

TÚSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach

**EARLY
YEARS**

INSPECTORATE

Quality and Regulatory Framework

Childminding



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This framework should be cited as:

Tusla (2018) *Quality and Regulatory Framework: Childminding*,
Dublin: Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla.

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

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

This Quality and Regulatory Framework applies to all registered Childminding Services.

A Childminding Service is an Early Years Service which may include an overnight service offered by a person who single-handedly takes care of early years children. This may include the person's own children, in the person's home, for a total of more than two hours per day, unless exempted from provision of Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 as set down under 58L:

- » The care of one or more children undertaken by a relative of the child or children or the spouse of such relative.
- » A person taking care of one or more children of the same family and no other such children (other than the person's own such children) in their own home.
- » A person taking care of no more than 3 children of different families (other than that person's own early years children) in that person's home.

A childminder is a person who provides a childminding service. A childminder aims to provide a home from home childcare service in the childminder's own home.

In the context of this document, the 'premises' as set out in the regulations is the childminder's home.

The reference to childminder throughout this document is the registered provider.

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

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

This Framework is accompanied by supporting documentation, including:

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

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

Author’s note

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

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

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Foreword

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

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

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

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

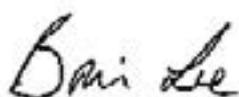
Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of Early Years Services in Ireland. Such radical revision and introduction of the 2016 Regulations means that we must continue to reform. The Early Years Inspectorate developed a programme of initiatives to support the implementation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

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

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

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

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



Brian Lee
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Tusla - Child and Family Agency



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Structure of the Quality and Regulatory Framework (QRF)

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

Section 1

This section contains:

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

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

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

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

Section 2

This section contains:

Information about the regulations grouped under four areas of:

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

Across these four areas, there are 97 numbered points, many of which are divided into subcategories, which will help you in achieving compliance.

The information explains the following elements of each regulation:

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

Section 3

This section contains:

Appendix 1 – 17: Policies, Procedures and Statements – the core elements of regulatory requirements.

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

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

Appendix 18: Service Record Retention Timeframe – the period of time detailed in the regulations for which each record is kept.

Section 4

This section contains:

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

Before you begin

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Section 1

This section contains:

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

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

Abbreviations and acronyms

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

Introduction

Who we are

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

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

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

These include:

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

Guiding principles

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

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

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

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

Valuing the care and education of the child

The Early Years Inspectorate acknowledges that:

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

Aim of the QRF

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

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

Development of the QRF

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

You can access the report on the consultation process at:

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

Purpose of regulatory inspection

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

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

Methodology of inspection — how inspections are done

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

The evidence is gathered in the following ways:

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

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

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

Inspection in the context of other legislation

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

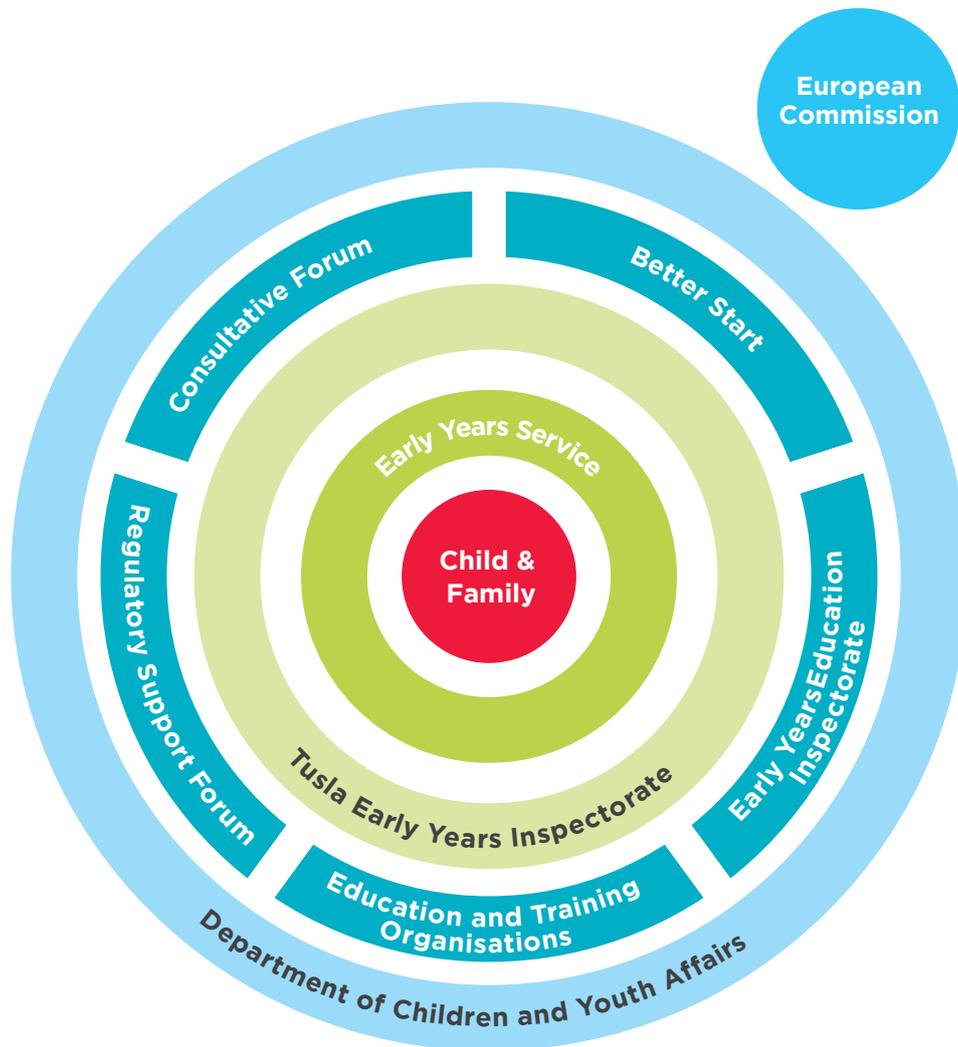
Child Safeguarding

[Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017](#).

Note: This is an example of a current potential referral that can be made when the Inspectorate considers that there is a real and potential risk to children. It may be added to as necessary, however this will be advised to you in advance.

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

Overview of Tusla Early Years Inspectorate: Key Relationships



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Section 2

Governance

The regulations that apply to this area are:

- **Regulation 9:** Management and Recruitment.
- **Regulation 10:** Policies, Procedures and Statements of a Pre-School Service.
- **Regulation 12 :** Childminders
- **Regulation 14:** Review of a Pre-School Service.
- **Regulation 15:** Record of a Pre-School Child.
- **Regulation 16:** Record in Relation to a Pre-School Service.
- **Regulation 17:** Information for Parents.
- **Regulation 31:** Notification of Incidents.
- **Regulation 32:** Complaints.

Regulation 9: Management and Recruitment

Purpose

The childminder ensures the effective operation of the childminding service to ensure the quality and safety of the care provided to the children attending. The childminder is [competent](#) to perform their role, with the appropriate qualification requirement, vetting and training.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

1. Governance

- » The childminder has a clear understanding of their own role and range of responsibilities regarding the regulations, to ensure the quality and safety of care provided to the children.
- » The childminder has the necessary experience and competencies (qualifications, training, knowledge, skills and abilities) to meet the needs of all children in their care.

2. Vetting²

- » A childminder is vetted before having contact with or access to children and before commencing the operation of a childminding service.
- » The [emergency contact person](#) is vetted.
- » Vetting documentation is available in English³ (or in Irish where applicable).
- » Vetting includes references and Garda/Police vetting:

² Please note that a [registered provider](#) must be vetted at Registration and Re - Registration. This is in accordance with Regulation 6.

³ Vetting documents provided in a language other than English or Irish must be translated through a reputable source of translation by the service and the evidence of the source of translation is available to Tusla Early Years Inspectorate.

References:

- » At least two written past employer references if a childminder has been in previous employment. (One of the past employer references must be the most recent employer.)
- » References from reputable sources⁴ if a person has no past employers.
- » A reference, if practicable, from the childcare employer if the person was previously employed in childcare.
- » All references must:
 - be from a reputable source;
 - be in writing;
 - be dated and signed by the referee, giving details of the referee's position;
 - contain the address, phone number, logo or headed paper of the referee and the organisation's stamp where applicable;

Example: a letter with a college stamp.

- be [validated](#)⁵ by [Tusla](#), Early Years Inspectorate;
- be kept in the childminder's file.

See Regulation 16.

Garda/Police Vetting:

- » Vetting disclosure for the person is obtained from the [National Vetting Bureau](#) of the Garda Síochána in accordance to the [National Vetting Bureau Act 2012](#).
- » Garda vetting for childminders is undertaken by the relevant organisation ([Barnardos Vetting Service](#)).
- » Police vetting, in so far as is practicable⁶, is available for a childminder who who has lived in a state or country outside Ireland for more than 6 consecutive months. This is undertaken by the childminder.
- » All those living in the childminder's⁷ home aged 18 years and over have been Garda and Police vetted where required.

⁴ A highly regarded, well thought of, respected person who is independent, unbiased and not a family member.

⁵ Validation of references for sole operators and childminders is undertaken by Tusla Early Years Inspectorate.

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

⁷ A person who provides a childminding service.

- » Garda vetting for each person has been undertaken within the last three years, including Garda re-vetting.⁸

3. Qualifications

- » The childminder holds one of the following:
 - A minimum of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.⁹
 - An exemption from the qualification requirement and confirmation that this exemption is accepted by the Minister.
 - The qualification requirement or relevant specialist training and the basis on which the capitation may be used for a person employed under the [Access and Inclusion Model](#) (AIM), detailed in an exemption letter from [Pobal](#).

⁸ Renewing earlier Garda vetting. In social care settings, this is required every three years.

⁹ Early Years (Pre-school) Regulations and DCYA Childcare Programmes Qualification Requirements: www.dcy.gov.ie/viewdoc.asp?fn=/documents/childcare/qualifications.htm.

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

Purpose

A childminder develops and reviews policies, procedures and statements. Policies, procedures and statements standardise the childminder's approach to implementing best practice and ensuring compliance with the regulations.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

4. Policies, procedures and statements¹⁰

- » Policies, procedures and statements for the childminding service are developed, updated and kept in [hard copy](#) or [electronically](#).
- » Approved policies, procedures and statements are consistent with the childminder's practices.
- » The following as detailed within Schedule 5 of the 2016 Regulations are in place:
 - [Statement of Purpose and Function](#) – See Appendix 1.
 - [Complaints Policy](#) – See Appendix 2.
 - [Policy on Administration of Medication](#) – See Appendix 3.
 - [Policy on Infection Control](#) – See Appendix 4.
 - [Policy on Managing Behaviour](#) – See Appendix 5.
 - [Policy on Safe Sleep](#) – See Appendix 6.
 - [Fire Safety Policy](#) – See Appendix 7.
 - [Inclusion Policy](#) – See Appendix 8.
 - [Outings Policy](#) (where children attending the service are brought on such outings) – See Appendix 9.
 - [Policy on Accidents and Incidents](#) – See Appendix 10.

¹⁰ Please note that a [Safety Statement](#) (within the meaning of the [Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005](#)) is also required for your service in accordance with Regulation 6 – Registration of Pre-School Service. See Appendix 17. Your Safety Statement is required at Registration and Re-Registration.

