Department of
Health, Social Services
and Public Safety
www. i .

CHILDMINDING AND DAY CARE

for Children Under Age **12**

Minimum Standards

July 2012

Contents

Introduction 3
Values and Principles underpinning the standards 6

MINIMUM STANDARDS

Section 1 – Quality of Care 9

Safeguarding and Child Protection 10
Care, Development and Play 13
Children's Health and Wellbeing 15
Health and Safety in the Setting 18
Food and Drink 21
Promoting Positive Behaviour 23
Working in Partnership with Parents 24
Equality 25
Additional Needs 26

Section 2 – Quality of Staffing, Management and Leadership 29

Management and Monitoring Arrangements 30
Organisation of the Setting 32
Suitable Person 38

Section 3 – Quality of the Physical Environment 39

Equipment 40
Physical Environment 42

Section 4 – Quality of Monitoring and Evaluation 45

Documentation 46
Complaints 48

Section 5 – Policies and Procedures 49

List of Policies Required 50
Examples of Policies 52

Glossary of Terms 60

Introduction

The Minimum Standards for Day Care and Childminding for Children Under Age 12 have been developed to provide assurance of a consistent level of quality in these services, and also to ensure a consistent regional approach to registration and inspection. Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts are responsible for registering and inspecting these services against the requirements laid down in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995. The standards have been developed in this context, and aim to clarify the requirements contained in the legislation. This will ensure a regional approach to registration and inspection which will in turn mean that children and their parents who use these services, along with service providers, can have confidence that all services will be measured against the same benchmark.

Minimum standards are exactly that – the **minimum** level of service that has to be provided in order to be registered with a HSC Trust and meet the inspection standards. Whilst there may be no specific law underpinning some of the standards, it is important to understand that the Department has the legal right to set standards for these services in order for a provider to be registered with their HSC Trust.

In setting these minimum standards, it is acknowledged that there will be many settings where services are provided to a level above this minimum, and who seek to continually improve the quality of their services for children, parents and staff. The point of these standards is not to bring down the quality in these settings, but to begin the process of raising the quality of registered child care provision everywhere.

All of these standards apply equally to all children in the care of the setting.

Where we refer to "parents" in this book, we mean anyone who has parental responsibility or is responsible for the care of a child – this may include parents, relatives, carers, guardians and so on. There is a definition of parental responsibility in the glossary of terms, but additional information can be found in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 and its associated guidance.

There are 16 minimum standards in this book and they are grouped under 4 headings:

Quality of Care
Quality of Staffing, Management and Leadership
Quality of the Physical Environment
Quality of Monitoring and Evaluation

A fifth section outlines the policies and procedures required in settings, and also includes some examples of what should be included **as a minimum** in some of the policies you're required to have in place in your setting.

There are three categories of childcare setting that are required to register with HSC Trusts – childminders, full day care and sessional day care.

Childminders are self employed day care providers who work in their own homes to provide care and play for other people's children in a family setting. They may offer this service all year round for the full working day. Childminders are required to register when they look after one or more children aged under twelve for reward on domestic premises.

Introduction

Full day care is care for children aged 0-12 years for a continuous period of four hours or more in any day in premises which are not domestic. The children do not necessarily have to attend for more than four hours, and the setting may provide provision for part-day care for children aged 0-12 years, but if the facility is open for longer than this, it is defined as a full day care setting.

Sessional day care is defined as day care for children which covers less than a continuous period of four hours in any day and covers **crèches, preschool sessional care, out of school clubs (including breakfast clubs)** and the **Sure Start Developmental Programme for 2-3 year olds. Wraparound care** is also covered by the standards on sessional care.

In this book, out of school clubs are generally covered under the category "Sessional Care". However, as children in these clubs are, by definition, older, there may be some standards that apply to them but not, for example, to crèches or pre-schools. Where this is the case, there will be a separate heading in the blue "Sessional Care" box and the standards below that heading only apply to out of school clubs.

If your group also receives funding from the Department of Education, you will also have to comply with the Education and Training Inspectorate's Standards for pre-schools and the policy guidance for settings offering the Sure Start Developmental Programme for 2-3 year olds.

There are many other legal requirements, government strategies and best practice guidance that apply to childminding and day care. It is your responsibility to make sure that you know and comply with all these requirements in areas such as employment law, health and safety law, transport regulations and so on.

Exemptions

Where a child is looked after in their own home by a nanny or approved home carer, there is no requirement to register and these standards do not apply. Similarly, if a setting operates for less than two hours a day, it is not required to register.

A person employed by **more than two** sets of parents to look after their children as a nanny is required to register as a childminder.

How to use the standards

When using this book, the overarching standard is set out in the top box. Once you know the standard, look at the criteria that apply to all settings (in the yellow box), then check below to see if there are additional criteria that have to be followed in your own setting.

Below some of the criteria (in the purple boxes) are examples of evidence that HSC Trust Early Years social work staff involved in undertaking an inspection will look for to see if the standard is being met. Some criteria don't have examples. This is because some of the criteria in the standard will either be met or not, for example, in child

protection, staff must be vetted, this is both the criteria and the evidence. Where there are examples of evidence in the purple boxes, Inspectors will expect to see these as a minimum indication that the criteria for each standard are being met.
These standards expand on the content of the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 and Volume Two of the guidance and regulations associated with the Order.

The Children Order can be found using this link:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1995/755/contents/made

Volume Two of the guidance and regulations can be found using this link:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/co-volume2-family-support-child-minding-day-care-centre.pdf

If you need help in understanding or applying the standards and criteria or with any other aspect of providing your childminding or day care service, you should contact your local Early Years Team.

Introduction

Values and Principles Underpinning the Standards

The belief that the people who use services are central to all aspects of planning, delivery, review and improvement of the service is the central conviction that underpins these standards. Children and young people will experience quality care and support when they are involved in all decisions affecting their lives, when they can contribute to any planning for, or evaluation of, services and when they are fully valued by the establishment or agency and occupy a central position in all its operations.

The Standards also relate to the articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular: Article 2 (non-discrimination); Article 3 (best interests of the child); Article 4 (protection of rights); Article 12 (respect for the views of the child); Article 18 (parental responsibilities; state assistance); and Article 31 (leisure, play and culture).

The following principles are fundamental to all the standards and the quality of a service is dependent on managers and staff basing their practice on these principles of care.

Dignity and Respect
The uniqueness and intrinsic value of children is acknowledged and each child is treated with respect.

Independence
Children and young people have as much control as possible over their lives whilst being protected against unreasonable risks.

Rights
Children's and young people's individual and human rights are promoted and safeguarded.

Equality and Diversity
Children and young people are treated equally and their background and culture are valued and respected.

Choice
Children, young people, parents and carers are offered the opportunity to select independently from a range of options based on clear and accurate information.

Privacy
Children and young people have the right to be left alone, undisturbed and free from unnecessary intrusion into their affairs and there is a balance between the consideration of the individual's own and others' safety.

Fulfilment
Children and young people are enabled to lead full and purposeful lives, and realise their ability and potential.

Confidentiality

Children, young people, parents and carers know that information about them is managed appropriately and that everyone involved in the service respects confidential matters.

MINIMUM STANDARDS

Section 1 - Quality of Care

This section deals with all aspects of care that children receive in the settings. Quality care is influenced by many factors, some of which, like room size and food & drink, are easily measured and others, such as the ethos of care, development & play, which are less obvious.

Safeguarding has been placed at the start of this section as safety is at the centre of a quality service.

These standards will help reassure parents that their children are receiving quality care in a safe environment.

Quality of Care

STANDARD 1. Safeguarding and Child Protection

Children are safeguarded through systems and practices that are consistent with the Regional Child Protection Policies and Procedures.

