



Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown
County **Childcare Committee**

Guidelines for Setting up a Childcare Service

Achievements to Date

Since DLR CCC was established in 2002 our key achievements have been:

Promotion Of Accredited and Professional Development Training for Childcare Personnel in the County.

Supporting Employers Childcare Options for their Employees

Facilitating Social Inclusion in the Childcare Sector

Establishment of a Childminding Advisory Service

Promotion of Quality Childcare

Supporting Potential and Existing Providers to increase the Supply of Quality Childcare in the County.

Note to Readers:

This information booklet sets out to provide the user with guidelines on establishing a service and information on available supports within the geographical area covered by Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Childcare Committee. It is designed as a basic guide and information tool for stakeholders concerned with setting up a new childcare service. This booklet is not intended to be a fully comprehensive source of information and is not, nor is it a recommendation of any of the services listed.

guidelines for setting up a childcare service

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introduction

Guidelines for Setting up a Childcare Service

This information booklet sets out to provide the user with introductory guidelines on establishing a childcare service in the geographical area covered by Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Childcare Committee. We hope you find this reference tool a useful guide for accessing information on how to set up a childcare service.

Guidelines for Setting up a Childcare Service contains valuable information on supports available which are very useful in setting up a childcare service. Much of the recommended reading is available in our Resource Room, which is open to the public at certain times.

Aim of the National Childcare Investment Programme

The NCIP 2006-2010 builds on the existing EOCP Programme and incorporates a number of key objectives. These are to:

- Increase the supply and improve the quality of early childhood care and education services, part-time and full day care, school age childcare and childminding
- Support families to break the cycle of poverty and disadvantage
- Support a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of childcare, which is centred, on the needs of the child

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Childcare Committee is responsible for implementing the NCIP at a local level in the county.



service types

Classification of Childcare Service Types

There are many types of childcare services– some distinguished simply by the opening hours or management structures, others by the curriculum of education that they use. What type of service you decide to offer depends on your training and the training of your staff as well as the market in which you are operating. The following is a broad categorisation of types of childcare services.

Sessional Care

“Sessional pre-school service” means a pre-school service offering a planned programme to pre-school children for a total of not more than 3.5 hours per session.

Services covered by the above definition may include preschools, playgroups, crèches, Montessori pre-schools, Naíonraí, notifiable childminders or similar services which generally cater for pre-school children in the 0-6 year age bracket.

Part Time Care

“Part – time day care services” means a pre school offering a structured day care service for pre- school children for a total of more than 3.5 hours and less than 5 hours per day and which may not include a sessional pre-school service for pre-school children not attending the part – time day care service.

The service must provide the same physical environment, including rest, play and sanitary facilities, as for full day care.

Full Day Care

“Full day care service” means a pre-school offering a structured day care service for pre-school children for more than 5 hours per day and which may include a sessional pre-school service for pre-school children not attending the full day care service.

Services such as those currently described as day nurseries and crèches are included in this definition. Where a full day care service also caters for children who do not attend on a full day basis, the adult/child ratio and group size for sessional services should apply.

Childminding Service

A childminder is a person that looks after not more than 5 pre-school children including their own pre-school children. Childminders who are not statutorily obliged to notify should contact the City/County Childcare Committee or the Health Service Executive and avail of the voluntary notification and support system.

Overnight Pre-School

Overnight preschool service means a service in which pre school children are taken care of for a total of more than 2 hours between the hours of 7pm and 6am, except where the exemptions provided in Section 58 of the Child Care Act 1991 apply. Over night preschool services involves pre school children being cared for over night in a crèche type or childminding service to facilitate parents/guardian’s working arrangements.

Different ratios apply for overnight preschool depending on whether the service is provided in a crèche or in a childminding service.

Drop In

“Pre-school service in a drop-in centre” means a pre-school service offering day care, which is used exclusively on an intermittent basis. Generally for a maximum of one to two hours. Examples of Drop In childcare are frequently found in shopping centres and leisure centres. A person or organisation intending to set up a temporary drop-in childcare service should notify the Health Service Executive 14 days prior to the event.

Parent & Toddler Groups

A group of parents / guardians/ carers and children who come together for supervised play and companionship for their children. Parent & Toddler Groups are not regulated by the Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006 and are the responsibility of the parents running the group.

