and practical set of appendices on Responsibilities of Youth Worker and Artist, Sample Artist Contract, Sample Project Costing, Contact Agencies and Local Authority Arts Offices, Practical Resources, Journals & Periodicals and Case Studies.

Cost: €10.00

The New Youth Arts and Crafts Book (1996)

By Alan Dearling and Howie Armstrong with cartoons by Gubby

Exciting book that provides creative opportunities for those working with young people in any setting. It presents activities, the majority of which do not require specialist tutor skills. Each entry includes: advice on materials; how-to-do-it information on art/craft activity; information on what can be produced and how it might be used; commentary on working with young people of different ages/abilities; space, time, safety & staffing considerations; problems/pitfalls & how to avoid them and a list of suppliers/further sources of information.

Cost: €20.00

Insights Into..... The Programme Starter Pack Series (1992)

by Fran McVeigh

Series of 3 packs (The Personal Me, The Creative Me, and The Healthy Me) designed to assist leaders generate programme discussion with small groups of young people. Each pack includes background information to put the topic into context and has a number of sessions to generate discussion.

Cost: Set of 3 for €7.00

Creative Outdoor Work with Young People (1994)

by Alan Smith

Handbook for those working, or wanting to work out of doors with young people, especially youth leaders, teachers and instructors. Comprehensive reworking of the classic 'Working Out Of Doors with Young People' it contains specially commissioned new material on safety. Activities are designed to ensure that participants have fun while making active use of the outdoors and have been successfully used with a broad range of young people between the ages of 11-18, and in a variety of training courses.

Cost: €20.00

Show Racism the Red Card Campaign Video, CD ROM & Resource Pack (2000)

by Show Racism the Red Card Campaign Project

20 minute video with accompanying resource pack and CD ROM which conveys a powerful anti-racist message through the medium of professional football. It is suitable for a broad range of age groups, both primary and secondary age level and comes with study notes on conducting sessions and an educational magazine. The CD contains high-quality footage of many famous footballers talking about racism. It also contains background information, an informative quiz and a link to the Campaign Website.

Cost: €20.00 (video and resource pack). €20.00 (CD ROM)

Far Out (1995)

by NYCI

Handbook that examines why outdoor education work so successfully with young people, particularly in a youth work context. It examines the concept of outdoor education, looks at the key elements of designing an outdoor education programme and is full of ideas for different outdoor activities, group work games, environmental games, reviewing techniques and includes a list of outdoor education centres.

Cost: €18.00

Youth Action and the Environment (1997)

by Alan Dearling and Howie Armstrong

Incorporates a unique and highly diverse range of examples and case studies including: Conservation and reclamation projects; games and activities; arts, drama and animation work. Agenda 21 initiatives; problems and solutions regarding sustainability, pollution, transport, power, food and other resources; options for participation and involvement; taking direct action; human rights issues; homelessness; unemployment; war; poverty; discrimination and potential responses; Global issues & action.

Cost: €20.00

Time to Grow: A Comprehensive Programme for People Working with Young Offenders and Young People at Risk (2000)

By Tim Chapman

Programme which offers practitioners guidance on how to provide three core opportunities for growth, a nurturing community, the processes of learning, and committed, purposeful relationships and to do so with integrity. It focuses on the growth of young people and is designed to be organic and self-developing. The first part of the programme explores principles, research and theories that might be useful when thinking through how to work with young people and the second part contains outlines of modules on processes, which address a range of needs, risks and protective factors. The programme also provides guidelines on how to plan and deliver programmes tailored to the individual. It aims to achieve sustainable learning and change; be appropriate to the level of maturity or development of the participants; be culturally sensitive and to value diversity; adopt a holistic approach.

Cost: €45.00

Who's Got the Remote Control?: Real World Guide to the Power of the Media (2000)

By Johnny Sheehan and Grainne O'Byrne for DEFY Project, NYCI

Resource pack developed to strengthen young people's skills in critically interpreting media. It aims to enable young people to reflect on their use of media; increase understanding of media processes; to explore issues of media representation, particularly of those from the developing world; to explore issues of access to media at a local and global level, and consumption of the media by young people; to develop young people's media analysis skills; to engage young people in educational action to tackle media injustice.