- [Policy on Authorisation to Collect Children](#) – See Appendix 11.
- [Policy on Healthy Eating](#) – See Appendix 12.
- [Policy on Outdoor Play](#) (where such play is provided to children attending the service) – See Appendix 13.
- [Policy on the Use of the Internet and Photographic and Recording Devices](#) – See Appendix 14.
- [Risk Management Policy](#) – See Appendix 15.
- [Settling-in Policy](#) – See Appendix 16.

5. Communication of policies, procedures and statements

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

Examples: they could sign a declaration form, or sign a parent's contract.

See Regulations 14, 16 and 23.

Regulation 12: Childminders

Purpose

The number of children in your care at any one time is limited, depending on their age and relationship to each other.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

6. Adult:child ratio

- » The childminder has a clear understanding of the number of children that can be cared for at any one time in the childminder's home¹¹.
- » There are no more than five early years children in the care of the childminder at any given time. This includes their own early years children¹².
- » There are no more than two children under the age of 15 months in the care of the childminder at any given time, unless they are siblings. This includes the childminder's own early years children.

7. Additional requirements

- » An [emergency person](#) is available while the childminding service is in operation.
- » A working telephone is available on the [premises](#).

See Regulation 9.

8. Childminder absences

- » Clear arrangements are in place and documented if a childminder is absent (planned or unplanned).

¹¹ A childminder does not need to register their childminding service after they have completed the sessional service if they care for 3 or fewer children.

¹² A childminder can operate an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) service (for 3 to 3.5 hours) as part of their registered childminding service once they remain within the maximum number participating, which is set in the regulations as 5 pre-school children.

Regulation 14: Review of a Pre-School Service

Purpose

A childminder ensures the quality and safety of the care and service provided to children is reviewed at least once a year in line with the regulations. The review is a formal assessment of the childminding service, including its policies, procedures and statements, with the intention of making changes if necessary. The purpose of the review is to improve the quality of care and education of the children. You must keep a [record](#) of the review for three years after it was done.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

9. Annual review

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

See Regulation 10.

10. Plan of review

The childminder's plan details the following:

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

Examples: inspection reports, corrective and preventive actions.

11. Carrying out the review

- » The childminder keeps a written record of the review.
- » The childminder considers any feedback and suggestions from parents, any quality improvements completed or ongoing and any trends in the area being reviewed.

Reviewing policies, procedures, statements and practice to determine:

12. The childminding service is being well governed

The following must be considered:

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

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

The following must be considered:

- » Children's care needs are being met.
- » Relationships are being supported.
- » Children's learning and development is being supported.
- » Positive emotional and behavioural management practices are in place.
- » The environment supports children's wellbeing.
- » Use of the internet and photographic and recording devices is in line with best practice (this may include the use of CCTV where appropriate).
- » Children are supported and helped to settle in.
- » Children have access to outdoor play.
- » Children's [outings](#) (if undertaken).
- » [Healthy eating](#) is supported.

14. Children are safe in the service:

The following must be considered:

- » Supervision of children.
- » Infection control (including outbreaks).
- » [Accidents](#) and injuries.
- » Administration of medication.
- » Safe sleep.
- » [Fire safety](#).
- » [Risk](#) management.
- » Fire safety.
- » Insurance.
- » Outings – if undertaken (including transportation of children).
- » [Child immunisation](#).

15. The childminder's home is safe, suitable and appropriate for the care of children:

The following must be considered:

- » equipment and materials, and
- » childminding areas in the home (including access, cleaning, lighting, heating, maintenance, and so on).

16. Reporting and closing out reviews

- » Any issues to be addressed or areas for improvement are identified and recorded.

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

- » Corrective and preventive actions are put in place to remedy the issues identified.
- » The childminder views the review findings and any remedial actions as an opportunity to learn and improve.
- » Reviews are closed when any issues identified are corrected.

17. Retention of records

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

See Appendix 18: [Service Record Retention Timeframe](#).

Regulation 15: Record of a Pre-School Child

Purpose

A childminder develops, maintains, store and retain [records](#) about children in their care. The records must contain appropriate information to document and support the care provided to each child. The childminding service controls and protects the information it holds about children.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

18. Children's records

- » Each child's record contains the following:
 - The name and date of birth of the child.
 - The date on which the child first attended.
 - The date on which the child stopped attending.
 - The name and address of the child's [parent or guardian](#) and a telephone number where that parent or guardian (or a relative or friend of the parent or child) can be contacted during the hours of operation.
 - Authorisation for collecting the child if the parent or guardian is unavailable to collect. This includes:
 - The name(s), address(es) and contact number(s) of the person(s) who is authorised to collect the child.
 - Written authorisation from the parent or guardian allowing the child to be released by the childminder into the care of the authorised person.
 - For a person not known to a childminder, photo identification or prior agreed password or code is required.
 - Proof that the authorised person is aged 16 or over.
- » Details are recorded of any illness, allergy or additional need(s) the child has, together with all the information relevant to the provision of specific care or attention.
- » If there is an Individual Care Plan in place, this information is included with the child's records.
- » The name and telephone number of the child's [registered medical practitioner](#) is included.
- » A record of any [immunisations](#) the child has had is included.

- » Written parental or guardian consent is included to allow the child to have appropriate medical treatment if there is an [emergency](#).
- » Entries in the children's records are factual, consistent, accurate and reviewed.
- » The record has been updated if the child's information changes.

See Regulation 19.

19. Availability of records

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

See Regulation 19.

20. Access to children's records and record confidentiality

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

21. [Electronic records](#)

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

22. Retention of children's records

- » All relevant children's records are kept for 2 years from the date a child **stops** attending the service.

See Regulation 16.

See Appendix 18: [Service Record Retention Timeframe](#).

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

Purpose

A childminder develops, maintains, stores and keeps relevant childminding service [records](#). Personal information kept by the service must be appropriately controlled and protected.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

23. Information in relation to the childminding service

- » A record in writing of the following information is available in the childminding service:
 - The name, position, qualifications and experience of the childminder.
 - Details of the childminding service and the age profile of children.
 - The type of care provided.
 - The opening hours and fees.
- » The policies, procedures and statements the childminding service is required to maintain are in line with Regulation 10.
- » The childminding service's record of attendance by children on a daily basis includes the time of arrival to, and departure from, the service.
- » Details are recorded of any medication given to a child attending the service with signed [parental or guardian](#) consent.
- » Details are recorded of any accident, injury or [incident](#) involving a child attending the service.

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

24. Service record retention

- » All documents and records about references and Garda and Police vetting are kept for 5 years from the date the childminding service commenced operation.

- » The following children's records are kept for 2 years from the date a child **stops** attending the childminding service:
 - The record of attendance by children on a daily basis including the time of arrival to, and departure from, the service.
 - Details of any medication given to a child attending the service with signed parental or guardian consent.
 - Details of any accident, injury or incident involving a child attending the service.

See Regulation 9.

Appendix 18: [Service Record Retention Timeframe](#).

Regulation 17: Information for Parents

Purpose

The childminder provides all relevant information about the childminding service, the type of care provided and the facilities available, to the [parents and guardian](#) of children proposing to attend the childminding service. The information is provided in a way they can understand.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

25. Information provided to parents and guardians

- » Parents and guardians are informed about any significant changes to policies, procedures and statements and this is documented.
- » The following information is available to the parents and guardians of children proposing to attend the childminding service:
 - The name, position, qualifications and experience of the childminder.
 - Details of the childminding service and the age profile of the children.
 - The type of care or programmes provided within the service and any additional needs or interests provided for.
 - The facilities available.
 - The opening hours and fees.
 - All policies, procedures and statements relevant to the service that are required in line with Regulation 10.

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

26. Communication with parents and guardians

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

Examples:

- **parent's handbook;**
- **text messaging;**
- **one-to-one contact with parents or guardians;**
- **parent or guardian meetings.**

27. Information available in the childminding service

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

See Regulations 9, 25 and 26.

Regulation 31: Notification of Incidents

Purpose

If an [accident](#), injury or [incident](#) occurs, the childminder has policies and procedures in place to identify, document, address, review and communicate the associated information. The childminder takes the necessary actions to prevent any reoccurrence of accidents, injuries or incidents. The childminder promotes a positive and open culture of reporting to [parents and guardians](#), and you must give feedback to parents and guardians after your investigations.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

28. Managing notifying incidents to the Early Years Inspectorate

- » A consistent and standardised approach is used to notify the Early Years Inspectorate of accidents, injuries and incidents that occur within the childminding service using the [Notification of Incident Form](#), available on the [Tusla website](#).
- » The childminder has notified the Early Years Inspectorate within three working days of becoming aware of any [notifiable event](#).
- » All accidents, injuries and incidents notified to the Early Years Inspectorate are investigated, managed and reported in line with the childminding service's accident, injury and incident policy and procedures.
- » All reasonable measures are taken to prevent another accident, injury or incident occurring.
- » The Inspectorate must be notified of the following incidents:
 - The death of a child while attending the childminding service, including the death of a child in hospital after they were transferred from the service.
 - The diagnosis of an [infectious disease](#) in a child attending the childminding service, or the diagnosis of an infectious disease in the childminder, or any other person living in the childminder's home (An infectious disease is defined in the [Infectious Diseases Regulations 1981](#)).

- An accident or incident that resulted in the childminding service being closed for any length of time (an unplanned closure).¹³
- A [serious injury](#) to a child while attending the childminding service that needed immediate medical treatment by a [registered medical practitioner](#), in hospital or elsewhere.
- An incident of a child going missing while attending the childminding service.

29. Reporting of incidents to external parties

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

Example:

- [Tusla Social Work](#) services - if there is a child safeguarding concern.

¹³ Where the service has to close unexpectedly due to unforeseen events or circumstances. This may be for personal reasons (for example - a bereavement), or any other reason (for example - a burst pipe).

Regulation 32: Complaints

Purpose

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

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

30. Complaints

- » Complaints are investigated, managed and reported using a consistent and unbiased approach.

Complaints Policy

- » There is evidence of the [complaints policy](#) being implemented.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 2.

31. Access to records

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

Section 2

Health, Welfare and Development of the Child

The regulations that apply to this area are:

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

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

Purpose

A childminder ensures the health, welfare and development of each child. This is achieved through implementing appropriate care practices and/or programme that supports the learning, development and wellbeing of each child, taking their individual interests and needs into consideration.

Overview of Regulation 19

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

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

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

32. Children's basic and individual care needs

Eating and drinking

- » [Healthy eating](#) is promoted within the childminding service.
- » Nutritious meals and snacks are served at regular times, but there is flexibility.

Example: if a child is deeply engaged in play.

- » Meals and snacks are appetising and healthy for children.
- » Snacks and water or milk are available to children when needed.
- » Enough time is allowed for bottle-feeding and mealtimes.
- » Infants younger than 12 months are held while bottle-feeding.
- » Each child is given enough time to eat and enjoy their bottle, snack or meal without being rushed.
- » The atmosphere during mealtimes is relaxed, with pleasant social interaction among the children and childminder.

Example: the childminder sits with children during mealtimes to give example of positive social skills.