All Settings

Safeguarding children is afforded the highest priority. A written policy and code of practice exists based on the Regional Child Protection Policy and Procedures which clearly states staff's responsibilities with regard to the reporting of suspected or actual child abuse or neglect and includes relevant contact names and telephone numbers. All staff must receive relevant training and understand their responsibilities and duties in respect of safeguarding and protecting children.[1]

At enrolment, parents are made aware of the setting's procedures for safeguarding and child protection, including the need to pass information without parental consent if staff have a reasonable concern that a child may be at risk of or is suffering abuse or neglect.

There is a written policy and procedures for intimate/personal care. Parents are made aware at enrolment of the setting's procedures for children's personal care.

There is a written policy on the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) equipment[2] and code of conduct in relation to use of mobile phones, particularly those with cameras or video capability, and participation in social networking websites. Staff agree and sign up to this policy on recruitment.

There is a written policy and procedures in place for the taking of photographs. Parents give written permission for their children to be photographed and the use of these photographs is clearly explained (e.g. displays, child records, promotional material etc).

There is a written policy and written procedures on the use of CCTV[3].

Arrangements for safeguarding children are reviewed on an annual basis.

There is a system in place to ensure that children are collected from the setting only by parents or those with parental responsibility or persons authorised by them to do so. Unless they are the parents, persons authorised to collect children are aged 18 or over.

1 UNOCINI is the recognised tool for referrals to Social Services. However, referrals will be accepted by Trusts' Gateway teams without UNOCINI. Guidance on UNOCINI can be found at **http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/microsoft_word_-_unocini_guidance_revised_june_2011_inc_mh_domain_elements.pdf**.

2 In this context, ICT equipment includes, **but is not limited to**, mobile phones, lap top and desktop computers, tablet devices, digital cameras, video cameras, web cams and other recording devices and other technology such as hand-held games consoles with recording, broadcast and/or internet capabilities.

3 Use of CCTV must comply with the CCTV Code of Practice issued by the Information Commissioner's Office. The Code can be found at **www.ico.gov.uk/upload/documents/library/data_protection/detailed_specialist_guides/ico_cctvfinal_2301.pdf**

Full Day Care

A whistle blowing policy is in place which encourages staff to report any concern they have regarding the practice of their colleagues, volunteers or trainees relating to the care of children. The Registered Person ensures that contact persons' names and telephone numbers are readily available to staff.

A staff member with designated responsibility for safeguarding and child protection is appointed.

A designated child protection officer must be available at all times during the hours of service provision for contact and consultation with staff and to offer instruction, advice and support to staff and this officer's details should be available to parents and carers. All staff must be able to demonstrate that they know how to contact the designated child protection officer if necessary.

Sessional Care

A whistle blowing policy is in place which encourages staff to report any concern they have regarding the practice of their colleagues, volunteers or trainees relating to the care of children. The Registered Person ensures that contact persons' names and telephone numbers are readily available to staff.

A designated child protection officer must be available at all times during the hours of service provision for contact and consultation with staff and to offer instruction, advice and support to staff and this officer's details should be available to parents and carers. All staff must be able to demonstrate that they know how to contact the designated child protection officer if necessary.

Childminder

For instruction, advice and support, childminders should contact their social worker in the Early Years Team.

EVIDENCE

Staff or the registered childminder can demonstrate an understanding of child protection issues and safe caring practices.

Parents are encouraged and facilitated to express any concerns they may have for their child's care. Details are provided regarding whom to contact in the event that they are uneasy about the standard of protection afforded to their children.

EVIDENCE (continued)

The Registered Person, person in charge or childminder knows how to respond if a complaint or allegation is made against them or others in the setting.

The Registered Person, person in charge or childminder ensures there is access to training in respect of safeguarding children. Such training is updated every three years.

All staff within the setting are aware of the signs and symptoms of child abuse, and understand their responsibility to:

- Be aware of the Trust protocol for reporting concerns;
- Report concerns without delay to the appropriate HSC Trust;
- Maintain a signed and dated record of anything which causes them concern, including any allegations made by the child; and
- Keep concerns confidential to those people who need to know.

STANDARD 2. Care, Development and Play[4]

Children's wellbeing is promoted and their care, developmental and play needs are met. A broad range of play and other activities is provided to develop children's physical, social, emotional & intellectual abilities.

All Settings

The relationship between the carer and the children is such that each child is valued and respected.

The environment is warm, welcoming, friendly and child-centred.

Children's confidence, independence and self-esteem are promoted through an environment and relationships where children feel secure and have opportunities to develop and make decisions and choices.

Children have appropriate opportunities to be active indoors and out, as well as to relax and rest.

Children's views are sought and their interests taken into account when activities are planned.

Children are given the opportunity to play at their own pace and to have fun.

Observations of what children do and say are used to meet their individual needs, promote their wellbeing and guide the work with them.

EVIDENCE

Staff and childminders listen to and engage with children and respond to their individual needs – including for example any apparent speech, language or communication needs.

Children are encouraged to share, help each other, and respect others and to develop social behaviour appropriate to each child's stage of development. There are high but realistic expectations of what children can achieve.

4 The principles of playwork can be accessed at: **http://www.skillsactive.com/our-sectors/playwork/playwork-principles**

EVIDENCE (continued)

There is positive engagement with parents to gain a good understanding of children's needs and home circumstances. Parents report that they feel included in their children's care and education.

There is a rich environment of natural, man-made and bought materials which ensures that the play and developmental needs of the children are met.

A range of resources and activities is provided to ensure that:

- Children's experiences are broad and balanced and provide them with opportunities which meet their differing needs;
- Children can build on their own natural curiosity, use their imagination, express their own ideas and develop their language and social skills; and
- Children make progress over time building on existing skills and introducing fresh ideas into their play.

Where possible children's artwork should be displayed.

STANDARD 3. Children's Health and Wellbeing

The overall health and wellbeing of the child is promoted and safeguarded.

All Settings

The premises and equipment are clean at all times.

Good hygiene is practised and promoted in order to minimise the spread of infection. When a child is ill, appropriate measures that comply with infection control guidelines[5] are taken. There is a written policy about the exclusion of children who are ill or infectious. The policy is informed by the PHA standard on infection control and is discussed with parents.

Any animals kept as pets have been risk assessed to consider the health and safety of the children and there are procedures in place to manage any such risks (e.g. children wash their hands after contact with animals; animal food is not kept where children can access it etc). Parents give written permission for their children to have contact with animals.

Settings comply with guidance produced by the Environmental Health Service in relation to food safety and its requirements for registration.

There is a policy and written procedures on the management of medicines. An example medicines policy is set out in Section 5.

Medicines are administered to children only after discussion with parents and with written permission for each period of sickness.

All medicines are inaccessible to children.

There is a first aid box complying with the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations (NI) 1982, the contents of which are checked frequently and replaced as necessary. This is easily accessible to carers, but out of reach to children. The suggested list of contents of the first aid box is set out in Section 5. There are no legal requirements as to the number of first aid boxes required in each setting. This should be determined by a risk assessment.

There is a policy and procedure for dealing with medical emergencies.

5 The Public Health Agency has produced guidelines on infection control, available at: **http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/infection-prevention-and-control-best-practice-advice-nurseries-and-childcare-settings**

Quality of Care

Full Day Care

There is at least one member of staff with up to date paediatric first aid training present at all times. There is compliance with the guidance on first aid as set out in The Children (NI) Order 1995, Guidance and Regulations, Volume 2. Whilst there is no legal requirement for ratios of first aiders to children, guidance can be found on the Health and Safety Executive website.[6]

All buildings and grounds are designated as smoke free.

Children are provided with their own bed linen, hairbrush and toothbrush.

Sessional Care

There is at least one member of staff with up to date paediatric first aid training present at all times. Whilst there is no legal requirement for ratios of first aiders to children, guidance can be found on the HSE website.[6]

All buildings and grounds are designated as smoke free.

Childminder

The childminder has up to date paediatric first aid training.