The Katherine Howard Foundation is responsible for delivering the Parent & Toddler Group Initiative and supports various groups throughout the country. See contact section for more Information

School Age Childcare

A School Age Child is defined as a child who attends a school which teaches the National Curriculum. A service for school going children could include out of school (e.g. summer camp), after school, during term holidays or before school care, where they may have homework supervision, planned activities and a nutritious meal. School Age Childcare is not regulated by the Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006.

The variety of services can be provided on a public and private basis. Supports are available for each sector. Contact Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Childcare Committee or POBAL for more information.

Curriculum - Differences

Montessori

The principal of the Montessori method is that every child is treated with respect, given freedom within the limits of a carefully structured environment and allowed to develop naturally at his / her own pace.

High / Scope

In High / Scope children are encouraged to make choices about materials and activities throughout the day and thereby learn actively through experience and reflection. This is based on shared control between the child and the adult.

Steiner

Steiner Warldorf early childhood education, takes an unhurried approach to childhood by providing a safe and secure environment in an increasingly fragmented world. Each stage of childhood development has unique qualities to impart to the child and should be experienced fully before embarking on to the next stage.

Naíonraí

Naíonraí are nursery schools or playschools operating as Gaeilge.



regulations

Pre School Regulations & Childcare

When planning a new childcare service or extending an existing one you must ensure that your proposed project complies with all statutory requirements. Statutory requirements include obtaining Planning Permission to run a childcare service, Building Regulations, compliance with Fire Safety, Food Safety (if serving food) and Pre School Regulations.

In order to comply with legislation it is essential that you contact:

Fire Safety Officer (See contacts page)

Planning Officer in Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council

Pre School Officer HSE to notify your childcare service

The Principle legislation regulating the childcare sector is the Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006.

A Pre-School child is defined as a child who has not yet attained 6 years of age and is not attending national school. The Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006 govern services operating for Pre-School children.

Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006

The Child Care Act 1991 is the most important piece of legislation in relation to the delivery of a pre school service. The Act sets out the main provisions in relation to pre-school services in part VII. If you are planning to open a childcare service you must notify (notification application forms available from the HSE) the Pre School Officer in the Health Service Executive (HSE) 28 days before you open (14 days in advance before opening a Drop In centre). Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006 allow for HSE Pre School Officers to carryout routine inspections of childcare services to ensure that the person providing the service is taking all reasonable measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of attending pre-school children.

(Exemptions: Childminders are exempt if they care for less than four children.)

The precise regulations vary depending on the type of childcare service you are providing but some common to all types include the need for:

You must have

- Adequate Insurance Cover
- Adequate Fire Safety Precautions
- Provisions in place for medical and other emergencies
- Policies and Procedures
- The necessary register and records
- Adequate Adult Child Ratios, for example

The Necessary Register and Records must include

- The Name, Position, Qualification and Experience of all Staff
- Maximum Number of Children Catered for
- Type of Service and Age Range
- Staff/Child Ratios
- Type of Care/Programme Provided
- Facilities Available
- Opening Hours and Fees
- Details of Attendance
- Details of Staff Rosters
- Details of Medicine Administered
- Details of Accidents/Incidents/Injuries
- Garda Clearance
- Arrival and Departure Time of Each Child
- Fire Drills
- Maintenance of Fire Safety Equipment
- Fire Procedures

The service must have a copy of the Child Care Act 1991 and the Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006 on the premises.

Adequate Adult Child Ratios are:

Full day and Part Time day care Service Adult/Child Ratio

Age Range	Adult/Child Ratio
<u>0-1 year</u>	1:3 1-3 children – one adult 4-6 children – two adults 7-9 children – three adults
<u>1-2 years</u>	1:5 1-5 children – one adult 6-10 children - two adults
<u>2-3 years</u>	1:6 1-6 children – one adult 7-12 children – two adults
<u>3-6 years</u>	1:8 1-8 children – one adult 9-16 children – two adults 17-24 children – three adults

Sessional Pre School Service Adult/Child Ratio

Age Range	Adult/Child Ratio
<u>0-1 year</u>	<u>1:3</u> 1-3 children – one adult 4-6 children – two adults 7-9 children – three adults
<u>1-2.5 years</u>	<u>1:5</u> 1-5 children – one adult 6-10 children - two adults
<u>2.5 - 6 years</u>	<u>1:10</u> 1-10 children one adult 11-20 children – two adults

Maximum group number = 20 children (subject to area/space required)

Drop In Pre School Service Adult/Child Ratio

Age Range	Adult/Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
0-6 years	1:4 No more than 2 children under 15 months to 1 adult	24

Space Requirements for Children in line with the Pre School Regulations as outlined in Section 4

Food and Nutrition

The service provider must ensure that children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs, in consultation with parents where concerns exist. The service provider has a responsibility to ensure that all food and drink consumed by the children on the premises is nutritious and should take account of the Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Pre-School Services as prepared by the Department of Health & Children. A 3 week menu plan - a resource for pre-schools is also available from the Health Service Executive.