- » The childminder encourages and supports the children to feed themselves independently, according to their age and stage of development.
- » The crockery, cutlery and drinking utensils used are suitable for the children's ages and stage of development.

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

- » Bibs are available for babies and toddlers at meal times.
- » Children are not forced to eat or drink.
- » Children who have not eaten, or who are hungry are offered:
 - food at times outside routine meal and snack times;
 - an alternative food option.
- » Children sit at a comfortable height in relation to the table top.
- » Children are supported to develop their knowledge and skills, to make nutritious food choices and to try different food tastes and textures.
- » Learning materials and experiences are available to reinforce nutritious food choices.

Examples: books, play food, food guide pyramid for young children, food representing a variety of cultures, cooking experiences.

See Regulation 22.

Nappy changing and toileting

- » The privacy and dignity of each child is respected at all times.
- » The childminder responds to children's individual personalities, sensitivities and needs in relation to nappy changing, toileting and toilet training.

- » Toilet training is based on the child's developmental level and their own readiness to start, rather than their age. Toilet training is agreed on and supported by [parents and guardians](#).
- » If there is an individualised toilet training plan, it is co-ordinated with the parents or guardians and kept in the child's individual [record](#).
- » Nappy changing and toileting is a positive experience for children.

Examples:

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

- » Children have unrestricted access to the toilet, and don't have to wait to use the toilet.
- » Children are allowed to take their time during toileting.
- » The childminder encourages and supports children to become more independent in toileting practices, and to take part in the process if they are physically able.

Example: flushing the toilet themselves.

- » Nappies are changed as necessary and in a timely manner.
- » The correct language surrounding toileting and nappy changing is used.
- » Setbacks and toileting accidents are treated in a sensitive and supportive way. Children are not made to feel embarrassed, ashamed or made to feel inadequate, or be punished about any aspect of using the toilet.

Personal care

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

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

- » The childminder guides and supports children who need more help.
- » The childminder promotes an awareness of healthy habits in children.

Examples: encouraging hand washing, use of clean tissues.

- » Children are encouraged and supported to develop self-help and personal hygiene skills.

Examples:

- **showing how to wash hands properly, and supervising children’s hand-washing before and after snacks and meals, after toileting, after blowing their noses, after messy play and after outdoor play;**
- **providing opportunities for children to pour drinks and serve themselves and others during meal and snack time, using a variety of suitably sized utensils;**
- **promoting children’s understanding of safety and accidents (cleaning up spills).**

Sleep, rest, quiet time

- » The childminder provides for each child’s comfort and each child’s need for sleep, rest and relaxation is met.
- » The childminder works with parents and guardians in relation to children’s sleep patterns and sleep needs.
- » The childminder allows children to sleep or rest when they are tired, and not just at a designated time.
- » The childminder recognises children’s individual cues of tiredness, indicating their need for sleep and rest.
- » The nap and sleep times of each child is supported according to each child’s individual needs and the hours they are in the childminding service, as follows:

Child’s age (approximately)	Number of naps supported	Length of nap time recommended	Night time sleep recommended
By about 6 months	2 daytime naps	2 - 3 hours each	10 - 11 hours
By about 9 months	2 daytime naps	1 - 2 hours each	10 - 12 hours
By about 1 year	2 daytime naps	1 - 2 hours each	10 - 12 hours
By about 18 months up to 2 years	1 daytime nap	1 - 2 hours	11 - 12 hours
By about 2 years	1 daytime nap	30 minutes	11 - 12 hours

See Regulations 20 and 23.

Mobility

- » Children have opportunities to move about freely and explore their environment, both indoors and outdoors.
- » The childminder's home has safe and comfortable spaces for infants, toddlers, or children not walking, to lie, roll, creep, crawl, pull themselves up, learn to walk, and to be protected from children who are more mobile.
- » Children have plenty of opportunities to move themselves, to practise and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance.
- » If an infant or child is in a high chair or other piece of equipment that constrains their movement, they are not in it for longer than fifteen minutes, other than at meals or snack times.
- » Infants are not placed in equipment until they are developmentally ready.

Example: highchairs.

33. Relationships and interactions around children

Relationships support a sense of belonging, connectedness and wellbeing

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

Examples, the childminder:

- **showing respect for each unique child and developing their trust;**
- **being actively involved in children's play, where appropriate (initiating games, joining in when invited to by children);**
- **behaving in a way that creates a positive atmosphere (having frequent social conversations, joint laughter and showing affection);**
- **listening to the voice of the child as they communicate their needs, thoughts and experiences both verbally and non-verbally, by reading children's cues, gestures and body language;**
- **encouraging children to think critically, ask questions and respond to them in a way that promotes sustained shared thinking**
- **nurturing and comforting children;**
- **using soft tones, the child's individual name, and getting down to their level and making eye contact.**

- » The childminder supports children in forming and sustaining positive relationships with siblings, peers and other children.

Examples, the childminder:

- **supporting children in developing their interactions and friendships with other children, especially those who are new, have additional needs, or are learning English as an additional language;**
- **providing opportunities for children to learn from each other and with each other, to work together, join in and contribute to projects and tasks;**
- **ensuring no child is bullied, mocked or excluded;**
- **supporting children to notice and understand how others are feeling, and how to comfort and help them.**

The childminder works with parents, guardians and families

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

Examples, the childminder:

- **recognising parents and guardians as the primary carers and educators of their children;**
- **communicating with parents and guardians in a sensitive, supportive and confidential manner, while being open and honest;**
- **working with parents and guardians by sharing knowledge and observations of the child's interests, strengths, developmental and care needs, approaches to learning, changes in their life, and any other concerns;**
- **verbally providing parents and guardians with daily information, including significant events or activities involving their child (their child's sleep and rest patterns).**

There is integration with local, regional and national community

- » There are established networks with the wider community.

Examples: visiting the post office, the library, the local shop, engaging with representative organisations (Childminding Ireland).

34. Inclusion, diversity and transitions

Inclusion Policy

- » There is evidence of the [inclusion policy](#) being implemented.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 8.

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

- » The childminder creates an inclusive and diverse learning environment, with a child-centred approach.
- » Routines, experiences, materials and activities are designed to reflect diverse backgrounds, identities, abilities, religions, skin colour, family structures, language, cultures or additional needs in a positive way, which helps children to learn, become aware of and be respectful of differences.
- » All children, including those who have additional needs, or who are dual language learners, or who are new to the community, are supported to be confident about their identity and to have a strong sense of belonging each day within the childminding service.
- » The childminder uses positive strategies to support children's inclusion.

Examples: using personal greetings, giving appropriate encouragement, accepting children's best efforts.

Settling-in Policy

- » There is evidence of the [settling-in policy](#) being implemented.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 16.

Supporting children's transitions

- » Transition of children into the childminding service is made as easy and comfortable as possible.

Examples:

- **Parents and guardians are encouraged to visit the childminder's home before their child attends, and are invited to stay with the child as they take whatever time is needed to adjust to their new environment.**
- **The child is given time to settle into the childminder's home and allowed to bring tangible reminders of home with them (their favourite toy).**

- » Transition of children from the service should be well planned and organised to make the transition comfortable and as seamless as possible.

Example: The childminder providing information about the child to the primary school before they move there, when this is requested and permitted by the parents or guardian

35. Children's positive behaviour

Policy on Managing Behaviour

- » There is evidence of the [policy on managing behaviour](#) being implemented.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 5.

The social and emotional wellbeing of all children is fostered

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

Examples:

- **Being supported to communicate their needs and wants, verbally and non-verbally (picture cards, hand signals), in a positive way.**
 - **Discussing and naming their wide range of emotions and feelings, while empathising with feelings of others (happy, sad, angry, feelings of exclusion and feeling hurt).**
 - **Assisting children to develop techniques that help them manage their positive and negative feelings: [OWL](#) (observe, wait, listen).**
 - **Listening to children in a caring, gentle way when they express emotions, and reassuring them that it is normal to experience positive and negative emotions at times.**
 - **Acknowledging and accepting children's feelings (positive and negative) and the relationships between children's actions and other's responses.**
- » Children are supported to demonstrate self-confidence.

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

- » The childminder responds to infants in a timely and appropriate way when they cry or become upset.
- » Children who show signs of social and emotional difficulties are given the appropriate care and support within the childminding service.

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

- » The home environment is stimulating, challenging and interesting for children, and is focused on their active engagement and involvement.
- » The childminder supports children to recognise and understand the rules for being together with others.

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

- » A climate is fostered where children know the boundaries and know how they're expected to behave within the childminding service.
- » The childminder encourages and praises children for specific, positive and appropriate behaviours.
- » Children are given positive alternatives, rather than just being told 'no'.
- » Children are supported in preventing, managing and resolving conflict.

Examples, the childminder:

- **acting to prevent potential conflicts and encouraging the children to resolve conflict if it exists;**
 - **responding promptly to children who are giving signals or cues expressing or indicating needs;**
 - **encouraging children to negotiate and resolve conflicts peacefully, with adult intervention and guidance when necessary;**
 - **actively supporting children in solving their differences and problems without being 'told' or 'ordered' what to do; and**
 - **prompting and supporting children to remove themselves from situations where they are experiencing frustration, anger or fear.**
- » Children with ongoing challenging behaviour are supported and helped to control their emotions and distress.

Examples, the childminder:

- reviewing the child's programme of care to ensure it is meeting the child's care, learning and developmental needs;
- reviewing the approaches taken to address a child's ongoing challenging behaviour, so that every opportunity is taken to make sure the behaviour improves;
- engaging with the child's parents or guardians to work with them on addressing the issues relating to the child's behaviour; (developing a behaviour management plan, assessing the need for help from external experts or professionals); and
- developing a [risk assessment](#) to manage the risks associated with the behaviours to the child and to other children.

Prohibited practices

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

Examples: withholding food as a punishment, isolating a child in a room, hallway or confined space.

- » Corporal punishment is prohibited.
- » The childminder does not use any form of physical intervention.

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

36. The childminding environment supports each child's learning, development and wellbeing

The design, organisation and resourcing of the environment supports each child's wellbeing, learning and development, within the ethos and philosophy of the childminding service

- » The atmosphere in the childminding home is encouraging and unhurried.

- » The childminder encourages children to interact and to engage with a range of materials, activities, equipment in the indoor and outdoor environment, based on the child's needs, choices, interests and age and stage of development.

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

37. The childminding service ensures effective programme delivery and quality of care.

The care and/or programme is designed or adopted taking into account:

- » The childminder's [Statement of Purpose and Function](#).
- » Play as the primary mode of learning for children.
- » The age and stage of development of the children.
- » The length of time the child spends in the childminding service.
- » The interests and choices, which children themselves express.
- » The children's health and safety requirements.
- » Respect for the child as a partner and an active participant.
- » The care and/or programme supports children's wellbeing, development and learning.