There is no smoking during the working day even if children are not on the premises.

Each child has their own bed linen, hairbrush and toothbrush.

EVIDENCE

All equipment must be protected from contamination and maintained in a clean condition.

Children are encouraged to adopt good hygiene practices including washing hands before meals and snacks and daily teeth cleaning.

Physical activity is acknowledged as essential for the health of children and opportunities for daily physical activity are included within the setting. Children are encouraged to be active in accordance with the UK Physical Activity Guidelines.[7]

6 Guidance on first aid can be found at **http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/firstaid.htm**

7 The UK Physical Activity Guidelines can be accessed at: **http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_127931**

EVIDENCE (continued)

Children are protected from over-exposure to the sun and extremes of weather conditions throughout the year and their wellbeing is actively promoted when they play outside. Parents provide written permission for staff to apply sunscreen for children when necessary.

STANDARD 4. Health and Safety in the Setting

Children's safety is promoted at all times ensuring that proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents and minimise risks to them.

All Settings

There is compliance with relevant health and safety regulations and guidance[8]; relevant environmental health regulations and guidance[9]; and firearms legislation.

The Registered Person ensures that a comprehensive risk assessment of the premises is carried out at least annually[10] and a written plan identifies actions to minimise identified risks. The risk assessment is reviewed if there is a significant change in the activity or setting.

All visitors are identified and their access to children is controlled as necessary.

Due care and attention is paid to minimising fire risks and assuring fire safety[11].

Records of fire drills and checks of the servicing of relevant equipment are kept in a fire logbook which is available for inspection. Where required, a fire safety certificate is also kept.

Safety glass which conforms to BS EN standards or purpose-made protective film is fitted to any doors, windows or furniture that are accessible to children.

Records are kept about vehicles in which children are transported during outings, including insurance details and a list of named, vetted drivers. There is a policy and written procedures on the transport of children whilst in the setting. An example policy is set out in Section 5. Parents give their written permission for children to travel in vehicles owned or used by the setting to transport children.

The Registered Person (or registered childminder if necessary) has adequate employer's and public liability insurance as well as the necessary insurance for the use of any vehicles owned by the setting.

There is a policy and procedures on how to deal with safety emergencies.

Ponds, pools, septic tanks or any water are made safe or inaccessible to children.

8 The Health and Safety Executive NI can provide information on relevant regulations and guidance. **www.hseni.gov.uk**
9 Environmental Health advice can be sought from local councils.
10 Guidance on health and safety risk assessments can be found on the Health & Safety Executive website at **http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/index.htm**
11 Guidance on fire legislation and fire safety can be found on the Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service website at **http://www.nifrs.org**

All Settings (continued)

Staff or the childminder are never under the influence of any substance that would impair their judgement whilst in charge of children.

All cleaning materials are safely stored out of sight and reach of children and used in compliance with COSHH Regulations[12].

Full Day Care

A valid fire safety risk assessment has been completed under the Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010 and all recommendations implemented.

Alcohol is not permitted to be kept on the premises.

Sessional Care

A valid fire safety risk assessment has been completed under the Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010 and all recommendations implemented.

Alcohol is not permitted to be kept on the premises.

Childminder

The registered childminder, or other competent person, has carried out a Fire Safety Risk Assessment for the premises and the assessment is kept under review.

The childminder should have an awareness of fire safety.

Any alcohol in the home is kept out of the reach and view of children.

EVIDENCE

Staff or the registered childminder have an understanding of health and safety requirements for the environment in which they work and are trained to minimise hazards in the setting.

12 Information on COSHH can be found at: **http://www.hseni.gov.uk/guidance/guidance/topics/coshh.htm**

EVIDENCE (continued)

Hazards on the premises, both inside and out, are minimised and daily checks are carried out before each session and appropriate action taken to minimise or cancel any risks.

All windows to which children have access have restricted openings.

The setting and its outside play area are secure and children are not left unsupervised.

Hazardous substances are stored safely in a cupboard inaccessible to children.

Children are kept away from boiling water.

All staff have received information, instruction and training on fire safety within the setting.

There are clearly defined arrangements for evacuation of the setting which are known to staff and children and regular practices take place.

Fire exits are clearly signed and easily opened from the inside. Fire exits and fire routes are not obstructed or blocked and fire doors are not wedged open.

A fire blanket which conforms to BS EN standards is provided in the kitchen.

Fire blankets, extinguishers, alarms and smoke detectors which conform to BS EN standards are provided as necessary and checked and kept in working order.

Soft furnishings and textiles are flame retardant and comply with BS EN standards.

Gas and electric appliances and their fittings conform to safety requirements and do not pose a hazard to children.

Cords on blinds are shortened or made inaccessible to children.

Floor coverings are sound and even and action has been taken to reduce the risk of slipping.

STANDARD 5. Food and Drink

Children are provided with a wide variety of nutritious foods and drinks that will contribute to their health, growth and development.

All Settings

There is a written policy on the provision of food and drinks for children. An example policy is set out in Section 5.

Settings must comply with guidance issued by the Environmental Health Service regarding the safe handling and preparation of food.

Food and drinks are nutritious, properly prepared and meet the dietary, cultural and religious requirements of each child. Guidance is sought from a health professional as necessary.

The number of meals and snacks to be provided will depend on the length of time the child spends there – but as a guide, children should be provided with three meals and three snacks throughout the course of a whole day.

Children's nutritional needs should be met by including foods and drinks from the four main food groups:

- Bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods;
- Fruit and vegetables;
- Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein; and
- Milk and dairy foods.

The social value of eating together is recognised and promoted.

Fresh drinking water is available at all times.

Settings should follow PHA Guidance on Preparing and Storing Infant Formula[13].

Full Day Care

The weekly menu is available to parents and copies kept on file.

Those involved with the preparation of meals and snacks must hold a Level 2 Food Hygiene Certificate[14] as a minimum.

13 Information on formula feeding can be found on pages 17-20 **http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/birth-five**
14 The Basic Food Hygiene Certificate has now been replaced with the Level 2 Food Hygiene Certificate.

Quality of Care

Sessional Care

A record of the group's snack menu is maintained.

Those involved with the preparation of meals and snacks must hold a Level 2 Food Hygiene Certificate as a minimum.

EVIDENCE

All meals, drinks and snacks provided comply with the nutritional information contained within "Nutrition Matters for the Early Years"[15].

The person in charge or childminder obtains records and uses information from parents about individual children's dietary requirements, food preferences and any food allergies and ensures that staff understand and meet these guidelines.

Breaks and meals are used to encourage the development of children's social skills and independence in activities such as pouring their own drinks and buttering their own toast etc.

15 These guidelines were originally prepared for the under fives in childcare, but the information is relevant to all age groups. Nutrition Matters for the Early Years can be found on **www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk/Resources/nutrition/pdfs/nutritionmatters/section1.pdf**

STANDARD 6. Promoting Positive Behaviour

There is consistency in the use of positive strategies to establish acceptable patterns of behaviour and to promote children's wellbeing, self-esteem and development.

All Settings

An environment is created which encourages positive behaviour and promotes the children's social and emotional development.

There is a written policy on behaviour management, including bullying, which states the methods used to manage and understand children's behaviour. This is fully understood and used by all staff and discussed with parents.

Communication between staff and children is positive and encouraging and contributes to the development of children's confidence, self-esteem, self-control and tolerance.

Strategies to manage challenging behaviour do not involve isolating children and do not include any methods that are degrading, humiliating or frightening for children or that involve derogatory comments about them.

No form of physical restraint is used unless the child is in danger of seriously hurting himself or others.

Physical punishments including smacking, slapping or shaking are neither used nor threatened.

EVIDENCE

Methods used in behaviour management are developmentally appropriate, promote resourceful mutual relationships and take account of individual children's levels of understanding and maturity.

Staff are role models for children in their communication and engagement, not only with the children themselves, but other members of staff and parents.