There are 3 options for providing food on a childcare premises:

The service prepares meals for the children on the premises

The service employs a registered company to provide meals for the children

Parents provide a meal for the children while attending the childcare service

Childcare Staff

Requirement that all staff, students and volunteers in preschool services will be appropriately vetted once procedures are in place to facilitate this.

In centre-based services, it is considered that the person in charge should aim to have at least fifty per cent of childcare staff with a qualification appropriate to the care and development of children.

(The above is just a sample of some of the regulations, for the full details see our Further Reference Section)

Further Reference

Copies of the full Pre School Regulations are available on our website:

www.dlrcountychildcare.ie or from the HSE Pre School Officers by contacting (01) 2822122 or (01) 4556546

'Legislation Handbook for Childcare Providers', is intended to act as a guide to the many areas of legislation that impact upon childcare providers in Ireland. Available Free (+ €1.50 p&rp) from Barnardos' NCRC Tel: (01) 4549699

'Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Pre-School Services' (2004) are available from the Health Promotion Unit website: www.healthpromotion.ie



market research

Market Research / Undertaking A Needs Analysis

Market research is essential in creating a sustainable childcare service and it will not only form the basis of your funding/grant applications and your business plan, it will also be important with regard to building considerations and staffing issues. The purpose of conducting market research is to highlight the demand for your childcare service. Identifying a strong demand is essential if your childcare service is to be viable.

You need to be aware of the level of demand for childcare (and type of childcare) in your area, the existing and projected population and the local economic and employment trends in order to develop a high quality, flexible, accessible early years service for children and families. Dún Laoghaire Rathdown CCC would be happy to help you if you require assistance.

Such information can be obtained from:

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Strategic Mapping Exercise
Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Childcare Committee
Census 2006 and Small Area Population Statistics
Childcare Census 2004
Local Primary Schools for enrolment details
Consulting with local childcare providers
Information on waiting lists for local childcare services
Parish Register for details of local births

SWOT Analysis

In conducting your market research it can be helpful to carryout a SWOT analysis. A Swot analysis helps you identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of your proposed childcare service. SWOT is a tool of strategic analysis and has two elements: an external analysis of Opportunities and Threats, and an internal analysis of Strengths and Weaknesses. The following are some pointers questions that may help you with your SWOT analysis.

Strengths:

What advantages does your proposed childcare service have?

What do you do better than anyone else?

What unique or lowest-cost resources do you have access to?

What do people in your market see as your strengths?

Weaknesses:

What could you improve?

What should you avoid?

What are people in your market likely to see as weaknesses?

Opportunities:

Where are the good opportunities facing you?

What are the interesting trends you are aware of?

Threats:

What obstacles do you face?

What is your competition doing?

Are the required specifications for your job, products or services changing?

Do you have bad debt or cash-flow problems?

Could any of your weaknesses seriously threaten your childcare service?

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childcare premises

Childcare Premises

Planning Permission

Generally, planning permission is required for the development of any childcare facility except for the use of a house for childminding. Childminders are defined by the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, S.I.600, as "the activity of minding no more than six* children, (including children of the person minding) in the house of that person for profit of gain". * The Pre School Regulations 2006 define a childminder as minding no more than five pre school children including their own.

Policy for the development of childcare facilities in Dún Laoghaire Rathdown is set out in the County and Local Area Development Plan. All Planning Permission applications will be set against this policy and against the Department of Environment and Local Government guidelines. The Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities published by the Dept. of Environment and Local Government (2001) encourage the provision of childcare facilities in appropriate locations including:

Residential areas,
City and town centres,
District and neighbourhood centres and areas of employment.

Information to be generally supplied with the planning application form:

1. Nature of the facility: full day care, sessional, part time, after school etc.
2. Number of children being catered for
3. Parking provision for customers and staff
4. Proposed hours of operation
5. Open space provision and management of it
6. Plans
7. Copy of Public Notices

Please note: It is always advisable to consult with Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council Planning Department, Chief Fire Officer and the Health Service Executive –Pre School Service Officer prior to submitting a planning application. (See section 9 for contact details).