Cost: €5.00

Another View: Introduction to Using Video in Working with Young People (2002)

By National Youth Arts Programme & Youthnet, N.I.

Practical manual developed as a result of a 5-year training programme for youth workers in video-making run by the NYCI, Open Channel (a community television company) and Youthnet. Designed to provide youth workers with the necessary skills in developing video as a tool for quality youth work practice, it provides the basic knowledge required to put a video together and technical information on video making, taking the learning, knowledge and expertise developed from the training and transferring it into a format that is accessible, practical and relevant as an aid for other youth workers to use video in their work.

Cost: €10.00

A Slice of Teenage Life: Not Just Another Teen Story (2004)

By Kid's Own Publishing Partnership / NYF

Book of stories on teenage life in Ireland, resulting from a partnership between Kids Own Publishing Partnership and NYF. The project was established after a number of youth workers expressed an interest in making a book with the young people they worked with. The project aim was to involve young people in the process of book publishing from an initial idea to a finished product through a series of master classes. The stories the teenagers wrote and the images they created and designed truthfully reflect the difficulties that can befall teenagers today. (46 pages).

Cost: €10.00

Child Protection Guidelines (2004)

By National Youth Federation

Comprehensive practical set of guidelines in ring-binder format based on current best practice and procedures as implemented by the statutory and voluntary sectors including health boards and consistent with Children First and Code of Good Practice for the Youth Work Sector. The guidelines include sections on Definitions, Recognition of and Disclosure of Abuse; Confidentiality; Reporting Procedures; Designated Officers; Dealing with an Accusation of Abuse (against employee, volunteer, young person); Recruitment Procedures; Volunteer Induction and Training and Good Practice on International Exchanges. Also includes a series of useful forms, templates and information contacts as appendices including Volunteer Application Form, Reference Form, Consent Form, Health Form, Reporting Concerns Template and Health Board and Children First contact details among others (54 pages).

Cost: €10.00

All Work and No Play: Child Labour in the 21st Century (2001)

by DEFY Project, NYCI

Resource containing activities, information and action ideas that youth workers, youth leaders and others working with young people can use to raise awareness around child labour, and develop local and national strategies for dealing with the complexities involved. Using simulation games, drama, role play, art work and ranking exercises, young people can investigate what child labour is, look deeper into the causes and consequences, imagine alternatives and explore what can be done to tackle child labour.

Cost: €5.00

Off Your Trolley: The Great Supermarket Challenge (1997)

By DEFY Project, NYCI in Partnership with Christian Aid

Activity pack on justice education with a global perspective. Designed for use with youth groups, it can also be adapted for use in other settings such as schools, community and women's groups. Cost: €5.00

A Guide to the Major Trusts 1997/98 (1998)

edited by Luke FitzHerbert, Susan Forrester & Julio Grau

Produced by DSC, it gives very detailed information on grant-making trusts. It covers 300 major trusts, making grants of over £200,000 a year, giving details of trusts' backgrounds, interests and priorities.

Cost: €20.00

UK Charitable Funding for the Republic of Ireland

by Paul Caddick and Howard Hurd

In the new dawn of Anglo-Irish relations, this ground breaking guide to UK trust and corporate funding sources for the voluntary sector in Ireland, with research on the attitudes on UK funders, will be an invaluable source of information for fundraising bodies and organisations with an interest in Ireland.

Cost: €20.00

The Complete Fundraising Handbook (1999)

by Sam Clarke

Offers clear and down to earth advice on raising money for charity, covering the range of funds available and techniques that can be employed; marketing, PR; and more.

Cost: €20.00

Writing Better Fundraising Applications (2000)

by Michael Norton

Practical guide to help users to produce applications that get results. Areas covered include: what makes a good application; costing a project; writing and assessing applications; creating your own worksheets.

Cost: €20.00

Tried and Tested ideas for Raising Money Locally (1997)

by Sarah Passingham

Packed with ideas & practical tips for success detailing 26 money-spinning projects with a breakdown of operating & equipment needs; lead time; costs & expected returns; method; overall pros and cons.