Parents are informed regularly of their child's development and behaviours. Good behaviour is acknowledged and shared with parents.

Any significant incident related to the management of a child's behaviour is recorded and the parents informed of the incident on the day. Parents sign and date the individual report to confirm their awareness of the content. Individual pages are used to protect confidentiality.

STANDARD 7. Working in Partnership with Parents

Providers work in partnership with parents to meet the needs of children both individually and as a group.

All Settings

There is a Statement of Purpose setting out information for parents. The expected minimum content of the Statement of Purpose is set out in the example in Section 5.

Agreement is reached with parents regarding the exchange of information about their child. Appropriate action is taken in response to parents' wishes or concerns. This issue is addressed in the relevant policies.

Records are kept about each child as set out in Section 5.

The needs of any parent who has a disability or whose first language is not English are taken into account in the provision of information and in the arrangements for access to the building.

EVIDENCE

Where appropriate, information is provided for parents about their child's day through written and verbal communication.

Parents are fully informed about and support the approaches used to address different aspects of children's behaviour in a positive way.

Parents are encouraged to participate in the work of the setting and advise on and contribute to meeting their children's developmental and other needs.

Parents are encouraged to express their views on the running of the setting and are consulted about major changes.

STANDARD 8. Equality

The setting actively promotes equality of opportunity and inclusion for all children and their parents and staff and positively values diversity.

All Settings

Admission of children to the setting and their access to its resources, activities and facilities is based on criteria which comply with equality legislation.

All children, staff and adults are treated with equal worth, respect and value in compliance with relevant equality and anti-discrimination legislation.

Equal opportunities are promoted with regard to employment and training of staff, trainees, students and volunteers.

EVIDENCE

Regular liaison with parents ensures that the family's cultural needs are understood and respected and that appropriate care is provided.

Staff demonstrate through their language, attitudes and behaviours that they positively value diversity in race, culture, religion, gender, ability, disability, age, marital or civil partnership status and sexual preference. They provide opportunities, using appropriate resources and activities, for children to develop positive attitudes towards others.

There is equality of opportunity for boys and girls in all activities and all children are encouraged to use the full range of equipment without recourse to gender stereotyping.

The range of activities includes opportunities for children to begin to understand and respect diversity, and play equipment within the setting facilitates the provision of these opportunities.

STANDARD 9. Additional Needs[16]

The inclusion, welfare and development of children who have additional needs are actively promoted, based on appropriate assessment.

All Settings

If the Registered Person, person in charge or childminder identifies a child in their care as possibly having additional needs, the observations and information are sensitively discussed with the parents and they are encouraged to seek relevant help. An individual care plan for the setting may be developed. Children's rights to privacy and confidentiality are respected when discussing potential additional needs.

The Registered Person, person in charge or childminder consults with parents about the child's needs, including any special services or equipment for a child with additional needs.

Before looking after a child with additional needs, the Registered Person or childminder ensures that the physical environment is suitable for that child. This includes changing facilities where required.

If a child is identified as a child in need (Article 17, Children (NI) Order 1995), the Registered Person or childminder, with the knowledge of the parents, gives appropriate information to the referring agencies.

Full Day Care

The Registered Person has a written policy which addresses how the setting responds to children with additional needs including both special educational needs (SEN) and disability. The policy is consistent with current legislation and guidance is made available to parents.

Staffing arrangements meet the needs of individual children with additional needs that attend the setting.

16 The term "additional needs" as used in this document refers to the Special Education Needs (SEN) as defined under the Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005; disability as defined under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995); the Autism Act (Northern Ireland) 2011; and Children in Need as defined by Article 17 of the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

Sessional Care

The Registered Person has a written policy which addresses how the setting responds to children with additional needs including both SEN and disability. The policy is consistent with current legislation and guidance is made available to parents.

Staffing arrangements meet the needs of individual children with additional needs that attend the setting.

Childminder

The minding arrangements meet the needs of individual children who have additional needs and of other children on the premises.

Section 2 - Quality of Staffing, Management and Leadership

The quality of staffing, management and leadership impacts directly and indirectly on children's care. Strong, competent and effective management means efficient running of a setting and high standards set for others. Staff who are happy in their role, secure in the knowledge of their responsibilities and well-trained to deal with all aspects of their job provide an environment where children can thrive.

A culture of professional, reflective practice and a willingness to challenge practice is vital. A whole-team approach and ownership of the setting is key to ensuring a safe, high-quality service for children, parents and families.

STANDARD 10. Management and Monitoring Arrangements

There are effective and efficient management and monitoring arrangements in the setting to support the work of staff and the care of children.

All Settings (Apart from a childminder working alone)

A record of the name and telephone numbers of the Registered Person is maintained and a contact point is made available for parents.

The manager/person in charge provides monitoring reports to the Registered Person at least quarterly to facilitate the regular review of the quality of the service.

Not all settings will have a management committee, but where they are in place, members' and Trustees' roles and responsibilities must be made explicit in writing and audited to ensure adherence to expected standards.

Management Committee and Trustee meetings must take place regularly and minutes made available to Trust Inspectorate staff.

The Registered Person ensures that all job descriptions, personnel specifications and contracts are approved, where appropriate, by the management committee / board.

The Registered Person ensures that the setting's practice in recruitment, selection and retention of staff complies with equal opportunities and fair employment legislation.

The Registered Person ensures that staff are provided with the necessary resources, including time, for the satisfactory discharge of their duties.

The Registered Person ensures that staff are employed in sufficient numbers and with the relevant qualifications to meet statutory requirements.

All those counted as staff must be age 18 or over.

The Registered Person or person in charge ensures that staff respect the privacy of children and parents and only share information in line with the Information Commissioner's Data Sharing Code of Practice.

The Registered Person ensures that training and developmental needs of staff are identified and addressed and facilitates staff to avail of developmental opportunities.

A record is kept of all training, including dates and attending staff. The Registered Person assesses the effectiveness of training provided for staff, whether internal or external, and uses this information to inform future training plans.

All Settings (continued)

Where a **full day care** setting has places for more than 20 children, a manager must be employed and is **NOT** included in the staff numbers for staff/child ratios.

EVIDENCE

The Registered Person understands their role and responsibilities and avails of training to assist them in the discharge of their duties.

The person in charge of the setting:

- Has a clear, well-informed vision and plan for the work of the setting and its future development based on agreed aims and objectives;
- Sets realistic, achievable standards of work for individual staff and the staff team as a whole;
- Demonstrates an ability to manage resources effectively to achieve the setting's aims and objectives;
- Demonstrates an ability to plan, in collaboration with staff, both the programme of work for the children and the staff's developmental plan;
- Provides a role model for staff through the quality of their work with children and commitment to continuing self-development;
- Provides a structured induction programme for each new staff member;
- Demonstrates effective communication with children, staff and parents;
- Encourages team-building with staff members and provides opportunities for them to contribute to the setting's development;
- Supervises individual members of staff and identifies their training needs;
- Completes an annual appraisal which is recorded; and
- Demonstrates commitment to working in partnership with parents and the local community.

There is regular discussion with staff and planned, minuted staff meetings at least every two months to facilitate the sharing of information and to promote the development of a common ethos of work with children and their parents.

Staff development is facilitated by regular supervision.

Staff work together as a team to plan their work with children and to address issues such as the management of children's behaviour and assessment of their individual needs.

Staff recognise how their individual work contributes to the attainment of the setting's aims and objectives and how consistency and teamwork contribute to children's wellbeing and development.

STANDARD 11. Organisation of the Setting

Adult /child ratios, space and resources are organised to meet the children's needs effectively and to comply with the stipulations on the Registration Certificate.

All Settings (Except Childminding)

The Registered Person ensures that there is a suitably qualified person in charge at all times and that parents can identify this person.

All planned absence of whatever duration of the person in charge as well as ongoing unplanned leave such as sickness is covered by a deputising arrangement and the Registered Person ensures that the person deputising is suitably qualified and trained.