Architects

Full sets of architect's plans are needed in order to obtain Planning Permission. For advise on choosing an architect or to locate an architect contact:

The Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland,
8 Merrion Square,
Dublin 2,
Ireland.

Tel. + 353 (01) 676 1703

Fax + 353 (01) 661 0948

E-mail: info@riai.ie

web: www.riai.ie

The Fire Safety Certification Process

Following receipt of Planning Permission for any childcare unit/crèche/preschool, an application must be made for a Fire Safety Certificate. This certificate has to be obtained for the premises and must be obtained before a commencement notice is lodged with the Local Authority.

A Fire Safety Certificate is a statement by the Fire Authority stating that the building is constructed in accordance with the submitted plans and documentation, it will meet the requirements of nationally accepted fire safety standards.

To obtain a Fire Safety Certificate:

Fill in the application form, which you will obtain from Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council.

Include two copies of drawings consisting of the Ordnance Survey Extract showing the location of the site, a site layout drawing, floor plans, elevations and sectional views of the proposed building

Include the appropriate fee.

The Fire Safety Officer is obliged to assess your application within 8 weeks of receiving it.

Pre School Regulations 2006

Space Ratios

The recommended areas with regard to “adequate” space are as follows:

Full day care services

Age of Child	Floor area per child
0-1 years	3.5sq metres
1-2 years	2.8sq metres
2-3 years	2.35sq metres
3-6 years	2.3sq metres

Part-time day care

Age of Child	Floor area per child
0-1 years	3.5sq metres
1-2 years	2.8sq metres
2-3 years	2.35sq metres
3-6 years	2.3sq metres

Sessional pre-school service

Age of Child	Floor area per child
0-6 years	2sq metres

Pre-school service in a drop-in centre

Age of Child	Floor area per child
0-6 years	2sq metres

Sanitary Accommodation

Children		Staff	
WC	Wash Basin	WC	Wash Basin
1:10	1:10	1:8	1:8

When developing a childcare facility you must also remember to allow approximately 20% of the space in a room for fixtures and fittings.

Rates

Once you establish your childcare business you will become liable for Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council Commercial rates. Details can be obtained from the County Council Rates Department on (01) 2054700.

Insurance

The main kinds of Business Insurance are:

Fire

Burglary

All risks – coverage against loss of assets however caused.

Public Liability

Employers Liability

Outings Insurance

Childcare Services may be able to avail of a reduced rate for insuring their service through group membership of National Children's Nurseries Association (NCNA) or IPPA, the Early Childhood Organisation, Forbairt Naíonraí Teo, and Childminding Ireland.

(See contact details in section 10)

Equipment and Materials

Having decided on the layout and design of your childcare facility, you can now start thinking of the fit out costs in relation to childcare materials and equipment and office materials. The National Children's Nurseries Association (NCNA) has a list of suggested age appropriate childcare equipment. Contact the NCNA on (01) 4601138. Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Childcare Committee has catalogues for childcare equipment available in our Resource Room. Contact (01) 2368030.

Your architect will have prepared a bill of quantities for the construction costs including permanent fixtures and fittings e.g. sanitary ware, fitted kitchen, internal floor covering, external landscaping, play area, external fencing etc.

It is good practice to shop around and obtain 3 quotes for items. This is particularly important if you wish to apply for a grant under the National Childcare Investment Programme, where you will need 3 quotes for every item costing over €3,000 and one quote for everything costing under that amount. Further information on the National Childcare Investment Programme is available in the section relating to Funding and Finance.

For Further Reference:

We Like this Place – Guidelines for the Best Practice in the Design of Childcare Facilities. POBAL, 2000. It is available in the childcare publications section of POBAL website: www.pobal.ie. Contact POBAL for the latest publication.



business plan & business information

Business Plan & Business Information

A business plan is vital for the successful running of any business or community enterprise no matter how big or small. A business plan helps to communicate your intentions for the childcare service and raise finance / grants. It can also act as a useful tool against which further performance can be assessed.

Top tips for preparing a business plan are as follows:

- ▶ Start off with a good executive summary.
- ▶ Be realistic; do not be over optimistic in your projections.
- ▶ Provide detailed market research including a competitive overview.
- ▶ Describe organisation structure.
- ▶ Make the plan your own.