Cost: €18.00

Good Ways of Raising Serious Money (1995)

by Sarah Passingham

A detailed examination of five adaptable events for crowds of between 4,000 and 40,000. This is a book for non-professionals that will give anyone the skills to make a big event work.

Cost: €18.00

National Youth Federation, Dominick Street, Dublin.

The Irish Youth Work Scene is a quarterly magazine produced by the Irish Youthwork Centre for the youth and community work sector and anyone involved in working with young people. It is available on a subscription basis (€10 per annum) from the Irish Youthwork Centre.

The magazine contains a number of regular sections containing updates on new resources; a notice board of training events and courses; policy and funding updates; and a news round-up. Further information is available from Mr. Fran Bissett, Production Editor, Irish Youth Work Scene. Tel: 01/ 8729933

In addition to the above the National Youth Federation has an arts worker- Catherine Kaye- who is in the process of producing a book of art and craft activities that is suitable for school age use. It will contain activity ideas for all calendar celebration dates e.g. St Patrick's, Easter, Valentines, Mothers day, Halloween etc. The book is currently in printing and will be launched at the N.Y.F Annual Assembly on May 20th 2005. The book will then be available for sale nationwide.

www.amazon.co.uk

Amazon website provides a directory of books (used and new), software, videos, games, etc which are available to buy online. Examples of useful resources are as follows:

- The complete School- Age Child Care Resource Kit, Abby Barry Bergman, William Greene. Care Education Paperback.
- Before and After School Activities: Managing your Before and After Programs, Denise Theobald, Humanics Publishing Group Paperback.
- Creative Resources for School Age Programs. Don Platz, Nancy Platz Delmar.
- Party Time: Ideas and Activities for Fun & Successful Birthday Parties. Ina Levin, Partners Publishing Group.
- The Second Anti-Colouring Book. Susan Striker, Edward Kimmel, Owl Books.
- Making Play Work: The Promise of After School Programs for Low Income Children. Robert Halpen, Teachers College Press.
- Diversity in Action: Using Adventure Activities to Explore Issues of Diversity with Middle School Age Youth. Sharon Chappelle, et al Pearson Publishers.
- Bringing Yourself to Work: A Guide to Successful Staff Development in After School Programs. Michelle Seligson, Patricia Jahoda Stahl, Teachers College Press.
- Summer Sizzlers & Magic Mondays: School Age Theme Activities. Edna Wallace, School Age Notes.

www.healthykids.com

This website covers a variety of topics from Health matters to Food and Activities. Under "activities" you will find a link called "Family Fun Finder". This provides ideas on a range of activities and craft ideas which could be adapted and used in an After School Setting. Examples include:

- Fathers/Mothers Day cards
- Medal making
- Kite making
- Necklace making ideas
- Window box making etc...

www.booklady.co.uk/ www.easons.ie

The booklady website is a resource of Children's books and caters for the age range of 0-13 years. A large variety of resources are available dealing with topics from play, education, story books, computer guides, religion to puzzles and encyclopaedias. The complete range of books available for sale are displayed on the website, as are details of how to order the books and how to contact the author of this range-Elizabeth Savage.

In addition a variety of craft and activity books are available with ideas such as: -Things to make on Mothers Day, -Engaging and Education Play Activities etc.

The Eason's Website is an Irish Book Company website which provides details on an extensive range of play and activity books that are available for purchase nation wide. A wide listing of Children's activity books are available, examples include:-

- Children's Arts and Crafts by the Australian Consolidated Press
- Quiz books for children Age appropriate- 5-12years. John Paton
- Educational Resources are also available etc...

Section 11

Planning a Programme of Activities

Definition of a Programme

“A Programme is a plan with flexible possibilities and not a rigid schedule which everybody has to follow. It provides a planned range of safe, creative, positive opportunities which provide ownership by the children and young people for many elements of the programme” (Bonel and Lindon, 1996:78)

Why develop a programme?

Safe play and recreational programmes for children and young people require planning to ensure **quality**. Children and young people will attend School Age Childcare Services because they enjoy the programme of activities and the interactions with their peers and adults. In order for the children to establish a sense of ownership and control it is clear that the children need to participate in the planning and development of the programme of activities.