The Registered Person has contingency arrangements in place to cover emergencies or unexpected staff absences. The person in charge is fully informed of these arrangements.

The Registered Person ensures that persons in charge and their deputies are qualified to the appropriate levels as set out below.

When these standards are published, existing staff who do not hold an appropriate qualification set out below **will not** have to attain new or additional qualifications whilst they remain employed in the children's day care sector covered by these standards. All employees are encouraged to become suitably qualified. Any newly appointed staff must be appropriately qualified.

The Registered Person ensures that within 1 month all newly appointed staff have induction training on:

- The setting's policies and procedures;
- Child protection, including whistle blowing;
- Management of children's behaviour;
- Recording;
- Working with parents;
- Health and safety; and
- Equal opportunities.

Whilst induction must be completed within 1 month, there will be some aspects that should be completed immediately at the discretion of the person in charge – for example, child protection.

Staff acknowledge in writing that they have read, understood and agree with the setting's policies and procedures.

All Settings (continued)

Individual records on all staff are kept securely, are available for inspection and contain:

- Their application form;
- Copies of their birth certificate, qualifications and references;
- Declaration of health;
- Confirmation of completed vetting and identity checks;
- Any record of disciplinary action or any complaints referred to HSC Trusts or the police which did not result in such action;
- Record of staff supervision and appraisal; and
- Record of training completed and of current training needs.

No more than 2 students are on a placement in a registered group at the same time. Students must be supervised.

Whenever a child with additional needs attends, the staffing complement is reviewed to ensure the wellbeing and development of the child is promoted.

The person in charge ensures that the number of staff available to accompany children on excursions or visits out of the setting is sufficient to safeguard them. The arrangements take account of individual children's needs and the nature of the outing. Parents are made aware of arrangements for their child's care and give written consent for the outing.

A cook is employed in any setting where meals are cooked on the premises for more than 15 children.

The person in charge maintains a daily register which records the names and dates of birth of children attending. The record must also include identification of the person in charge; permanent staff; any students or volunteers on duty; and the actual starting time and collection arrangements for each child (including accompanying adults). A daily record must also be maintained of all visitors to include arrival and departure times.

Full Day Care

The person in charge/manager and deputy should have at least a qualification at QCF Level 5 Diploma in Child Care, Learning and Development or Playwork; or a relevant occupational qualification in early years' education, social work, nursing, teaching or health visiting; **and** 2 years' experience working with children aged 0-4 years.

Team leaders or supervisors should have at least a qualification at QCF Level 3 Diploma in Child Care, Learning and Development or Playwork.

At least 50% of all other child care staff should have a minimum qualification at QCF Level 2 Diploma in Child Care, Learning and Development or Playwork. Other staff should be in the process of gaining this qualification within a reasonable time.

Quality of Staffing, Management and Leadership

Full Day Care (continued)

Where staff have previously attained Level 2, 3 or 5 NVQ qualifications in Early Years Care and Education, this will be an acceptable alternative to QCF Diplomas.

In a setting that includes more than one registered group, the size of a group never exceeds 26 children.

Each child is allocated to a member of staff, sometimes referred to as a keyworker, who is responsible for collating the daily observations and records on the child and for sharing this information.

The Registered Person ensures that a minimum ratio of staff to children is followed as below:

- 0-2 years – 1:3
- 2-3 years – 1:4
- 3-12 years – 1:8

Regardless of group size, at least 2 members of staff are on duty at all times.

Sessional Care

In **out of school clubs**, the person in charge and deputy should have at least a qualification at QCF Level 5 Diploma in Playwork which is the most appropriate qualification for this setting; or a QCF Level 5 Diploma Child Care, Learning and Development; or a relevant occupational qualification in early years' education, social work, nursing, teaching or health visiting; **and** 2 years' experience working in a play, education, youth or day care setting.

Team leaders or supervisors should have at least a qualification at QCF Level 3 Diploma in either Playwork or Child Care, Learning and Development.

At least 50% of all other child care staff should have a minimum qualification at QCF Level 2 Diploma in either Playwork or Child Care, Learning and Development. Other staff should be in the process of gaining this qualification within a reasonable time.

In **pre-school sessional care or crèches**, the person in charge and deputy should have at least a qualification at QCF Level 5 Diploma in Child Care, Learning and Development or Playwork; or a relevant occupational qualification in early years' education, social work, nursing, teaching or health visiting; **and** 2 years' experience working in a play, education, youth or day care setting.

Team leaders or supervisors should have at least a qualification at QCF Level 3 Diploma in Child Care, Learning and Development or Playwork.

Sessional Care (continued)

Where staff in any setting have previously attained Level 2, 3 or 5 NVQ qualifications in Play Work or Early Years Care and Education, this will be an acceptable alternative to QCF Diplomas.

At least 50% of all other child care staff should have a minimum qualification at QCF Level 2 Diploma in either Playwork or Child Care, Learning and Development. Other staff should be in the process of gaining this qualification within a reasonable time.

In out of school clubs, where a setting is registered for more than 30 children, the number of children in each room never exceeds 30.

The Registered Person ensures that staff develop an understanding of each child's needs and wishes and that significant information is recorded, collated and exchanged with parents.

The Registered Person ensures that a minimum ratio of one staff member to 8 children is maintained at all times.

In pre-school sessional care facilities which offer places for children from the age of 2 years and 10 months (but not younger), the 1:8 adult:child ratio is acceptable as long **as no more than 4** children of this age are in the setting at any time. If at any time, more than 4 children of this age are present, the ratio must be reviewed to 1:4.

Regardless of group size, at least 2 members of staff are on duty at all times.

Childminder

The childminder complies with the specified maximum number of children who may be cared for as identified on the Registration Certificate. This number includes their own children under 12 years of age. The ratios are:

- 1:6 – six children under 12, of whom no more than 3 are under compulsory school age.
- Normally no more than 1 child under a year old.

Exceptions may be made for siblings and for continuity in certain circumstances if approved by the Trust.

Where the childminder employs an assistant, the same ratios are met for any additional children. There is compliance with the Trust's registration decisions regarding the ages and total number of children up to a maximum of 8.

Childminders are encouraged to attain QCF Level 2 or 3 Diploma in Child Care, Learning and Development according to previous learning and experience. For both levels it is important that the Level 3 unit 079 "*Understand how to set up a home based childcare service*" is the required operational unit.

Childminder (continued)

Childminders are not required to have a minimum qualification, however, they are required as part of these standards to obtain and maintain training in core areas including safeguarding, first aid, health and safety as required by HSC Trusts.

The childminder ensures that the number of adults available to accompany children on excursions or visits out of the setting is sufficient to safeguard them. The arrangements take account of individual children's needs and the nature of the outing. Parents are made aware of arrangements for their child's care and give written consent for the outing.

The childminder has arrangements in place to cover emergencies and parents have given written consent to these arrangements.

The childminder supervises and is accountable for the work of any assistant.

Space and equipment in the home are organised to provide the children with a broad range of play and learning opportunities which enhance their continuing development.

EVIDENCE

Staff demonstrate a shared sense of purpose in keeping with the aims and objectives of the setting.

The Statement of Purpose is made available to parents on request.

Staff are deployed effectively within the setting to promote the safety, wellbeing and development of the children's full potential.

The organisation of the setting encourages children to work and play together in small groups.

The use of students, trainees and volunteers is compatible with the need to:
- Maintain the setting's focus on the child;
- Promote continuity of care for the children;
- Give priority to the needs of children;
- Promote the child to child interactions; and
- Maintain the caring ethos of the setting.

The person in charge facilitates staff's contact with parents to enable a ready exchange of information.

NOTE: Given the new requirements for staff qualifications, it has been agreed that applicants without the relevant childcare qualifications will be eligible for recruitment to a manager's post in the settings above on the basis that they have the relevant experience and can prove they are registered with an FE college to complete the necessary QCF Level 5 Diploma by *1 April 2016*.