Suggested structure of a business plan

1. Executive Summary

Description Of Service
Industry Analysis And Trends
Marketing Plan
Financial Details
Strategic Position

2. Business Description

Short Description of Service
Mission, ethos, business aims and objectives
Details of your competitive edge

3. Organisational Structure and Management Team

Organisation Structure
Ownership Information
Human Resources
Advisors/ Professional Services
Management Team Profiles

4. Operational Plan

Location Details
Opening Hours
Type of Service Provided

5. Market Research

Details of Demand for your Service
SWOT analysis

6. Marketing Plan

Target Markets
Market Research Information
4 P's Information (Product, Place, Price & Product)

7. Funding & Finance

Income Projection
Cash Flow Projection
Projected Balance Sheet
Base figures on realistic expectations

Conclusion

For further information on developing business plan contact:

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Enterprise Board

Tel: (01) 4948104 or visit their website www.dlrceb.ie. There are a number of useful business guides available on their website.

Further Reference

Establishing a Childcare Enterprise, by M. O'Sullivan and N Gibbons.

Barnardos National Children's Resource Centre has an Information Resource Pack, which contains a Business Plan template that has been designed for childcare business. The pack can be downloaded from there website www.ncrc.ie or phone (01)-4549699.

A copy of 'Starting Your Own Business' by Ron Immink And Brian O'Kane (2001) is available to download @ www.entemp.ie/syob/index.htm.

Business Information

A. Legal Structure

There is a difference between legal structure and legal status. Legal status is necessary in order to act through the legal system and an organisation without legal status is not recognised by the courts. For example, a community group that only has a constitution is not recognised by the courts. When an organisation becomes incorporated as a company the company has a separate legal status. It can now carry out activities such as employing staff and acquiring property in its own right and its members are protected against certain liabilities. In addition, many funding organisations require a group to have formal legal status.

The legal structure of your business will affect the way that the business is taxed and the accounting records required by the Revenue Commissioners.

Different obligations, levels of risk and liability are associated with each other.

These are three formal structures in which you could provide childcare services:

1. As a sole trader
2. As a partner in a partnership
3. As a share holder in limited company

1. Sole Trader

A sole trader is a business that is owned and run by one person. Setting up as a sole trader needs very little by way of legal formality, apart from registering with the Register of Business names of the Companies Registration Office (www.cro.ie). An advantage of being a sole trader is that apart from normal tax returns, which every taxable person must pay, a sole trader is not required to make public any information about the business.

2. Partnership

A Partnership is an extension of a sole trader model, joining two or more people together in a business relationship. Up to 20 people can be partners in a business venture, some of whom can be simply 'sleeping partners' contributing capital but without any say in the running of the business. Although there is no legal requirement, business partnerships often start by the writing of a formal agreement, a Deed of Partnership, which sets out in legal terms the working of the business, the profit sharing arrangements and stipulations resignation, retirement and death.

3. Limited Company

A Limited Company is a legal entity in its own right, separate from its owners, who are shareholders, and from its directors, who run the business. The owners are free from personal responsibility for the debts of a limited company – they are liable to lose only the share capital that they invested in the business. The shareholders are liable in the event of the business not being able to pay its debts for any amount outstanding on their subscribed shareholdings.

There are 4 different types of limited companies to suit different types of organisations. For Example, a Company Limited by Guarantee not having Share Capital is the general legal structure used by Not for Profit Groups. Other types of limited companies include: A private company limited by shares, A company limited by guarantee having a share capital, A public limited company.

Information regarding setting up a limited company is available from the Company Registration Office (www.cro.ie) or from Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Enterprise Board. It is worthwhile taking advice from a solicitor or an accountant as to whether an incorporated company is the best way for you to operate your business, as directors now take on huge responsibility under company law.

Further Information

A. Industrial and Provident Society

This structure gives legal status to an organisation. It is used by co-operatives. The organisation that becomes an Industrial and Provident Society must carry on a trade, industry or business.

B. Charitable Status

When an organisation has charitable status it means that it is recognised by the Revenue Commissioners for tax purposes. Groups can apply to the Revenue Commissioners for exemption from certain taxes and the Valuation office for exemption from rates on buildings. Most funding organisations for voluntary and community groups require the organisation to have charitable status. It does not give legal status to an organisation. A group can have charitable status without having legal status and vice versa.