Examples:

- **Providing children with schedules and daily routines that are predictable, but flexible.**
- **Undertaking outings to enhance learning opportunities for children.**
- **Enhancing opportunities for:**
 - » **Physical development (fine and gross, rhythm and movement).**
 - » **Cognitive development (problem solving, critical thinking, reasoning, imagination).**
 - » **Linguistic development (communication, language and literacy).**
 - » **Emotional development (self-awareness, self-confidence and self-regulation).**
 - » **Social development (social skills and relationship building).**
 - » **Sensorial development (stimulating senses in active play experiences, combining the senses of touch, vision, hearing, taste and smell).**

- **Helping children to learn through active, hands-on experiences; playing, exploring, experimenting and discovering.**
- **Providing opportunities for children to take part in a variety of creative activities (music, dramatic play, science and stimulation of the senses).**
- **Providing opportunities for the child to be challenged, to take risks, achieve mastery and success and engage in old and new learning and concepts.**
- **Providing children with opportunities to take the lead and to make choices and decisions.**

Individual care plans

- » Where a written Individual Care Plan is required, the childminder ensures that the care provided to each child is in line with their plan. The plan:

- is developed with the childminder, if appropriate;
- describes the current developmental level of the child;
- details any chronic diseases or health issues the child is currently receiving treatment and care for;

Examples: allergies, asthma, sensory impairment.

- documents current medications, medical treatments and other therapeutic interventions;
- specifies how the childminder will meet the child's needs.

Examples:

- **Providing developmental variation, sensory impairment, or additional needs.**
- **Providing emotional and behavioural support.**
- **Providing emergency care for a defined medical condition.**
- **This emergency care plan gives details of what to do in a medical emergency. The plan is put together by parents/guardians with guidance from a medical practitioner (a GP or consultant).**

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

Policy on Using the Internet and Photographic and Recording Devices

- » There is evidence of the [policy on the use of the internet and photographic and recording devices](#) being implemented.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 14.

Technology usage

- » Technology is only used to enhance and support children's learning and development.
- » Where the childminder provides access to technology, it must ensure it is suitable for the child's age and stage of development.
- » There is a defined retention period for all images and recordings taken within the service with parents' and guardians' consent, including CCTV recording and images posted on social media.
- » Images and recordings of the child are only kept or displayed in line with the policy's retention period.

Regulation 20: Facilities for Rest and Play

Purpose

A childminder provides appropriate and safe facilities to meet children's needs for rest and sleep.

A childminder recognises that appropriate indoor and outdoor facilities within services are important for the developmental health and wellbeing of children. The childminding service is a home from home environment, organised to engage and promote play opportunities for all children attending.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

Facilities for Rest and Sleep

39. Supporting individual sleep requirements

- » The sleep and rest facilities and equipment are suitable for the ages, development stages and individual needs of the children.
- » There is sufficient rest and sleep equipment within the childminding service for each child to sleep or rest during the day.
- » A separate sleep room is not required in the childminding service.
- » The sleep area is quiet during sleep and rest times.
- » The lighting in the sleep and rest rooms is reduced, but only to a level where the childminder can still conduct direct visual checks.
- » Individual bed linen (sheets and blankets) is provided to each child.
- » The linen is laundered after each use, unless it is reserved for the sole use of that child.
- » Appropriate separate storage is available for:
 - unused clean linens;
 - linens that are not laundered after each use;
 - dirty linens waiting laundering.

40. Children aged under 2 years

- » All children up to the age of 2 years have access to, and sleep in, a standard cot, unless the child has a history of climbing out over the cot – in which case, a floor bed or mat is safer.
- » A documented [risk assessment](#) on an individual child is completed if a child is identified as being likely to climb out of the cot.
- » All cots used by the service:
 - are in good condition;
 - have a recognised safety standard;
 - have cot bars less than 6cm apart (round), or less than 7.5cm apart (flat);
 - have at least 50cm between the top of the mattress and the top of the cot;
 - have no footholds in the sides, or cut-outs in the end of the cot;
 - are positioned away from potential risks.

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

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

41. Children aged 2 years and over

- » Children over the age of 2 needing sleep or rest have access to a low-level bed or mat.
- » Children aged 2 and over are offered a pillow at rest or sleep time.

42. Items prohibited for sleeping children

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

See Regulations 19 and 23.

Facilities for Play

43. Indoor play

- » The home is comfortable, inviting and accommodates the play needs of all children.
- » The home provides a range of challenging, diverse, creative and enriching experiences for all children, in line with their stage of development.

See Regulation 19.

44. Outdoor play

Access to outdoor play

- » All childminders who registered **on or after 30 June 2016**, and those who moved premises on or after the 30 June 2016 require a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space on the [premises](#), that is accessible to the children on a daily basis.
- » All childminders who registered **before 30 June 2016** require children to have access on a daily basis to an outdoor space, either on or off the premises as follows:
 - Where the outdoor space is provided on the premises, it is suitable, safe and secure.
 - Where the outdoor space is not on the premises, it is suitable.
- » Children have opportunities to be outside as often as possible, in all weather conditions, except where a risk assessment does not allow.

- » The childminder balances the need for safety with the need to provide physical, challenging experiences.
- » The equipment and materials available in the outdoor play area provide children with play, movement and exploration opportunities that are unique to the outdoor environment.
- » Safe and comfortable outdoor spaces are provided for children who are not yet walking.

See Regulation 19.

Safety requirements where the outdoor play area is on the premises

- » The outdoor play area is reached by a route that is always free of [hazards](#).
- » The outdoor play area is enclosed with a fence or natural barriers.
- » Fences and barriers prevent access to streets and other dangers, such as pits, water hazards or wells. The barriers do not prevent the children being in sight of relevant staff.
- » The outdoor play area protects children from:
 - catch points, sharp points, and protruding hardware;
 - getting trapped;
 - tripping hazards.
- » Play equipment in the outdoor area that requires a [shock-absorbing surface](#) is safety-rated and installed according to the manufacturer's requirements.
- » The childminder supervises all children by **both** sight and sound in all areas with access to water.
- » The service boiler, refuse bins, oil tank or gas supply are inaccessible to children in outdoor play areas.
- » Pest control bait boxes are inaccessible to children in outdoor play areas.

Outdoor play where the outdoor play area is off the premises

- » The [outings policy](#) is implemented where required.
- » A risk assessment is carried out before every visit.
- » The risk assessment identifies any hazards and how any potential risk of injury or incident from these hazards can be eliminated or safely managed.
- » Children are not at risk from members of the public, and are protected from unwanted attention while in an outdoor play area not located on the premises.

See Regulation 23.

Policy on Outdoor Play (if such play is provided to children attending the service)

- » There is evidence of the [policy on outdoor play](#) being implemented.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 13.

Regulation 22: Food and Drink

Purpose

As the [registered provider](#), you must ensure that all children attending the service receive a nutritious and varied diet, which takes their individual needs and preferences into consideration.

Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

45. Healthy eating

Policy on Healthy Eating

- » There is evidence of the [policy on healthy eating](#) being implemented.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 12.

46. [Food and drink](#)

- » Adequate quantities of food and suitable portion sizes are available for children. The food is suitable for the age and stage of development of the child.
- » If a child does not want the food offered for any reason, a healthy alternative is offered.
- » Clean and safe drinking water is available and accessible to children at all times.
- » Water used for infants under 1 year is boiled and cooled before use.
- » Children are supported to self-serve as appropriate.
- » Water and milk are the only drinks offered.
- » The meals and snacks are of appropriate textures for infants.¹⁴
- » Breastfeeding supports are provided where required.

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

¹⁴ In accordance with the Health Service Executive – Feeding your Baby: Introducing Family Meals, available at: www.healthpromotion.ie/hp-files/docs/HPM00971.pdf.

- » Powdered infant formula is managed appropriately in the service.¹⁵
- » Food safety provisions include:
 - safe facilities to store food, including a fridge for perishable foodstuffs;
 - a system where all food and drinks brought from the child's home are identifiable to the child.
- » Special occasions like birthday parties are in line with the service's policy on healthy eating.

See Regulation 27.

¹⁵ PIF is managed in accordance with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's Guidance Note no. 22, available at: www.lenus.ie/hse/bitstream/10147/227213/1/GN+22+REV+2+FINAL.pdf.

Section 2

Safety

The regulations that apply to this area are:

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

Regulation 23: Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child

Purpose

The childminder is committed to safeguarding the children in their care, and to providing a safe environment where children can play, learn and develop.

The scope of this regulation addresses the following:

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

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

General Safety

The following points listed may not address all safety issues. New issues and [hazards](#) can emerge over time. Therefore, the childminder must ensure that all aspects of their service are reviewed and assessed to ensure the safety of all the children attending.¹⁶

47. Infant formula

- » If the childminder heats up infant formula or breast milk, the milk is warmed using a bottle warmer or by standing the feed in a container of warm water, for no more than 15 minutes¹⁷.
- » No milk or other infant foods are warmed in a microwave oven.

¹⁶ Competition and Consumer Protection Commission – Child Safety: www.ccpc.ie/consumers/product-safety/child-safety. Health Service Executive – Child Safety: www.hse.ie/eng/health/child/childsafety/.

¹⁷ PIF is managed in accordance with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's Guidance Note no. 22, available at: www.lenus.ie/hse/bitstream/10147/227213/1/GN+22+REV+2+FINAL.pdf.

48. Choking hazards¹⁸

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

Examples: grapes, cherry tomatoes.

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

Examples:

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

49. Toxic substances

- » The following items are stored in the original labelled container in a safe and secure way, separate from stored medications and food, and are inaccessible to children:
 - cleaning and sanitising materials;
 - detergents;
 - automatic dishwasher detergents;
 - aerosol cans;
 - pesticides;
 - health and beauty products;
 - medications.

¹⁸ Examples of other choking risks are included at: www.hse.ie/eng/health/child/childsafety/choking-.html.

- » Shaving cream or foam is not used as play material.
- » Toys and other products using button-cell batteries, such as small electronic devices, have lockable battery compartments.

50. Furniture, equipment and materials

Nappy changing mats

- » Changing mats are waterproof, have an easily cleanable cover and are in a good state of repair.
- » Nappy changing mats are cleaned after each nappy change.
- » Nappy changing supplies are within arm's reach of the childminder before a nappy change, and a childminder does not step away while the child is on the mat.

Equipment for meal and snack time

- » [High chairs](#) used during meal and snack times conform to safety standards.
- » Equipment used during meal and snack times meets the following requirements:
 - Equipment is used according to manufacturers' instructions, and is appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child.
 - Furniture and eating utensils make it possible for children to eat at their best skill level.
 - Food utensils and equipment, including furniture, is adapted if necessary to meet the developmental and physical needs of individual children.

[Blind cords](#)

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

Finger pinch protectors

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

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

Portable heaters

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

Example: CE mark.

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

Indoor and outdoor equipment

- » Furniture, toys and equipment on the premises conform to CE or EN safety standards or the [European Communities \(Safety of Toys\) Regulations 2011](#), as applicable.
- » Daily inspection of indoor and outdoor play equipment takes place.
- » A monthly review of the up-to-date list of products recalls and products withdrawn from use by the [Competition and Consumer Protection Commission](#) is done.
- » Play equipment is installed and maintained in line with the manufacturer's instructions and specifications.
- » [Shock-absorbing surfaces](#) are installed in fall zones, as recommended by the manufacturer, for the fall height of the play equipment.
- » Equipment, materials and furnishings are sturdy and safe and do not carry the following safety hazards:
 - openings that could trap a child's head or limbs;
 - elevated surfaces and structures that are poorly guarded;

Example: a tree-house.