STANDARD 12. Suitable Person

Those working with children in either a paid or voluntary capacity, or who have substantial access to them, are suitable individuals to do so.

All Settings

Staff selection and recruitment arrangements ensure the safeguarding and protection of children.

Those working with children or who have substantial access to them have Enhanced Disclosure vetting checks completed through the Access NI processes.

Prior to appointment, a fit person assessment for the applicant; person in charge (and anyone who acts as a deputy in their absence); or childminder has been completed by the Trust.

An up to date record is maintained containing details of any adult who assists in looking after a child, including all those living on the premises and regular visitors. Details include each adult's vetting status.

EVIDENCE

The Registered Person (or Trust in the case of a childminder) ensures all appropriate checks have been carried out and all those working with children have:

- An Access NI Enhanced Disclosure Certificate;
- A letter confirming Trust clearance;
- Pre-employment health assessment;
- Ability to provide warm and consistent care which promotes children's development;
- Integrity and ability to be flexible in their work;
- Knowledge, understanding and commitment to treat all children as individuals and with equal concern; and
- Appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and qualifications.

The person in charge or childminder demonstrates the knowledge and skills necessary to:

- Promote children's positive behaviours;
- Work in partnership with parents;
- Comply with regional safeguarding and Child Protection procedures; and
- Apply equal opportunities legislation.

Training needs are identified and training undertaken as necessary to assist in the development of relevant skills and knowledge.

MINIMUM STANDARDS

Section 3 - Quality of the Physical Environment

The quality of the setting's environment is an important influence on a child's reaction to the care he or she receives. These standards set out what is expected as a minimum in terms of space, as well as expectations of indoor and outdoor play areas, toilet facilities, the kitchen or food preparation area and staff facilities.

STANDARD 13. Equipment

Sufficient furniture, play equipment and materials are provided. These are appropriate for their purpose and help create an accessible and stimulating environment.

All Settings

A range of sufficient and suitable play equipment and materials is available for indoor and outdoor play to provide stimulating activities for children in all areas of their development and learning. The content of play materials is checked to ensure that they are safe for each child who uses them.

Play equipment is appropriate to the ages and developmental needs of those attending, including those with additional needs.

Play equipment and materials are accessible to all children, including those with additional needs.

Where applicable, furniture and play equipment conform to BS EN Safety Standards or the Toys (Safety) Regulations.

There is a policy on the maintenance and replacement of play equipment.

Safety matting or soft surfacing is provided for equipment that requires children to climb. Soft surfacing is also provided for outdoor play involving elevated equipment.

Full Day Care

Where possible there should be low adult-sized seating so that staff can sit comfortably on a level with children.

There is age appropriate equipment to allow children to eat and play together.

Sessional Care

There is age appropriate equipment to allow children to eat and play together.

EVIDENCE

There is sufficient furniture and equipment available for the needs of the children attending, for example, high chairs, buggies, safety gates and car seats.

Play equipment is presented in such a way that allows children to choose freely from it.

Storage arrangements for toys and equipment enable staff to have safe and easy access to them.

Furniture and equipment, including play equipment, are in good condition and are regularly checked for defects and faults, and are repaired or replaced as necessary.

Quality of the Physical Environment

STANDARD 14. Physical Environment

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose and meet relevant statutory requirements.

All Settings

Risks have been assessed and minimised in the arrangements for the drop-off and pick-up of children at the setting.

There is access to a working telephone on the premises.

Rooms are heated (i.e. within the temperature range of 18°- 21°C) depending on the age and mobility of the children. Radiators or heating pipes are guarded, or have guaranteed low temperature surfaces.

Premises have adequate, safe and accessible storage space.

Outdoor play space is safe, secure, well-maintained and exclusively for the use of the children when the setting is in operation. The safety and security of the play area is checked prior to use.

Unless it is being used for a supervised cooking activity with them, children do not have unsupervised access to the food preparation area.

There are clearly defined play areas, large enough to give scope for free movement in which children have opportunities for safe, energetic play. The space allows for the implementation of a broad and balanced programme of care and education.

Where outside play space is not available for children to use, proper arrangements must be made so that children are taken regularly to local parks, playgrounds or equivalent. Adverse weather is not necessarily a barrier to outdoor play.

Provision is made for children who wish to relax or play quietly.

Provision is made for any mother who wishes to breastfeed her child.

Full Day Care

The setting provides a minimum clear space for each child as follows:

- 0-2yrs – 4.2m^2 (**This includes the area in m^2 of a cot**)
- 2-3yrs – 2.8m^2
- 3-5yrs – 2.8m^2
- 5-12yrs – 2.3m^2

Clear space is usable floor space – i.e. space that can be used either for children to play in and the equipment that they use for play and other activities.

There is a separate sleeping room for babies. There are suitable sleeping arrangements that are safe and appropriate to the age and developmental needs of all other children.

Toilet facilities for children are designated for their sole use.

There is 1 toilet and 1 wash hand basin per 10 children aged over 2 years.

Toilet facilities are accessible to children with a disability.

Liquid soap, paper towels and covered waste disposal bins are provided for children's use.

Separate toilet facilities are provided for staff.

There is a designated nappy changing area and arrangements for the safe disposal of soiled nappies.

A food preparation area is available which is adequately equipped for the preparation and storage of drinks and snacks for children and staff. Exceptionally, if that is not available, the Registered Person makes arrangements to provide snacks and drinks.

An office area is provided where staff may talk to parents confidentially.

There is secure storage in locked cupboards or lockers for staff's personal belongings.

There is a room where staff can have a break away from direct contact work with children.

Sessional Care

The rooms used for the care of children are for the sole use of the setting during the hours of operation. Specific arrangements are in place to ensure the safety of children inside and outside any setting which shares premises with other users.

Sessional Care (continued)

The setting provides a minimum of 2.3m^2 of clear space for each child. Clear space is usable floor space – i.e. space that can be used either for children to play in and the equipment that they use for play and other activities.

Unless impracticable, toilet facilities for children are designated solely for their own use.

Where toilet facilities are shared with others, children are supervised when using them.

There is 1 toilet and 1 wash hand basin per 10 children aged over 2 years.

Toilet facilities are accessible to children with a disability.

Liquid soap, paper towels and covered waste disposal bins are provided for children's use.

There is a designated nappy changing area and arrangements for the safe disposal of soiled nappies.

A food preparation area is available which is adequately equipped for the preparation and storage of drinks and snacks for children and staff. Exceptionally, if that is not available, the Registered Person makes arrangements to provide snacks and drinks.

An area is provided where staff may talk to parents confidentially.

There is secure storage for staff's personal belongings.

Childminder

There is provision for the hygienic storage, preparation, cooking and serving of food.

EVIDENCE

Premises are clean, well-lit, adequately ventilated and maintained in a suitable state of repair and decoration.

Where planning or building control permission is required, recommendations from local Planning or Building Control departments are met.

MINIMUM STANDARDS

Section 4 - Quality of Monitoring & Evaluation

This section sets out requirements for record keeping and documentation, and identifies notifiable incidents.

These include records of any accidents or incidents which happen in the setting, or any complaints received. Sometimes things will go wrong, and it is important that if they do, that they are reported as required, any appropriate lessons are learned and steps are taken as far as possible to avoid any recurrence.

STANDARD 15. Documentation

Records are managed in accordance with legislative requirements and the setting's records management policy.

All Settings

There is a policy on the retention, safe storage and destruction of records, including computerised records, and practice is in compliance with this policy. Recording practice complies with requirements established by Article 126 of the Children (NI) Order 1995.

All records, including complaints, accidents, untoward events and children's records are retained in secure storage for the periods outlined in the setting's record management policy[17].

Any records about a child are made available to parents who are encouraged to sign and date them when they access them.