What is a School Age Childcare Service programme/ curriculum?

A School Age Childcare programme or curriculum is a set of planned play and recreational activities and opportunities that will allow for and encourage spontaneity for young people and children. It is very important that the plan is flexible and the children are involved. It should include activities, transition time, chill out, time to chat with other users and staff, personal care and nutrition, and homework if needed.

Features of a successful School Age Childcare programme:

- Staff knowing and understanding the interests, abilities and preference of the individuals that use the service
- Staff and children planning ahead to meet individual needs and planning what kind of activities could be provided for example, the options on a particular day or over a longer period.
- Staff ensuring that the necessary materials are available and providing choices in materials, equipment, ideas and space
- Staff must plan rotas to ensure that children and young people are adequately supervised.
- Staff must be aware of the health and safety of the young people and children using the service.
- Children and young adults having the opportunity to choose from a wide variety of materials
- Staff ensuring that children and young people have plenty of scope for spontaneity and recreation as well as the planned activities on offer
- Staff following the lead of the children and responding with flexibility to the events of the session

- Flexibility in adapting the programme to take in to account the environment in which the School Age Childcare project is located or situated.
- Provision to allow children to move smoothly from one activity to another at their own pace.
- Opportunities for relaxation time/chill out time should be available for children throughout the day.
- Adults and children taking the time to evaluate the programme, to see what is working or not and build in options to allow change when necessary.
- Nutritious and healthy snacks should be provided each day.

The programme on offer should reflect the mission statement of the School Age Child-care Service and promote the development of all children attending the Service.

Range of activities

- Wherever the School Age Childcare Service is situated it is important to make the most of the environment in which you work.
- A suggested programme of activities should include:
- Art, sculpture, textiles, drawing, music, drama, dance, gardening, computers cooking, swimming, photography, personal development, outdoor activities, involvement in community events e.g. litter week, parades etc, environmental projects e.g. recycling, occasional outings e.g. local library, fire station.

Preparing for a School Age Childcare Service session - Programme planning checklist

The Staff of the service need to work together in preparing a curriculum/programme of activities. Some of the following questions could be asked during a brainstorming session with staff and users of the service.

How many and what is the age range and ability of children attending?

How many staff are required? E.g. consideration given to gender requirements when doing an activity such as swimming

How much space do we have?

What other facilities/amenities could be accessed by the service?

What are the costs involved in each activity and has the time involved been considered?

Have we adequate insurance cover for planned activities?

What specific interests/hobbies have been expressed by the children of the service?

Will your activities cater for the whole age range or have you provided alternatives to suit different stages of development and abilities.

Have the children attending any language, cultural, dietary or special needs considerations?

What are the strengths of the project?

What collective skills and experience do we have?

What local resources are available to the project? E.g. Availing of parent's/community member's skills and expertise.

It is essential when preparing for a session that staff have a clear communication, planning and evaluation process in place. Time should be set aside on a regular basis in order for children and staff to meet plan and evaluate. Weekly staff meetings allow the workers to share relevant information about children/young peoples interests and capabilities. Parents should be invited to contribute skills and ideas to the planning process.

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

- What materials and equipment will you need?
- Make a detailed list
- Do you have enough materials?
- How much will they cost? , Are you within budget?
- Do the materials and equipment comply with health and safety legislation?
- Will the users need to wear protective clothing?
- Do you have materials and equipment for related activities if the children want to change their mind and make something else?

ACTIVITY

- Have you planned for choice variety stimulation and fun?
- Does your activity promote positive images of children from different family types culture or circumstances and avoid negative stereotyping
- Will all children have the opportunity to participate regardless of age race or gender and religion?
- What will your own involvement be
- What will you do if an activity flops or children are not interested?
- Are opportunities provided for outdoor activities?

ADULTS

- Are all workers in agreement as to how the activity fits into the session and the roles and responsibility they are each expected to take
- Will extra supervision be needed to carry out particular activities?
- Do you need parental consent or approval if the activity is a outing
- How will you make use of the skills that are within the team or do you wish to bring in people from outside.