- lack of shock-absorbing surfaces and fall zones under and around climbable equipment;
- insufficient spacing between equipment;
- components that can pinch, cut or crush skin and flesh.

- » Equipment that is known to be of a hazardous type, is free from:
 - splinters;
 - protruding nails, bolts, or other components that could entangle clothing or snag skin;
 - loose, rusty parts.
- » Natural materials such as branches, shells, rocks, pine cones, leaves, 'free and found' materials used in sensorial play, are suitable to the age and stage of development of the children and are non-toxic.
- » Equipment, materials and furnishings are placed to help prevent collisions and injuries.
- » Equipment is not placed on uneven surfaces, near the top of stairs or within reach of a safety hazard, such as a window.
- » Large pieces of furniture, including televisions, have stable bases and are securely anchored.
- » Chairs and other furnishings that children can easily climb are kept away from cabinets and shelves.
- » Hazardous equipment is inaccessible to children or removed until it is made safe or replaced.
- » 'Jumpers' (bouncing equipment attached to a door frame or ceiling) and infant and baby walkers are not used.
- » Safety straps are used on all equipment or furniture if provided by the manufacturer of the equipment.

Ride-on toys

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

Sand area

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

Examples: animal excrement, waste, and so on.

- » Sandboxes in the outdoors are covered with a lid or other covering when they are not in use.
- » Sand play area covers are properly secured when they are lifted or moved to allow children to play in the sandbox.
- » Sand play areas are separated from landing areas for slides or other equipment.

Water play tables

- » The basin and toys are washed and sanitised at the end of the day.
- » The childminder ensures that no child drinks water from the water table.
- » The floor and surface areas under and around the water table are dried during and after play.

Stair gates

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

Trampolines

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

51. Structural

Walkway surfaces

- » Walking surfaces, such as footpaths, ramps and decks:
 - have a non-slip finish;
 - are free of water and ice and loose material;
 - are free of holes and flaws in the surface.

- » Safe pedestrian walkways, drop-off and pick-up points at the service are:
 - clearly identified;
 - have been pointed out to all children, parents and guardians.

Stairways and ramps

- » Guardrails are provided at open sides of external stairs, ramps, and other walking surfaces.
- » Inside and outside stairs, ramps, porches and other walkways to the childminder's home are safe to use and are kept in good repair and are well lit.
- » Damaged or worn carpet is repaired.
- » Railings are strong, and do not have any footholds for climbing on, or gaps to fall through, crawl under or over.

52. Safe sleep

Policy on Safe Sleep

- » There is evidence of the [policy on safe sleep](#) being implemented.

See Regulations 10, 19 and 20.

See Appendix 6.

53. Administration of medication

Policy on Administration of Medication

- » There is evidence of the [policy on administration of medication](#) being implemented.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 3.

54. Outings

Outings Policy (if children attending the service are brought on such outings)

- » There is evidence of the [outings policy](#) being implemented.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 9.

55. Infection control

Policy on Infection Control

- » There is evidence of the [policy on infection control](#) being implemented.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 4.

56. Risk management

Risk Management Policy

- » There is evidence of the [risk management policy](#) being implemented.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 15.

Retention of risk management [records](#)

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

57. Accidents and Incidents

Policy on Accidents and Incidents

- » There is evidence of the [policy on accidents and incidents](#) being implemented.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 10.

58. Fire safety

Fire Safety Policy

- » There is evidence of the [fire safety policy](#) being implemented.

See Regulation 10.

See Appendix 7.

Fire drills

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

Examples:

- following an ineffective fire drill practice;
- following a fire drill that identified risks;
- in childminding services where sleeping children or children with additional needs are catered for.

- » Fire drills are carried out on different days of the week and at different times of the day.
- » Fire drills include a complete evacuation of the childminder's home to a pre-arranged, designated assembly point.

Fire extinguishers

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

See Regulation 26.

Fire training

- » The childminder is trained in the use of fire fighting equipment, by a qualified person.
- » Fire training is undertaken at least every 2 years.

Fire alarms and smoke alarms

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

Regulation 24: Checking In and Out and Record of Attendance

Purpose

A childminder only releases children into the care of people who have been authorised by the [parents and guardians](#), and who have been advised to the childminding service. Appropriate measures are in place to record the children's attendance at the childminding service and suitable resources are in place to do this effectively. All people entering the childminder's home are authorised to enter and do not have unsupervised access to the children.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

59. Authorisation to collect children

Policy on Authorisation to Collect Children

- » There is evidence of the [policy on authorisation to collect children](#) being implemented.

See Regulations 10 and 15.

See Appendix 11.

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

- » Each child attending the service is checked in and out by the childminder.
- » A [record](#) of each child's attendance is kept on a daily basis, and readily accessible to the childminder.
- » The record of attendance kept includes the following:
 - The full name of each child attending the childminding service.
 - The date and time each child arrives and leaves.
 - A record of the name of one of the following people at the time that the child arrives and leaves:
 - the person who delivers the child to the service and collects the child from the service.
 - the childminder.

61. Access by other parties

- » The childminder authorises the entry of any person to the premises, while the children are in the service.
- » People entering the childminder's home do not have unsupervised access to children in the childminding service (except for the [emergency person](#)).

62. Retention period

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

See Appendix 18: [Service Record Retention Timeframe](#).

Regulation 25: First Aid

Purpose

A childminder is appropriately trained in [first aid](#) for children.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

63. Childminder trained in first aid

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

- » The childminder is trained in first aid for children.
- » The childminder's in-date FAR certification is available.
- » Children with additional healthcare needs that relate to the provision of first aid are managed in line with the child's individual care plan.

Examples: diabetes, epilepsy, allergies.

64. First aid equipment

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

65. Recommended contents of first aid box and kits:

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

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

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

66. Accessibility of first aid equipment

- » First aid equipment is marked, easily recognisable and accessible to adults, but inaccessible to children.
- » A fully equipped first aid box is available within the childminding service in the following areas and situations:
 - nearby and accessible to outdoor play areas;
 - on [outings](#);
 - in any vehicle used to transport children.

See Appendix 3.

67. Emergency contact details

- » [Emergency](#) medical assistance contact details are easily and quickly available.

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

68. Recording of first aid care and responses provided

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

Regulation 26: Fire Safety Measures

Purpose

A childminder ensures that the fire safety [records](#) are available and kept in the childminding service for the defined period required. Also, these records must be open to inspection by the parents, guardians, and authorised people.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

69. Record of fire drills

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

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

- » The number, type, location and maintenance of records relating to fire equipment, including fire extinguishers and smoke alarm systems, is available and includes:
 - the maintenance certificate from a competent contractor or company;
 - the service details on the labels of portable fire extinguishers, fire safety blankets, and so on.

- » Records showing self-contained smoke alarms are tested at least once a month to ensure the alarm tone is working.
- » Records detailing all alarms are checked once a year by a competent person with appropriate training.

71. Access to records

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

72. Record retention period

- » Records of fire drills and maintenance records of fire-fighting equipment and smoke alarms are kept for 5 years after their creation.

See Appendix 18: [Service Record Retention Timeframe](#).

73. Fire notice

- » There is a notice setting out the procedures to be followed if there is a fire.
- » The fire notice is clearly visible and displayed in a prominent place in the childminding service.

See Regulations 10 and 23.

See Appendix 7.

Regulation 27: Supervision

Purpose

The childminder ensures that all children are appropriately supervised at all times while attending the childminding service. This supervision **must not** compromise the child's right to privacy.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

74. Appropriate supervision

- » Children are supervised primarily by sight – that is, observation.
- » Supervision for short intervals by sound (listening) is allowed, as long as the childminder can talk with children who are out of sight.

Example: children who can use the toilet independently.

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

Examples: climbing trees, swimming, bonfires, ponds, water tables, sensory play activities.

- » Supervision is appropriate at all times, including during:
 - indoor activities;
 - outdoor activities;
 - meal times;
 - [outings](#) (where undertaken);
 - sleep time;
 - toileting and nappy changing;
 - technology use, including internet access.
- » Supervision considers:
 - the individual children's needs;
 - the activities being engaged in.

- » No person in the childminding service is under the influence of alcohol or any other substance that has a detrimental effect¹⁹ on their functioning or behaviour during the service's hours of operation.

75. Sleep

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

76. [Food and drink](#)

- » Children are supervised while eating and drinking.

77. Toileting

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

78. Quiet play

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

¹⁹ The result of a wrong action or a failure to follow correct procedures that has a damaging or harmful effect. If the childminder is taking medication, it must not impair the childminder's ability to care for children.

Regulation 28: Insurance

Purpose

A childminder ensures that the childminding service is adequately insured, evidenced by a current certificate of insurance.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

79. Insurance cover

- » The service's insurance includes the following, where appropriate:
 - public liability insurance;
 - insurance against fire and theft;
 - buildings insurance;
 - insurance for [outings](#) undertaken as part of the service provision;
 - motor insurance cover for vehicles used by the service to transport children;
 - any other insurance requirements depending on the services provided as identified by the childminder or the Inspectorate.

80. Insurance certificate

- » The insurance certificate for the childminding service is available and in date on inspection.
- » The information provided on the relevant insurance certificate includes:
 - the contact details for the insurance provider;
 - the name and address of the childminding service insured;
 - the categories of insurance cover for the childminding service;
 - the number of children covered by insurance within the childminding service;
 - the start date and end date of current insurance cover.
- » The number of children in the childminding service at any time does not exceed the number for which the insurance is provided.
- » Any vehicle used to transport children is appropriately insured for the purpose. Details of all relevant vehicle insurance policies and certificates are kept by the childminder.

Section 2

Premises and Facilities

The regulations that apply to this area are:

- **Regulation 21:** Equipment and Materials.
- **Regulation 29:** Premises.

Regulation 21: Equipment and Materials

Purpose

There is enough suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available in the childminding service.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

81. Availability of and access to equipment and materials

- » A wide variety of age and developmentally appropriate equipment is available indoors and outdoors²⁰ for children throughout the day.
- » There is access to a sufficient quantity of safe, well-maintained, high-quality materials and equipment, toys and furniture for all children.
- » Equipment and materials facilitate play and learning, engages all children and keeps them active and involved, whilst supporting and encouraging each child to experiment and explore.
- » Natural materials are accessible to the children.

Examples: twigs, leaves, treasure basket, stones, shells.

See Regulation 19.

82. Equipment and materials are inclusive

- » The materials, equipment and toys support and reflect the identity of all children who are attending the childminding service, their families and also the wider community.
- » Materials, equipment and toys provide a rich and varied environment with regard to gender, race, culture, ethnicity and additional needs, to encourage respect for diversity, equality and inclusion.
- » Furnishings, equipment and materials, where required, allow children with additional needs to participate fully in the service.

See Regulation 19.

²⁰ Where the outdoor area is part of the premises.

83. Furniture and equipment

- » Furniture and equipment meets the individual needs of all children.
- » The childminder has a comfortable place to sit, hold, and feed infants, and to read with, interact with and comfort children.

84. Personalised equipment

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

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

See Regulations 10 and 23.

85. Maintenance

- » Toys, equipment, materials and furniture are:
 - clean;
 - in good condition;
 - regularly checked for damage and wear and tear;
 - appropriately maintained.