All records, including those pertaining to children and staff, must be available for inspection by the Trust's Early Years Team.

The Registered Person, person in charge or childminder keeps appropriate records of all accidents, injuries or untoward incidents involving the adults or children in the setting. Parents read, date and sign the record as soon as possible after the event.

The Trust's Early Years Registration and Inspection Team must be informed of the following and agree in advance:

- Any changes in membership of the management committee, staff or people living on the premises;
- Any significant plans to change the premises; and
- Any significant changes to the operational plan.

The Trust's Early Years Registration and Inspection Team and other appropriate agencies as required must be informed of the following without delay:

- Allegations of abuse by a member of staff or volunteer, or any abuse that is alleged to have taken place on the premises;
- Any other significant events, for example serious illness, injury or accident necessitating medical attention or death of any child whilst in the care of the provider;
- The Registered Person, staff or anyone living on the premises who is subject to police or social services investigation, including allegations of child abuse or domestic violence issues; and

17 Advice on records management can be found in Good Management Good Records – **http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/gmgr.htm**

All Settings (continued)

- If the Registered Person, staff or anyone living on the premises has received any new charges or convictions subsequent to their employment in the setting.

The certificate of registration and the insurance certificate are available for inspection by the HSC Trust and parents.

Full Day Care

Observations of children at play are recorded and used to identify the children's stages of development and to plan future activities that meet their needs.

Sessional Care

There are informal observations of children used to identify their stages of development and to plan future activities that meet their needs. Where settings are funded by the Department of Education, more formal observations may be required in order to meet the standards of the Education and Training Inspectorate.

EVIDENCE

All accidents or incidents are recorded promptly and comprehensively, respecting the confidentiality of any third party.

STANDARD 16. Complaints

All complaints are taken seriously and dealt with promptly and effectively.

All Settings

The complaints policy is publicised and made available to parents.

Staff know how to receive and deal initially with complaints.

Staff directly involved with the management and investigation of complaints are trained and supervised in the application of the complaints procedure.

A complaints register is maintained to record all complaints and the steps taken to resolve them. The register must be made available to the Trust's Early Years Team.

Reports on the progress of the investigation of any complaints are provided regularly to complainants.

Complainants are asked to read, sign and date the recorded outcome of any complaint, indicating whether or not they are satisfied with the steps taken to resolve the matter. Where the complainant remains dissatisfied, they are advised of other channels available to them to pursue their complaint further.

Information from complaints is used to improve the quality of the service provided.

MINIMUM STANDARDS

Section 5 - Policies and Procedures

Effective policies and procedures ensure the smooth running of the setting and compliance with best practice guidance.

This section includes a list of polices that should be kept in the setting and some examples of individual policies. Where there are such examples, your policy must include the contents **as a minimum**, even if you include other points.

Policies and Procedures

List of Policies Required in Each Setting

(Policies marked * are not required by childminders unless they employ an assistant).

*Absence of the Manager
Accidents – Prevention, Reporting, Recording and Notification
Additional Needs
*Allegations against Staff
CCTV
Complaints
Confidentiality
Consent
Data Protection
Equality
First Aid
Infection Prevention and Control
Intimate /Personal Care
Maintenance and Replacement of Play Equipment
Managing Aggression and Challenging Behaviour – including bullying
Managing Emergencies
Management of Medicines
Management of Records
Management of Risks Associated with the Care of Individual Service Users
Menu Planning
Mobile Phones
Parents' Access to Records
Participation
Photography and Videography
Play
Provision of Food and Drink
Reporting Adverse and Untoward Incidents
Safeguarding and Child Protection
Security of the Setting
Smoking
Social Networking
*Staffing:

- Behaviour and Conduct
- Clothing /Uniform
- Discipline
- Grievance
- Induction
- Meetings
- Records
- Recruitment
- Rotas

- Supervision and Appraisal
- Training and Development

Transport for Service Users – Provision and Use

Whistle Blowing.

Example Policy on Medicines

1. Prescribed medicines will not be accepted without complete written and signed instructions from the parent.

2. Staff will not give non-prescribed medicine to a child unless there is specific prior written permission from the parent.

3. Each item of medication must be delivered to the setting, in normal circumstances by the parent, in a secure and labelled container as originally dispensed or purchased. Each item of medication must be clearly labelled with the following information:

   - Child's name;
   - Name of medication;
   - Dosage;
   - Frequency of administration;
   - Date of dispensing;
   - Storage requirements (if important); and
   - Expiry date.

   Items of medication in unlabelled containers will not be accepted.

4. All medicines are stored securely in a locked container which is inaccessible to children and in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. This could necessitate storage in a refrigerator.

5. (In Day Care Settings) Staff who manage and/or administer medicines receive training or guidance and are competent to do so. A record is kept of all medicines management training.

6. A personal medication record is maintained for each child which will be available for parents to view. Such records are constructed, completed and maintained in such a manner so as to ensure a clear audit trail with names, signatures, dates and times and include:

   - Medicines prescribed or requested;
   - Medicines administered;
   - Medicines refused; and
   - Medicines returned to parents for disposal.

7. Medicines are administered as follows:

   - Medicines which have been prescribed by a GP or other authorised prescriber are only administered to the child for whom they are prescribed and in accordance with the prescriber's instructions; and
   - Non-prescribed medicines are administered only on the written request of the parent in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

8. Staff will not make changes to dosages on parental instructions.

9. Before a medicine is administered to a child, the following practices are followed:

   - The child's personal medication record is consulted to identify the medicine, dosage instructions required and to confirm when the medicine was last administered;
   - The medicine pack is checked to confirm it is labelled with the child's name, dosage instructions and to ensure the expiry date has not passed;
   - Medicine doses are prepared immediately prior to their administration from the container in which they are dispensed;
   - The correct dose is identified and appropriately administered at the specified times according to the prescriber or manufacturer's instructions which should be clearly written on the medication label or product;
   - (In the case of Day Care) 2 members of staff are present, one of which is the designated member of staff;
   - When the medicine is administered, the medication record is immediately updated with details of the dose given, names and signatures of the staff involved and the time and date;
   - Any refusal of medication by the child is recorded and reported to the parent; and
   - Parents are informed daily of the medicines that have been administered to their child and asked to sign the record book to acknowledge the entry.

10. It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the setting in writing if the child's need for medicine has ceased.

11. Staff will not dispose of medicines. Date expired medicines or those no longer required for treatment will be returned to parents for transfer to a community pharmacy for safe disposal.

12. Where necessary, training in specialist techniques for administering medication is provided for named staff by a qualified health professional. Training is specific to the individual needs of the child. The administration of specialist treatment is carried out in accordance with the written authorisation of the prescribing practitioner.

13. The arrangements for the administration of medicines comply with the terms of any insurance cover.

14. A registered childminder caring on a long term basis for a child with a specific condition has a thorough understanding of the condition and the medicines (if any) that are to be administered.

Suggested Contents of a First Aid Box

There are no legal requirements for the contents of a first aid box, but as a guide it should include the following items:

- A leaflet giving general guidance on first aid;
- 20 hypo-allergenic plasters or micropore tape and melolin;
- 2 sterile eye pads, with attachment;
- Cotton wool;
- Lint dressings (of assorted sizes with micropore tape to attach);
- 6 medium sized individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings approximately 10 cms x 8 cms;
- 6 safety pins;
- 2 crepe bandages;
- 2 triangular bandages;
- Scissors;
- Salt and water saline solutions;
- Blue plasters;
- Disposable gloves; and
- Fever /scan thermometer.

Example Policy on Transport

1. (In day care settings) records are kept about vehicles in which children are transported during outings, including insurance details and a list of named drivers who have been vetted.

2. There is appropriate insurance cover and all drivers have an up to date Driving Licence, Vehicle Road Tax Certificate and MOT certificate if required.