(Template adapted from Davy,1998:81)

See Appendix 1 for a sample of plan of range of activities and a sample weekly plan!

Section 12 - Games and Activities for the School Age Child

Introduction

Working in an after school club can be great fun. At times, it can also be exhausting and challenging- especially as the children have already had a hectic day in school and are often tired. It is important that young people have the opportunity to develop their interests, skills and abilities therefore it is essential that they are involved in planning and choosing activities.

School age childcare services have the scope to offer a range of activities and should not be limited to just sporting and arts and crafts activities. The opportunities are numerous for example: cooking, swimming, nature walks, drama, dance, music, woodwork, sewing, photography, language and cultural awareness activities, computer skills, gardening. The young people should be asked for their ideas on what activities they would like to be included in their service. Parents should also have the opportunity to have an input/offer their skills to the development of programmes/activities, for example a parent who is a chef/gardener/beautician etc may be willing to come in and demonstrate their skills.

So let us try and inspire you to attempt something new, from ice sculptures through to simple food preparation and cooking with the children.

This section will focus on different types of games and activities that can be applied in a School Age Childcare setting.

Content

- 1. Action Games.**
- 2. Educational Games.**
- 3. Fun Games.**
- 4. Alternative games including some from other countries.**

Action Games.

1. "SNATCH BALL"

Aim: Promote physical development.

Equipment/Materials: small football or rugby ball, large room or outdoors-weather permitting, an object which marks the centre where the ball will be placed.

Procedure:

The members of two teams of 4-10 players try to gather a small ball or other object (small football or rugby ball are best) and return to their line untouched by their opposite numbers. The emphasis here is on speed and agility.

The teams are lined up and given numbers in reverse order.

The ball is placed in the centre of the playing area.

One of the numbers is called out and the player with that number from each team dashes out in an attempt to snatch the ball and get back over his or her line without being touched by the opposite number. He may go by any route he likes.

The ball must be taken cleanly. If it is dropped, the players return to their places after which any other.

Remember that a player cannot be touched unless he has the ball in his hands.

2. "CAPTURE THE FORT"

Aim: Promote physical development.

Equipment/Materials: Soccer ball.

Procedure: Divide the players into two sides; attackers and defenders. The more children there are the larger the circles.

Defenders form a circle, holding hands and facing outwards, with their captain in the centre.

Attackers surround the fort at about eight or ten paces distant. They try to kick a soccer ball into the fort. It may be through the legs of the defenders or over their heads, the captain may catch it and throw it out. But if it touches the ground inside the circle, the fort is captured and the players change sides.

3. "RELIEVE"

Aim: Promote Physical development

Equipment/Materials: A ball. Chalk or object to make circle in the middle of the playing area and also to make the den.

Procedure: A den is placed at one end of the court (room) and a ball placed inside a small circle marked in the centre of the remaining playing area. Any player tagged by "it" becomes a prisoner in the den, but all prisoners are freed if a free player can kick the ball out of the circle before being tagged. "It" cannot tag until the ball is in the circle. With a large group more than one "it" should be employed.

4. "CHASE"

Aim: Promote physical development.

Equipment/Materials: One or more obstacle courses are laid out on the lawn, comprising anything that comes to hand such as buckets, or string stretched between slender stakes both at ankle and knee height. It is best if there are at least half a dozen items in each course.

Procedure:

These objects should be placed 1 metre (3 or 4 feet) apart.

A small number, perhaps five or six, of the guests are then picked as "horses" and, after being allowed a brief study of the course, are blindfolded and led to their starting positions.

While this is going on amid a little hub-hub, other guests quietly remove all the obstacles, and when the course is clear the "horses" are given their starting orders and set off to be the first to complete the course.

It is important that all the other guests, or even "jockeys" specifically appointed for the task, keep up a constant flow of instructions and advice, telling the "horses" when and how to circumnavigate the non-existent obstacles.

The first one to reach the end wins and all can then remove the blindfolds. The "horses" are then allowed a few moments to recover from their embarrassment.

Educational Games.