Regulation 29: Premises

Purpose

The childminder's home is safe, suitable and provides an appropriate environment for the children. The [premises](#) are clean and hygienic.

Core Requirements of Regulatory Compliance

86. Sound and stable structure

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

87. Safety and security of the premises

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

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

- » Exits are clearly identifiable and visible at all times.
- » The childminding areas are not used for any business or purpose unrelated to providing child care when children are present in these areas.
- » The physical environment is safe, secure, and suitable for childminding. This includes the following:
 - passageways are free of obstacles;
 - electrical sockets are safe;
 - floor coverings are secured to keep adults and children safe from tripping or slipping;
 - no trailing flexes are in children's reach;
 - safety glass is used (BS6206).

- » All areas, both indoors and outdoors, are free from glass, rubbish, sharp or hazardous items and visible debris, and are in a clean condition.

See Regulation 23.

88. Storage

- » The childminding service has enough safe and appropriate storage space for equipment when not in use.
- » Equipment is stored safely and in an organised and hygienic way.

89. Adequate lighting

- » The childminder's home is an inviting bright environment with natural and glare-free artificial lighting that provides enough light and comfort for activities.
- » Outside artificial lighting is provided at entrances and exits used by children and their parents and guardians, to ensure good visibility if children are being dropped off or collected outside of daylight hours.

90. Adequate heating

- » There is enough suitable heating to ensure a room temperature of 16 - 20°C in sleep areas, and all other areas are within a range of 18 - 22°C.
- » Radiators have a surface temperature up to but no higher than 50°C, or radiators with a surface temperature higher than 50°C are guarded.

Example: radiator covers.

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

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

91. Adequate ventilation

- » Fresh air can circulate in rooms occupied by children.
- » Each room within the childminding service, particularly sanitary and nappy-changing areas, are adequately ventilated, either naturally through windows that can be opened, or by mechanical ventilation, such as fans, air conditioners and so on.

- » Areas that have been recently painted, carpeted, tiled, or otherwise renovated are ventilated before they are used by children.

92. Cleaning of premises

- » The premises are kept in a clean condition in line with the [Management of Infectious Disease in Childcare Facilities and other Childcare Settings](#).
- » For all childminding areas, cleaning is carried out in a way, and at a time, that does not interfere with the care or welfare of the children.
- » A cleaning programme is available and documented.
- » Cots are kept in a clean condition. If the cot is soiled with blood or body fluids, they are cleaned first and then disinfected with a chlorine-based disinfectant, then rinsed and dried.
- » Sleep mats and mattresses are waterproof, in a good state of repair, and are cleaned with detergent and warm water, rinsed and dried. Cleaning is carried out before use by a different child, or immediately if they are soiled or wet, and at least weekly.
- » Play surfaces are cleaned, rinsed and dried before use or when visibly soiled.
- » Whenever possible, disposable materials are used for cleaning.

Examples: paper towels, disposable cloths.

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

See Regulation 23.

93. Cleaning requirements for sanitary equipment

- » Toilets, sinks, wash-hand basins and surrounding areas are cleaned as needed, but at least twice a day.
- » Potties are emptied immediately and carefully into the toilet, cleaned then wiped over with a disinfectant and dried thoroughly using disposable paper towels. They are then stored appropriately.
- » If trainer seats are used, they are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after each use and stored appropriately.
- » Gloves and equipment designated for cleaning and disinfecting toilet-training equipment and toilets are used for each cleaning, and are not used for other cleaning purposes. Utility gloves are washed with warm soapy water and dried after each use.

94. Cleaning requirements for play materials and equipment

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

95. Maintenance and repair

- » Carpets are not used in toilet rooms, nappy-changing areas, and areas where food handling occurs. Carpets are maintained in a hygienic condition.
- » Walls and floors are kept in good repair, and are safe with no sharp edges, splinters, protruding nails or missing parts.
- » All joints and crevices are sealed.

96. Waste disposal

- » Rubbish is removed from the premises daily.
- » Waste, both indoors and outdoors, is inaccessible to children.
- » Waste bins are foot-pedal operated.
- » Soiled nappies are stored in a way that will not give rise to bad smells or cause a risk of infection. That is, they are stored in sealed airtight containers that are not accessible to children. The containers are removed from the premises at least once a day.

97. Adequate and suitable sanitary facilities

Children's toilets

- » Suitable, adequate, hygienic and soundly constructed sanitary accommodation (bathrooms with toilets, wash-hand basins and so on) is provided for toilet-trained children.
- » Children can easily open the toilet door from the inside, and the childminder can easily open toilet doors from the outside if assistance is needed.

Wash-hand basins

- » Each wash-hand basin is equipped so that there is access to:
 - running cold and hot water. The hot water temperature should be no more than 43°C;
 - a supply of hand-cleansing liquid soap;
 - disposable, single-use drying cloth or paper towels.
- » Step-ups are available for children if needed.
- » Wash-hand basins are not used for rinsing soiled clothing, for cleaning equipment that is used for toileting, or for disposing of any waste water used in cleaning the home.

Nappy changing

- » The service has nappy changing equipment, including a wash-hand basin and changing mat.
- » The nappy-changing mat is smooth and easy to clean.
- » Appropriate storage is provided for all necessary nappy-changing equipment.

Examples: gloves, nappy supplies.

Protective clothing

- » Single-use disposable gloves are available at the nappy-changing area and are used by the childminder during nappy changes.
- » Disposable gloves are used on both hands during nappy changing.

Bath or shower

- » Bathing facilities are age-appropriate where infants are cared for.
- » Young children are never left unattended in the bath.
- » The use of bath seats or rings, or similar devices are prohibited.

Section 3

Policies, Procedures and Statements

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

Index	Appendix Number	Theme
Statement of Purpose and Function.	1	Governance
Complaints Policy.	2	Governance
Policy on Administration of Medication.	3	Safety
Policy on Infection Control.	4	Safety
Policy on Managing Behaviour.	5	Health, Welfare and Development of the Child
Policy on Safe Sleep.	6	Safety
Fire Safety Policy.	7	Safety
Inclusion Policy.	8	Health, Welfare and Development of the Child
Outings Policy (where children attending the service are brought on outings).	9	Safety
Policy on Accidents and Incidents.	10	Safety
Policy on Authorisation to Collect Children.	11	Safety
Policy on Healthy Eating.	12	Health, Welfare and Development of the Child
Policy on Outdoor Play (where such play is provided to children attending the service).	13	Health, Welfare and Development of the Child
Policy on the Use of the Internet and Photographic and Recording Devices.	14	Health, Welfare and Development of the Child
Risk Management Policy.	15	Safety
Settling-in Policy.	16	Health, Welfare and Development of the Child
Safety Statement.	17	Governance

Appendix 1: Statement of Purpose and Function

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

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

It states that a childminding service is provided.

It gives the hours of the childminding service.

It sets out the age range of the children catered for in the childminder's home.

It sets out the number of children that can be cared for.

It gives a list of the policies, procedures and statements of the service.

It includes the contact numbers of the service for people seeking information about the service.

It sets out the cost to parents and guardians for the service.

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

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

Appendix 2: Complaints Policy

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

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

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

It gives the name of the person in the service who receives complaint, including when the childminder is the subject of the complaint.

It states that complaints are treated in a confidential manner.

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

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

It also:

- » describes the progress of a complaint;
- » states how the person making the complaint is to be kept informed of progress;
- » gives the anticipated timeline for dealing with the complaint.

It describes how:

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

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

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

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

It states the storage location of complaint information.

It states that the complaint records are kept for 2 years from the date the complaint has been dealt with.²¹

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

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

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

Useful Weblinks:

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

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

Tusla: New Registrations

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

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

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

²¹ This is without prejudice to any requirement to keep this record under any other enactment or rule of law.

Appendix 3: Policy on Administration of Medication

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

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

The policy includes the following core elements:

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

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

It includes a medication consent form.

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

It sets out the childminder's [competency](#) (knowledge, skills and training) to administer medication, and includes the procedures to follow before, during and after administering medication.

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

It sets out the procedures for applying sunscreen including where:

- » the parent or guardian supplies the sunscreen;
- » the childminder supplies the sunscreen.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Useful Weblinks:

Irish Cancer Society

www.cancer.ie/

Appendix 4: Policy on Infection Control

The Policy on Infection Control for a Childminding Service specifies the procedures to be followed in the service to protect the childminder and early years children attending the service from the transmission of infections.

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

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

It sets out hand-washing procedures to ensure that:

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

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

It sets out specific requirements about preventing cross-contamination.

It also sets out general infection controls – for example:

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

It describes the safe management of perishable food and includes:

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

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

It describes procedures for managing outbreaks.

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

It sets out the procedures for the management of poultry, animals, fish, and so on, that children have access to.

It provides information about infection control on zoo and farm outings.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Useful Weblinks:

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

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

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

Appendix 5: Policy on Managing Behaviour

The Policy on Managing Behaviour for a Childminding Service, is a policy that:

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

The policy includes the following core elements:

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

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

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

It states how children with challenging behaviour are supported.

It describes how ongoing challenging behaviour is responded to.

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

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

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

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

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

Useful Weblinks:

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

Aistear Síolta Practice Guide
aistearsiolta.ie/en/

Appendix 6: Policy on Safe Sleep

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

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

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

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

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

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

All objects, toys and hanging items are removed (clear cot).

- » Overheating is avoided.
- » Bottle-propping is prohibited.
- » Soothers are used appropriately.

It sets out how children are supervised at all times while sleeping:

- » the childminder remaining in the room where children are sleeping;
or
- » the childminder going into the sleep room at least every 10 minutes and observing each child.

Physical checks take place at least every 10 minutes, including completing a sleep record: The sleep record details:

- » the time of the check;
- » the sleep position of each child (as above);
- » any change in the child's normal skin colour;
- » any change in the child's normal breathing pattern;
- » the sleep room temperature for children aged under 2 years (16-20°C).
- » Using listening devices.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Useful Weblinks:

First Light: Safe sleep for under 2s

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

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

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

Tusla: Safety Alert – Cots

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

Tusla: Adequate and suitable rest facilities

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

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

www.lullabytrust.org.uk/

Scottish Cot Death Trust: Reduce the Risks of Cot Death

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

Appendix 7: Fire Safety Policy

The Fire Safety Policy for a Childminding Service is a policy specifying:

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

The policy also specifies the way the childminder is:

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

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

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

It specifies the way the childminder is:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Useful Weblinks:

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

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

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

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

Keeping Communities Safe: A Framework for Fire Safety in Ireland

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

Appendix 8: Inclusion Policy

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

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

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

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

It describes how the childminding service creates a culture of inclusion and acceptance – for example, respecting and valuing children’s home languages.

It describes how the childminder’s home (including equipment and materials) in the service supports inclusion and reflects diversity.

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

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

It states how the childminder engages in reflective practice training opportunities.