3. Child safety seats or appropriate booster seats are correctly installed and all children wear suitable safety belts or harnesses.

4. All vehicles, including taxis and contracted vehicles used to transport children to and from the setting, are suitable for the purpose and meet all current road traffic legislation.

5. A risk assessment is carried out to ascertain the ratio of staff or volunteers required when taking children on outings.

Example Policy on Food and Drink

This example policy is based on the content of "Nutrition Matters for The Early Years", which can be obtained from your local Early Years team.

1. Introductory statement

(Example) I aim to offer a high quality service to the children I care for and their parents. I recognise the need to encourage healthy eating habits from an early age to help children to reach their full potential in terms of growth and development.

2. Meals

- Well-balanced and nutritious meals are provided for the children. If parents are to provide any or all of their children's meals, snacks and drinks, this should be clearly stated;
- All puddings provided are based on fruit and/or milk;
- Fresh fruit is always available;
- Processed meat products such as sausages, chicken nuggets, burgers and fish bites, if provided, are limited to once a week;
- Healthier cooking methods are used, e.g. boiling, grilling, steaming, microwaving, stewing, rather than frying;
- Special diets are respected. Parents will be asked to provide a copy of the diet sheet from a registered dietitian;
- Cultural dietary habits are respected. Parents should provide details of these;
- Mealtimes are used as an opportunity to encourage good table manners; and
- Whenever possible children and adults eat together.

3. Snacks and drinks

- Snacks provided are healthy and nutritious;
- Sweets and fizzy drinks are not routinely offered;
- Where possible snacks are sugar-free to avoid causing damage to teeth;
- Fresh fruit is regularly offered as a healthy snack;
- Whole milk or water is provided for children as a drink between meals; and
- If juices and squashes are given these are well-diluted and only given at mealtimes to avoid causing damage to teeth.

4. Rewards and special occasions

- Praise and attention are used to help develop children's self-esteem and to act as a positive reward for good behaviour;
- If other forms of reward are used, they do not conflict with the healthy eating principles that are in everyday use. For example, sweets and sugary drinks are not given as rewards; and
- On special occasions, the focus will be on the occasion rather than providing fatty or sugary foods or drinks.

5. Activities

- A healthy lifestyle is promoted through a variety of activities including active play, outings, cookery, stories, music, etc.

Example Statement of Purpose

A Statement of Purpose should include **as a minimum** the following information:

- Aims and objectives;
- Ethos;
- Admissions policy;
- Hours of opening;
- Contact information;
- Routines;
- Charges and fees;
- Registration and insurance information;
- The role of parents, including any expectation that they participate on the management committee or as volunteers;
- Policies on safeguarding and behaviour management;
- Any policy on excluding children from the setting;
- The complaints policy;
- How to access the other policies within the setting and what they are;
- Information about activities provided for children;
- Information on how children with additional needs are accommodated within the setting;
- The range of resources available;
- Deployment of staff;
- Activities provided;
- The inspection role of the HSC Trust Early Years Team; and
- Recording practice and access to these records by the HSC Trust.

Records to be kept in respect of each child using the setting

- Name and address;
- Name by which the child prefers to be known;
- Age and date of birth;
- Names of parents/those with parental responsibility;
- Emergency contact details for above;
- Any health problems (including allergies) and medication required;
- Any special dietary requirements; and
- Details of those authorised to collect the child from the setting.

Glossary of Terms

Abuse
Single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action occurring where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress, including physical, together with inappropriate restraint, sexual, psychological, emotional, verbal, financial or material neglect and acts of omission, institutional, discriminatory and abuse through inappropriate use of medication.

Access NI
Access NI helps organisations in Northern Ireland to make more informed recruitment decisions. It does this by providing criminal history information about anyone seeking paid or unpaid work in defined areas, such as working with children or vulnerable adults.

Additional Needs
The term "additional needs" as used in this document refers to Special Education Needs (SEN) as defined under Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005; disability as defined under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995), the Autism Act (Northern Ireland) 2011; and Children in Need as defined by Article 17 of the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

Behaviour Management Programme
Planned interventions to manage specific behaviour agreed by appropriate professionals, where staff employ pre-arranged strategies and methods, based on a risk assessment.

Employer
A person or business that employs one or more people for wages or salary.

Induction
Initial training or guidance given at the start of employment.

Job Description
A written, agreed and up to date statement of the main tasks and responsibilities of a staff member's job within the day care setting, including an overall definition of their role and the person to whom they are accountable.

Medication administration
Involvement of staff in any of the following:

- helping the service user to identify the medication to be taken or applied;
- preparing the medication dose; and/or
- giving or applying the medication dose to the service user.

Parental Responsibility
The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 defines parental responsibility as all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which, by law, a parent has in relation to a child and his property. More than one person can have parental responsibility at the same time. A mother automatically has parental responsibility for her child when he/she is born. In Northern Ireland, a father has parental responsibility if he is married to the mother of the child at the time of the child's birth or if he marries

the mother after the child's birth, he acquires parental responsibility. Since 15 April 2002 an unmarried father obtains parental responsibility if he is named, or becomes named, on the child's birth certificate. Others can acquire parental responsibility by a Parental Responsibility Agreement or a Court Order but can also cease to have it through cessation of an Agreement or Court Order. A birth parent ceases to have parental responsibility if their child is freed for adoption and parental responsibility is vested in the relevant Health and Social Care Trust. Full parental responsibility is transferred to adoptive parents on the granting of an Adoption Order.

Personal Care (also referred to as intimate care)
The provision of appropriate assistance in intimate care for children such as changing nappies.

Policy
An operational statement of intent which helps staff make sound decisions and take actions which are legal, consistent with the aims of the setting, and in the best interests of the users.

Procedure
The steps taken to fulfil a policy.

Public Liability Insurance
A general term for any liability coverage for claims brought against the insured by a third party or member of the public. It is liability for damage or injury to property, health or life as a result of the use of dangerous objects or work with them (means of transport for instance). The liability also concerns a non-intentional infringement of a law or contract liabilities.

Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)
Framework for attaining vocational qualifications. QCF has replaced National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in this regard.

Records
Information that has been received, created or maintained by an individual or an organisation as evidence of a business activity, patient/client care, treatment given, treatment planned and can be in any format – paper, electronic, digital and/or voice.

Registered Person/Registered Provider of an Early Years Setting
A person deemed qualified to care for adults and children and whose name appears on the certificate of registration. The Registered Person has overall responsibility for ensuring that the requirements of the regulation and the associated minimum standards are met. A company, committee or other group may be the Registered Person.

Manager of an Early Years Setting (also referred to as person in charge)
The person in day to day charge of the early years setting. The manager must have appropriate qualifications and experience.

Safeguarding
The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

Service User
A child who is attending a childminding or day care setting.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)
Special Education Needs (SEN) are defined under Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005.

Staff
Person working in the setting, whether paid or voluntary, full-time or part-time, casual, relief, agency or contract.

Statutory Duty
A legal responsibility.

Student
Someone who is attending a university or a college of further education.

Trainee
One who is being trained for a job.

Welfare/Wellbeing
Meeting each individual's reasonable physical, security, personal, emotional, and spiritual needs, providing support and guidance as needed, and enabling the individual's development for the future and fulfilment in the present, taking into account the individual's age, characteristics and wishes.

Whistleblowing
Disclosure by an employee of genuine concerns about crimes, illegality, negligence, miscarriages of justice, or danger to health and safety or the environment when these have been ignored or covered up by the employer or by a fellow employee.

Whistleblower Protection
The Public Interest Disclosure (NI) Order 1998 introduced a policy to provide strong protection from dismissal or other sanction for workers who report wrongdoings that they believe in good faith to be true.

Produced by:
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety,
Castle Buildings, Belfast BT4 3SQ
Telephone: (028) 9052 2351
Textphone: (028) 9052 7668
www.dhsspsni.gov.uk