1. "LINK UP"

Aim: Increase vocabulary and understanding of language, promote social development.

Age: more appropriate for 9 years upwards.

Equipment/Materials: Chairs in a circle in a small group room. Cards with one word on them.

Procedure:

Introduce the game: "These cards all contain one word. When you pick it up have a look at it and say any word that it immediately brings to mind.

Other people then have to try and guess the word on the card from that."

The person volunteering to start takes a card which is shown to no one else and that person then says a word associated with the word on the card, e.g. bed sleep.

The others in the group then have to guess the original word by calling out, e.g. in response to 'sleep' – a sleeping-bag, night, tired, dream – until someone guesses 'bed'.

The person who guesses correctly takes the next turn, and so on.

Variations: This game can also be more competitive by allocating points to the person who guesses correctly.

Teams could also play this game where they could confer before answering. Points can also be used for this method.

2. "WHO AM I?"

Aim: Supports social development. Increases and develops child's range of vocabulary.

Age: can be adapted to suit younger age group by using pictures/characters etc instead of names.

Equipment/Materials: Sheets of paper with names written on them. Sellotape /pins.

Procedure:

Introduce: "Someone is going to have the name of a famous person stuck on their back. They then have to ask members in the group questions to find out who it is.

However, group members can only answer 'yes' or 'no'.

One person holds the pile of cards or sheets of paper with names on them.

One person goes to the card holder and gets a piece of paper, unseen by him/her, stuck on their back.

This person then has to guess/deduce the name on his back by first turning slowly in the middle of the circle to show everyone the name, and then asking questions to which the others can answer only 'yes' or 'no'.

Variations: Use celebrities, football/pop stars, instead of local people.

3. "ONE WORD STORY"

Aim: Language development and creative thinking.

Age: Can be adapted to suit all ages.

Equipment/Materials: none.

Procedure: Circle formation. Each person in turn says one word which will add to the story that is developing. For example "I . . . saw . . . a . . . monster . . . in . . . the . . . lemon . . . soup . . ." and so on. Very amusing. It works best when the place is lively.

4. "REMEMBER"

Aim: Develop child's sense of awareness and improve memory capabilities.

Age: Can be adapted to suit all ages.

Equipment/Materials: A room and young people!

Procedure: Everyone studies the room and the people in it. One person goes out and the group changes something or someone. "It" must come back in and try to find out what's changed.

Variations: Add something instead. Do in pairs, study each other, turn backs and change something.

For younger children a table/tray can be set out with a number of cards. The table/tray could then be covered and one or two objects removed, the child must then discover what's missing.

Letter or number cards could also be used instead of objects to reinforce and develop language and numeracy skills.

Fun Games.

1. “Car Boot Sale/ Rummage Sale”

Aim: Have fun while learning about money and buying and selling at the same time.

Age: Approx. 7 years and upwards.

Equipment/Materials: Free and found, donated and recycled articles. (This activity is like a glorified jumble sale but the children love it).

Procedure:

Invite the children to bring certain categories of unwanted and no longer required bits and pieces into school, e.g. books, toys, etc. Store in an allocated place. When you have gathered enough ‘stuff’ the children can help sort the articles, set up the stalls and prepare for the sale.

You might decide to serve refreshments and have a few side shows in to the bargain.

Issue the children with some money real or plastic explain that this is just a game and nothing is for keeps and they can take turns to buy and sell.

2. “Find your Leaf”

Aim: Increase child’s knowledge and awareness of the world. Develop an interest in nature and respect for the environment.

Age: More appropriate for younger child – 4/5 yrs.

Equipment/Materials: Feely bag or box, paper, pencils, crayon. Magnifying glasses.

Procedure: Explain to the children that they are each going to select a leaf to observe closely. Once they have done this encourage them to examine it really carefully for any distinguishing features. They might also draw around it or take a rubbing.

Ask: Can you notice anything very special about your leaf that is different to all the others? If it was muddled up with some other leaves how would you find your leaf?

Gather the children together and explain that they are going to put their leaves into a box and that the box will be shaken to muddle all the leaves up.

Encourage them to have one last look at their leaf. They then see if they can recognize it again.