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

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

Useful Weblinks:

Department of Children and Youth Affairs: Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Care and Education
aim.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Diversity-Equality-and-Inclusion-Charter-and-Guidelines-for-Early-Childhood-Care-Education.pdf

Report of the Inter-Departmental Group: Supporting Access to the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme for Children with a Disability
www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/publications/20151118ECCEAccessSpecialNeedsReport.pdf

Access and Inclusion Model

aim.gov.ie/

Equality and Diversity Early Childhood National Network

edenn.org/

National Disability Authority

nda.ie/

Ask Me: Guidelines for Effective Consultation with People with Disabilities

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

National Disability Authority: Make your websites more accessible

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

National Disability Authority: eLearning

nda.ie/Resources/eLearning/

Health Service Executive & National Disability Authority: National Guidelines on Accessible Health and Social Care Services

www.hse.ie/eng/services/yourhealthservice/access/natguideaccessible/services/natguideaccessibleservices.pdf

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

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

Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training

www.decet.org/

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

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

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Appendix 9: Outings Policy

(where children attending the service are brought on such [outings](#))

The Outings Policy for a Childminding Service is a policy specifying the measures to be taken to ensure the safety and welfare of early years children under the control of the childminder, while not in the home.

It includes the following core elements:

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

It includes a consent form for outings.

It states that a parent's or guardian's consent is required to go on outings.

It sets out how outings are managed by the childminder.

It states that a [risk assessment is undertaken before each outing](#), where this is required – for example, one off outings.

It describes how children are supervised on outings.

It states that the childminding service is adequately insured for each outing.

It describes the availability of communication systems during outings, including:

- » charged and working mobile phone with network access, or access to a landline;
- » parent and guardian contact details;
- » [emergency](#) contact details.

It states the clothing requirements for outings.

It sets out the [food and drink](#) requirements for outings.

The first aid requirements are detailed, including:

- » the childminder is trained in first aid for children;
- » the availability of a well-stocked first aid kit.

It sets out what records are required on an outing, including:

- » the record of attendance;
- » [individual care plans](#), if appropriate;
- » a Critical Incident Plan.

It details how children will be transported during outings, pick-up and drop-off.

It sets out the infection control measures for outings.

It sets out the procedures for managing an [accident](#) or [incident](#) while on an outing.

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

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

Useful Weblinks:

Aistear Síolta Practice Guide

aistearsiolta.ie/en/

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

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

Appendix 10: Policy on Accidents and Incidents

The Policy on Accidents and Incidents for a Childminding Service is a policy specifying:

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

The policy includes the following core elements:

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

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

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

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

- » the childminder's awareness of their roles and responsibilities if there is an accident or incident;
- » the [first aid](#) requirements – for example, the childminder as the trained first aider carries out assessment;
- » the administering of immediate first aid (if required);

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

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

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

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

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

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

Useful Weblinks:

Tusla: New Registrations

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

Health Service Executive: Child Safety

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

Health Service Executive: Child Safety Checklist (for your home)

www.hse.ie/eng/health/child/childsafety/publications/checklist.pdf

Injury Observatory for Britain and Ireland

www.injuryobservatory.net/

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents

www.rosipa.com/

Health and Safety Authority

www.hsa.ie/eng/

Poisons Information Centre of Ireland

www.poisons.ie/

National Standards Authority of Ireland

www.nsai.ie/

Child Accident Prevention Trust

www.capt.org.uk/

Eurosafe: European Association for Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion

www.eurosafe.eu.com/home

National Childhood Network: Healthy Ireland Smart Start: Health and Safety

www.ncn.ie/index.php/2-ncn/203-healthy-ireland-smart-start-health-safety-3

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

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

Appendix 11: Policy on Authorisation to Collect Children

The Policy on Authorisation to Collect Children for a Childminding Service is a policy specifying the rules of the service in relation to collecting children attending the childminding service.

The policy includes the following core elements:

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

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

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

It sets out who is authorised to collect a child.

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

It sets out the procedures for unusual circumstances, including:

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

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

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

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

Appendix 12: Policy on Healthy Eating

The Policy on Healthy Eating for a Childminding Service is a policy specifying the way the service will ensure that the [food and drink](#) provided to the early years children attending the childminding service is nutritious, and complies with the dietary or religious requirements of the child.

The Healthy Eating Policy is developed in line with the [Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Pre-School Services](#)²² and the [3 Week Menu Plan - A Resource for Pre-Schools](#), and the [serving size guide](#) for pre-schools.

The policy includes the following core elements:

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

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

- » specific dietary requirements;
- » appropriate serving size;
- » the food and drinks children bring to the childminding service;
- » the availability of drinking water at all times;
- » availability of weekly menu plans adhering to meals, snacks and drinks.

It states that the menu includes a wide variety of healthy foods.

It states that any changes in the menu are noted, and any foods that are substituted are of equal nutrient value.

It states that the main meal must include appropriate servings of protein, starch, dairy, vegetables and iron.

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

It states how breastfeeding will be supported.

It states that parents and guardians are informed if their child has not eaten well.

It details that the parents and guardians encourage good eating habits.

²² The Department of Health is developing healthy eating guidelines for 1-5 year olds.

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

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

It describes how birthday parties and special occasions are celebrated.

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

It details how children are supervised while eating and drinking.

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

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

Useful Weblinks:

Health Service Executive: Babies and toddlers

www.mychild.ie

Safefood: START

www.makeastart.ie

Safefood: Little Bites (ROI)

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

Food Safety Authority of Ireland: Allergens

www.fsai.ie/allergens/

National Childhood Network: Healthy Ireland Smart Start - Nutrition

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

Irish Food Allergy Network

ifan.ie/

Appendix 13: Policy on Outdoor Play

(where outdoor play is available to children attending the service)

The Policy on Outdoor Play for a Childminding Service is a policy specifying:

- » the way and the times early years children attending the childminding service have access to outdoor play, whether on the childminder's [premises](#) or in another location; and
- » the way the health and safety of the pre-school children at play is ensured.

The policy includes the following core elements:

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

It describes how children have access to outdoor play (on or off the premises), including:

- » how often outdoor play is facilitated;
- » where outdoor play is located;
- » measures to deal with weather conditions, for example – clothing, sun protection.

It describes the play opportunities available, – for example, risky play, challenging play, running, climbing, gardening.

It sets out how children are supervised during outdoor play.

It sets out the safety requirements where the outdoor play area is on the premises. For example, the area must:

- » be visually checked to ensure it is free of [hazards](#).
- » be well maintained, including any equipment in the outdoor area;
- » allow for children to be supervised .

It sets out the safety requirements where the outdoor play area is not located on the premises, including:

- » carrying out a [risk assessment](#);
- » implementing the [outings policy](#); and
- » procedures for dealing with members of the public and unwanted attention.

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

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

Useful Weblinks:

National Childhood Network: Healthy Ireland Smart Start – Physical Activity

www.ncn.ie/index.php/2-ncn/200-healthy-ireland-smart-start-physical-activity

Health and Safety Executive: Children’s Play and Leisure – Promoting a Balanced Approach

www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/childrens-play-july-2012.pdf

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Appendix 14: Policy on the Use of the Internet and Photographic and Recording Devices

The Policy on the Use of the Internet and Photographic and Recording Devices for a Childminding Service is a policy specifying:

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

The policy includes the following core elements:

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

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

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

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

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

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

It includes a consent form.

It sets out how images and recordings are stored.

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

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

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

Useful Weblinks:

General Data Protection Regulation

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

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

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

Appendix 15: Risk Management Policy

The Risk Management Policy for a Childminding Service is a policy on the way the childminder assesses any potential risks to the safety of the early years children attending the childminding service. It also covers the steps taken to either eliminate those risks or reduce them.

The policy includes the following core elements:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Useful Weblinks:

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

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

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

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

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Appendix 16: Settling-in Policy

The Settling-in Policy for a Childminding Service is the procedures in place to facilitate the integration into the childminding service of an early years child when they first attend the service and their transition to primary school.

The policy includes the following core elements:

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

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

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

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

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

Useful Weblinks:

Aistear Síolta Practice Guide

aistearsiolta.ie/en/

Appendix 17: Safety Statement

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

Safety Statement:

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

- » The childminding service's health and safety policy. See example of Health and Safety policy on page 21 of [A Guide to Risk Assessments and Safety Statements](#).
- » The results of the childminding service's [risk assessments](#).
- » The name of the childminder responsible for any safety and health matters.
- » The childminding service's plans and procedures for dealing with [emergencies](#) – for example, a [Critical Incident Plan](#).
- » The childminder's arrangements to ensure the safety of children and visitors to the home, or anyone else who may be affected by the service's work activities.
- » The personal protective equipment policy and register of equipment.
- » The [first aid](#) and [fire safety](#) procedures and details about the equipment and facilities available.
- » The procedures for accident reporting and investigation.
- » The training records [records](#).

The safety statement (including the risk assessments) must be brought to the attention of all [parents, guardians](#) and visitors that may be exposed to any risks. Ready access to an [electronic copy](#) is acceptable.

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

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

Useful Weblinks:

Health and Safety Authority: Legislation

www.hsa.ie/eng/Legislation/

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

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

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

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

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

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

Appendix 18: Service Record Retention Timeframe

Regulation	Document	Retention Period
Registration of Pre-School Service: Regulation 6(6)	Safety Statement of the Service.	While the childminding service is registered.
Review of Pre-School Service: Regulation 14(b)	Yearly review of policies/procedures/statements and practice.	3 years from the date the review is carried out.
Record of Pre-School Child: Regulation 15(4)	Record of an early years child in a childminding service.	2 years from the date on which the child stops attending the childminding service.
Copy of Act and the 2016 Regulations: Regulation 18	Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013. Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.	While the childminding service is registered.
Record in relation to a Pre-School Service: Regulation 16(2)(a)	References, Garda Vetting, Police Vetting.	5 years after the childminder starts the childminding service. Includes family members over 18 years of age and the emergency contact person.
Record in relation to a Pre-School Service: Regulation 16(2)(b)	Record: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » child's attendance on a daily basis; » any medication administered to an early years child attending with parents' consent; 	2 years from the date on which the child stops attending the childminding service.

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

Section 4

Explanatory Notes

This section contains:

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

Accident:

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

Act of 2012:

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

Aistear:

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

Better Start National Early Years Quality Development:

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

Blind cords:

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

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

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

- » Cords of blinds and curtains are inaccessible.
- » Looped blind cords are out of the reach of children.
- » Cords ending in a loop are particularly risky. Cut the cord to get rid of the loop and install tassels.

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

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

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

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

Carbon monoxide monitors (CO):

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

Certified copy:

A true copy of a certificate or document.

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

- » The registered provider has seen and inspected the original hard copy of the certificate/document and can verify that the copy is “a true copy” or an “authentic copy” of the original. The registered provider notes on the copy that it is a true copy of the original.
- » If it is not possible for the registered provider to see the original hard copy of the document, they verify that the copy of the certificate of document bears the stamp of the relevant organisation or college.

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

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

Child Safeguarding:

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

Competent:

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

Contractor:

In relation to a childminding service, a contractor is a person who carries out work in the childminder's home. This means that contractors may have access to, or contact with, children attending the service – for example, a person doing repairs. Contractors must always be supervised when with children. Unsupervised access is unacceptable.

Disclosure:

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

If the service receives a processed disclosure from a relevant organisation (for example – Childminding Ireland) that indicates a recorded conviction in regard to an ‘applicant’, the employer will consider the contents and undertake a comprehensive [risk assessment](#) of the processed Garda vetting disclosure before any decision is made to employ the person. The risk assessment is documented.

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

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

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

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE):

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) define the ECCE programme as “a universal programme available to all children within the eligible age range”. It provides children with their first formal experience of early learning before they go to primary school. The programme is provided for three hours a day, five days a week over 38 weeks from September to June each year. There are three entry points throughout the programme year – September, January and April.

Childcare services taking part in the ECCE scheme must provide an appropriate pre-school educational programme which adheres to the principles of Síolta, the national framework for early years care and education. More information can be accessed at: www.dcy.gov.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=1143.

Emergency:

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

Emergency person:

An adult who is capable, can act without instruction, and is available to attend the service within 10 minutes of being called. The emergency person is familiar with the service, and knows their designated role and responsibilities when

contacted in an emergency. Also, the emergency person is not required to have a qualification, but is required to be vetted (Garda/Police vetting and references).

Fire safety:

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

In summary:

- » A fire alarm system is required in a childminding service, to give early warning of an outbreak of fire, and to ensure that the escape routes can be safely used.
- » Self-contained alarm units are mains powered smoke detectors with the smoke detection and alarm sounder housed in one unit. A fire alarm system based on self-contained units is sufficient for childminding services. A battery-powered smoke detector (not wired) is not a self-contained unit and is inadequate for any category of pre-school service including a childminding service.
- » Sleeping infants and children are given high priority when you have to evacuate a building because of a fire.

First aid:

First aid is provided where help is required to:

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

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

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

First Aid Response (FAR):

First Aid Response and First Aid Responder.

The Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) has established the First Aid Response standard. It offers training to individuals and groups who require a first aid skill set, including 'cardiac first response' – that is, providing [first aid](#) to

someone having a heart attack or other heart-related issue. The PHECC standard is designed to meet first aid and basic life support (BLS) requirements that a person known as 'First Aid responder' may need in [emergency](#) circumstances. Further information available at: www.phecit.ie/Images/PHECC/Career%20and%20Education/Education%20Standards/STN006%20First%20Aid%20Response%20V1.pdf.

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

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

The Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC):

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

Food and drink - healthy eating:

Eating a variety of nourishing foods at regular times to maintain good health and growth. The Department of Health are developing healthy eating guidelines for 1 - 5-year olds. Food safety precautions must also be adhered to.

Growbags:

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

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

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

Hazard:

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

Herd Immunity/Population Immunity:

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

High chairs:

High chairs provided must:

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

Immunisation:

Making a person resistant to infection by vaccination. In Ireland, the law does not require that children be immunised (vaccinated) in line with the [National Immunisation Schedule](#). This is a parent's or guardian's choice. However, it is highly desirable that children are vaccinated in line with the schedule unless there is a medical reason preventing it. Children who are not vaccinated are dependent on [herd immunity](#) to protect against disease. The [registered](#)

[provider](#) must be aware of which children attending the service have been vaccinated and which haven't. This is important, so that those children who are not vaccinated can be best protected if an infectious disease occurs within the service.

Incident:

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

Individual risk assessment:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Safety Issues:

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

Manual Handling:

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

Risks of Fall and Overturning:

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

Infection Control:

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

Items in a Cot:

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

National Vetting Bureau (NVB):

The National Vetting Bureau provides vetting (checking and screening) on behalf of organisations employing people to work as a childminder or is present in a childminder's home. The NVB provides vetting disclosures for both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Childminders who are members of Childminding Ireland can obtain Garda vetting through Barnardos: www.barnardos.ie/what-we-do/our-services/specialist-services/vetting-service.html.

Childminders who are members of the Early Childhood Ireland Association (ECI) should make contact directly to process vetting applications: www.earlychildhoodireland.ie/work/operating-childcare-service/garda-vetting/.

Notifiable disease:

Any disease that, by law, must to be reported to authorities. A notifiable, infectious disease is one that is on the list of diseases (and their causes) contained in the Infectious Diseases Regulations 1981 and subsequent amendments. A list of the notifiable diseases is available at: www.hpsc.ie/

[notifiablediseases/](#). The childminder will notify [Tusla](#) of the infectious disease when the childminding service has been contacted by the Department of Public Health Medicine, HSE, and advised that the service has a confirmed case as listed. The Department of Public Health Medicine will advise you about what to do regarding precautions to be taken in your [premises](#) and follow-up of contacts and procedures.

Notifications of accidents and incidents:

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

Childminders must notify [Tusla](#) in writing of any accident or incident that occurs using the [Notification of Incident Form](#), available on the Tusla website. This must be done **within three working days** of the childminding service becoming aware of any of the following accidents or incidents occurring in the service:

- » The death of a child while attending the service, including the death of a child in hospital following their transfer to hospital from the service.
- » An accident or incident that occurs in the service and that results in the service being closed for any length of time.
- » An unplanned closure where the service has to close due to unforeseen events. That is, the service has to close unexpectedly. This may be for personal reasons (for example – bereavement), or any other reason – for example, a burst pipe in the service, external factors, and so on).
- » A [serious injury](#) to a child while attending the service that requires immediate medical treatment by a [registered medical practitioner](#) in hospital or otherwise.
- » An incident resulting in a child attending the service going missing.
- » A diagnosis that a child attending the service, an employee, an unpaid worker, a [contractor](#) or any other person working in the service is suffering from an infectious disease listed as notifiable in the Infectious Diseases Regulations 1981 and subsequent amendments.
- » The childminder will notify Tusla at ey.registration@tusla.ie of the infectious disease when the childminding service has been contacted by the Department of Public Health Medicine, HSE, and advised that the service has a confirmed case as listed. The Department of Public Health Medicine will advise you about what to do regarding precautions to be taken in your [premises](#) and follow-up of contacts and procedures.

Outings:

Occasions where children attending the service are under the control of the service but not on the [premises](#).

Outings – Risk Assessment:

The adult:child ratio is determined for each [outing](#) based on a [risk assessment](#). The following considerations must be determined:

- » Potential [risks](#) and [hazards](#) associated with the outing.
- » The number of adults required to adequately maintain the supervision and safety of all early years children.
- » Additional needs of children.
- » Public accessibility, if applicable.
- » Management of all risks identified before the outing.
- » All relevant policies and procedures in the service.
- » Insurance requirements.

Overnight Early Years Service:

An Early Years Service where children are cared for between the hours of 7pm and 6am for no more than two hours, except where the exemptions provided in [section 58L of the Act](#) apply.

Parent or Guardian:

A parent is the child's natural or adoptive mother or father. A guardian is another person – not the natural or adoptive parents – who has legal rights and responsibility for the child. Married parents are automatically joint guardians of their children – separation or divorce **does not** change this. If custody of a child is granted to an individual (parent, guardian or other legally responsible person), they may need legal documentation as evidence – for example, a custody or guardianship order. A custody or guardianship order issued is in line with the Children and Family Relationships Act 2015 and the Guardianship of Infants Act 1964.

Premises:

Buildings, grounds, gardens and so on. In relation to a Childminding Service, premises includes a building or part of a building and any out-offices, yards, gardens or land that is adjacent to the buildings and owned by the premises (but not used for gain).

QQI:

[Quality and Qualifications Ireland](#) is a State agency whose functions include those previously carried out by:

- » the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC);
- » the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC);
- » the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB); and
- » the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI).

QQI is responsible for maintaining the 10-level NFQ (National Framework of Qualifications). QQI are also an awarding body and set standards for awards QQI make in the NFQ.

QQI validate education and training programmes and make extensive awards in the Further Education and Training sector, including in the Education and Training Boards. QQI also make awards in Higher Education, mainly to learners enrolled on courses offered by private providers. The universities and institutes of technology largely make their own awards. QQI also provide advice on recognition of foreign qualifications in Ireland and on the recognition of Irish qualifications abroad. Part of QQI's functions is also to publish a directory of providers and awards in the NFQ.

Record:

Usually a written or electronic log of information and events.

'Record' under Regulation 2 means any record kept or retained in under Regulations including any electronic record, book, card, form, tape, film, note or any record in permanent form, including a record that is not in a legible form, but which is capable of being reproduced in a legible form (for example, voice recordings that can be transcribed into text).

In addition, a record is defined by the [Freedom of Information Act 2014](#).

Any record held electronically must be available, accessible, retrievable and capable of being reproduced if required. An electronic record is defined by the Oxford English dictionary as a record accessed or kept by a means of a computer or other electronic device.

Register:

The list of registered Early Years Services established and maintained in line with [Section 58C of the Childcare Act, 1991](#).

Registered childminder and registered sessional service:

If a registered childminder is also registered to provide a sessional service, the following is required:

- » adequate provision for both a childminding and sessional service;
- » one service must not compromise the other;
- » the childminder cannot run the day-to-day activities of the [sessional service](#) at the same time as their childminding service;
- » each service must be registered separately;
- » each service must meet the regulatory requirements.

Registered medical practitioner:

A medical doctor or specialist registered with the Irish Medical Council.

Registered medical practitioner has the same meaning as it has in the [Medical Practitioners Act 2007](#).

Registered provider:

The person whose name is entered in the register in line with section 58C of [Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013](#) as providing an Early Years Service. The registered provider is the person who has signed the registration application form and is legally responsible for operating the service in compliance with the legislation under the 2016 Regulations and the Act.

Risk:

The chance or possibility of danger, loss or injury.

Risk assessment:

A written document that records a three-step process:

- » Identifying the [risks](#) presented by [hazards](#).
- » Assessing the risks presented by hazards.
- » Putting control measures in place to reduce the risk of the hazards causing harm.

Serious injury:

Injury to a child while attending the service that requires immediate medical treatment by a registered medical practitioner in hospital or otherwise.

Sessional Early Years Service:

An Early Years Service offering a planned programme to children for not more than 3.5 hours per session.

Síolta:

Síolta is the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education, and was developed by the Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills.

Soft fall:

A shock-absorbing surface that lessens the impact of a fall. Follow manufacturer's guidelines regarding the positioning and provision of appropriate ground surfacing for domestic equipment. Ground surfacing for commercial outdoor play equipment should meet the requirements as detailed in the relevant [National Standards Authority of Ireland](#) guidelines.

Subject Access (UK):

A Subject Access request is a person's right under Freedom of Information (UK) to request the information (if any) that is held about them in the Police National Computer (PNC). A Subject Access report is not acceptable as police vetting from the UK. Section 56 of the UK Data Protection Act is designed to protect individuals against Enforced Subject Access. This section makes it a criminal offence in the UK to ask someone to obtain a Subject Access report for anything other than their own personal use. This closes loopholes of prospective employers requesting relevant staff to get Subject Access instead of formal vetting routes which would disclose information to them that they were not legally entitled to see.

Subject Access includes personal information, non-conviction data, not guilty verdicts and other information which could have an impact on those individuals' prospects.

In summary, Subject Access is for an individual to get information held about them and not for third party use. An [ICPC](#) is the documentation required for UK police vetting purposes and not a Subject Access.

See also: [disclosure](#)

Tusla - The Child and Family Agency:

The dedicated State agency responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children. Tusla was established under the [Child and Family Agency Act 2013](#).

Validation:

A process to check or prove the legality or accuracy of a document. The childminder dates and signs the document being validated. The terms validating, verifying, confirming, checking and vetting are terms that we use interchangeably.