Hot Tip Leaves can also be preserved by coating them with a layer of PVA glue. When they are dry you can stitch them together with small stitches to make a wall hanging, or cut them up and used them as a mixed media painting. Or you could stitch them together to form a long, snake, like creature, and float it down a nearby stream.

3. "Make a Scarecrow"

Aim: Encourages children to be creative and imaginative.

Age: Approx.6 years and upwards.

Equipment/Materials: A broom handle, some old clothes, bits and pieces for making the features, a bale of straw or some hay.

Procedure: This is a great activity as the children can admire the fruits of their labours for some time afterwards. It is especially effective when done for a real purpose, e.g. when you have planted some seeds in the outside area.

Talk to the children about what they would like their scarecrow to look like. Look at pictures of scarecrows in books. Talk about what scarecrows are used for.

Ask:

What can we help put on the scarecrow to help frighten the birds away?

Can you think of a good name for our scarecrow?

Can you think of any other ways in which we could frighten the birds away?

Do you think there is anything else that might like to eat the seeds?

Extend the children's imaginations by suggesting that the scarecrow comes to life when they have all gone home. (Depending on age). Get them to think about some of the things he might like to do.

4. "An Outdoor Music Area"

Aim: Develop child's creativity and encourages a sense of interest in music and sound. Develops the auditory senses also.

Age: Can be adapted to suit any age.

Equipment/Materials: Tins, bells, bottle tops, saucepans, coconut shells, tin cans, horse-shoes, wind chimes, old cutlery, a variety of beaters, e.g. wooden spoons and plastic kitchen utensils.

Procedure: Set up a table (as far away as possible from the rest of the school and neighbours) where children can explore sound using some unconventional 'musical instruments'. If you have a suitable frame, hang some of the instruments up and explore whether they make different sounds when suspended. If you haven't got a frame they could perhaps use the fence to hang their instruments on. Fill bottles with water to different levels to see what sounds they make.

Ask: Can you think of anything else we could use to make music with?

Alternative Games.

1. "Gossip (Chinese Whispers)"

Aim: The game of "Gossip" is not only a fun parlour game for children, but it is a good sociological demonstration of what happens to information when it is passed by word of mouth.

Age: It is recommended for more than six players and generally requires children of school age with minimal communication skills.

Equipment/Materials: Pieces of paper with sentences or words written on them.

Procedure: Very simply, the players are lined up in a row or a circle. The first person is given a sentence or perhaps several sentences written on a piece of paper. He or she commits the information to memory and then sets the paper aside. He "whispers" the information, as well as he can remember it to the next person in line. This person does the same, passing the information down the line until it reaches the end. The last person reveals what he has been told to all assembled. The first person then reads the paper.

There are typically no prizes or winners associated with this game, but the results are often quite hilarious.

2. "Fashion Designer"

Aim: Develop young person's imagination and creativity.

Age: Approx 7/8 years up.

Equipment/Materials: Wall paper roll, safety pins.

Procedure: This is like "Mummies" but instead of having toilet paper and having to wrap the 'victim' to look like a mummy, you give each team part of a (not ready pasted) wall-paper roll, and 12 safety pins and they have to make an 'outfit', in say 5 minutes. If you wish, you may specify "A dress", "Jacket and trousers"etc. (The paper may be pinned on the person's normal clothes, rather than having to make the 'outfit' and then they have to put it on.)

3. "Cooking without a Kitchen"

Aim: Develop child's imagination and creativity. It also aims to increase their knowledge and interest in food.

Age: Can be adapted to suit all ages.

Equipment/Materials: Different food items – fruit and vegetables etc.

Procedure: Always check first for allergies. A number of different activities can be carried out. These are outlined below.

Ants on a log' Spread celery or bananas with peanut butter or cream cheese, Add raisins for the ants.

'Pear Mice'

Place a pear half face down; add raisins at the tip for the eyes and a curl of a carrot for a tail.

'Butter'

1 pint of whipping cream

Small clean baby food jars and lids

Take whipping cream out of refrigerator 2 hours before using to get to room temperature. Divide evenly into jars, put on lids and let children shake, shake, shake.

When butter forms, pour off liquid (taste this!) and spread on crackers or bread.

Option: Put 1 pint of cream into a mayonnaise jar and take turns shaking.

'Fun Kebabs'

Put skewered pieces of fruit or vegetables onto thin pretzel sticks or cocktail sticks. The only thing is you have to be careful about the sharp ends of the cocktail sticks.

4. "It's good to be me Game."

Aim: Increase a child's sense of value and worth for himself and others, build self esteem and confidence and promotes both emotional and social development.

Age: Can be adapted to suit all ages.

Equipment/Materials: None.

Procedure:

Every child chooses a topic to talk about in front of the other children, each line must begin with "It's good to be me because....."

Then each child must turn to the next person and decide on what's good about spending time after school with their fellow classmates.

Each child gets to compliment a fellow classmate; each classmate gets an opportunity to realize how they are valued in the setting.

Children get a chance to appreciate what they have and where they come from, learn about others in their class and express their feelings about how they see themselves.

Games from around the world.

1. “Khajano” From India.

Aim: Memory Game. It is important to inform children where the game is from as it increases their awareness of other cultures and generates interest in international games/activities.

Age: Suitable for children of similar ages.

Equipment/materials: You will need 25 different objects such as a paperclip, box, pencil sharpener, flower, button, ball, pen and so on.

Procedure:

Display all the objects on a table in the room. Let the children into the room for two minutes or so to look at the table, then take them all outside again. Give them five minutes to write down as many items as they can remember. Once the players get more used to the game, you can make it more difficult by putting more things out.

2. “Monini Monini” Leg Game from Africa

Aim: Explain to the children that this game originates from Africa. Increase child’s cultural awareness.

Age: All ages.

Materials/Equipment: None.

Procedure:

Everyone sits on the floor with their legs out.

A leader is chosen who counts the number of people sitting e.g. 8 people sitting

The leader then tips each person on each leg and counts to 8 as he/she tips each leg.

Whoever’s leg is tipped at number eight must then sit on their leg.

If the leader tips your leg again at number eight you must sit on both legs and are then out of the game.

Last person remaining sitting is the winner.

3. African Game 'Do you know I'm gold or silver'

Aim: Increase child's cultural awareness.

Age: All ages.

Materials/Equipment: None.

Procedure:

Two people stand holding hands. One person represents gold and one represents silver and they both sing, "Do you know I'm gold or silver, gold or silver, gold or silver, Do you know I'm gold or silver, gold or silver"

Everyone else runs through between the two leaders arms held together.

The leaders then drop their hands and catch someone between them.

One of the leaders asks the person quietly if they are gold or silver.

If the person says gold they stand behind the gold leader and silver they stand behind the silver leader.

This is repeated until everyone ends up behind the gold or silver person.

Then the gold line of people and the silver line of people pull against each other in a row. The first to fall loses.

Checklist

- Identify the need for the service
- Identify the range of stakeholders;
 - Children
 - Parents
 - Schools
 - Health Board
 - Employers
- Contact Support Agencies
 - County Childcare Committee
 - Health Board
 - NVCO's i.e. NCNA, IPPA, - Now Early Childhood Ireland
 - FAS
 - County Development Board
 - County Enterprise Board
 - Local Partnership Company
 - Youth Projects
- Hold a Public Meeting to engage a community group - to form a Working Committee
- Locate Site / Premises
- Profile of the area
- Explore funding opportunities
- Prepare Business Plan
- Agree Ethos & Mission Statement & Aims and Objectives of the service
- Source Resources on: Building Designs, Starting Your Own Business, Revenue Information, Best Practice Guidelines for Employment, Committee Skills etc, Your County Childcare Committee can provide you with these.
- Open Bank Account
- Agree Committee Constitution / Form a Limited Company.

- Tender for Architect
- Consult E.H.O, Planning Office, Fire Officer.
- Draw up outline design plans
- Develop Policies & Procedures/Safety Statement/Mission Statement
- Arrange funding
- Plan Training for Committee Members
- Display Plans in the Community, Public Meeting to seek views of community/users
- Apply for Planning Permission
- Tender for Builders