C. Registration of Business Name

Whether a sole trader, a partnership or a limited company, if you use a name for the business that is different from your own name, you should register it with the Company Registration Office. Such a registration enables the public to find out about the people behind a trading name and doesn't confer any legal protection or propriety rights on that name. Full details of how to register your business are available from the Companies Registration Office www.cro.ie or from Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Enterprise Board www.dlrceb.ie

D. Taxation & PRSI

Comprehensive guides in respect of all aspects of business taxation including 'Starting in Business' guide can be obtained from your local tax office at (01) 8780100 or the Revenue website www.revenue.ie

For information on all aspects of PRSI contact:

Your local Social Welfare Office

Self-Employment Section, Social Welfare Services Office, Cork Rd Waterford.

Tel (051) 356000 or (01) 704 3000

Department of Social & Family Affairs Website www.welfare.ie or (01) 7043165

E. Accountants

For information and/or advice on accounting or taxation matters you are advised to contact your accountant. If you do not know of an accountant check the golden pages or contact one of the following:

Association of Chartered Certified Accountants – (01) 4988900

Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Ireland – (01) 6767353

Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland – (01) 6377200

F. Solicitors

You will need a solicitor to:

Check out any lease, loan agreement or contract you may be asked to sign

Advise you on relevant legislation

Act as a final step in your credit control process

Act for you if you are being sued

If you do not know a solicitor, search the Golden Pages or contact

The Law Society – (01) 6724800

G. Marketing Plan - 4P's

It is very important to prepare a marketing strategy for your childcare service. The following are the key elements that need to be included in your marketing plan:

- **Product**

Who are your customers, what are they looking for in terms of childcare service types
What are you offering the children in your service

- **Place**

Relates to the location of the business and how people are going to access the childcare service.

- **Price**

This refers to your pricing strategy for the type of service you wish to offer particularly when compared to that of competitors? Will your service be a budget or upmarket service? Price is a balance between what your customers are willing to pay and what profit you would like to gain for private providers

- **Promotion**

Promoting your childcare service is very important. In this section you will identify how you are going to advertise your service (e.g. via newspaper adverts), publicity (via interviews to local radio about your new service to word of mouth), direct marketing to potential customers via letters. Also sales promotion e.g. first month fees at half the normal price.

What on-going market research will be undertaken to measure such things as customer satisfaction, the effectiveness of the advertising and promotion, and changing consumer wants?

Further Reference

'A Business Guide to the Childcare Sector' can be obtained from any branch of AIB or can be downloaded directly at www.aib.ie/business

'Becoming a Limited Company' by Jane Clarke (1996), Combat Poverty Agency.

Information on the websites of the Companies Registration Office www.cro.ie and Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Enterprise Board www.dlrceb.ie

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finance & funding

Finance & Funding

The financial element of a business plan is fundamental and the backbone of any plan. Projected financial statements will be included in this section, which represent what your business will look like in the future based on a set of assumptions. Financial Plans normally show the projected income and expenditure over a specified period 3 – 5 years.

Budgeting

In order to be successful in securing grants, funding or loans, the most important documentation will be your projected budget with its breakdown of estimated income and expenditure. It is also very important to write up a complete budget so that you can see what is required for your childcare service to be financially viable.

Balance Sheet

It is important to include a balance sheet when preparing your financial plan.

Fees

Fees must be high enough to ensure that the service is sustainable and at the same time affordable to the local community. Community Childcare Services may need to source additional grants, as often income from fees is not sufficient to cover all overheads. The following factors should be considered when deciding the cost of the service (fees):

The cost of overheads, such as staff, wages, premises, equipment and insurance.

Actual cost per childcare place. (Total cost of running the childcare facility divided by the number of children.)

Grants available from funding agencies.

Tiered Payment Structures

The purpose of a tiered payment system is to make childcare more accessible. The payment system aims to allow all families to avail of childcare in their community irrespective of their financial / personal circumstances. The fee structure will be influenced by the circumstances of the service and the financial capacity of the families who are availing of it. Contact DLRCCC for more information.

Expenditure might be broken down into the following headings:

Set up cost – fixtures and fittings, equipment, architectural design fees etc.

Salaries including Employers PRSI

Insurance – building, contents, employees

Recruitment costs

Premises – rent, rates, electricity, heating, phone

Furniture and equipment – from desks to soap

Administration costs – stationary, payroll software

Staff – uniforms, training

Marketing costs – signage, Golden Pages etc.

Consumables – stationery, arts and crafts materials, etc.

For further advice on how to produce a budget contact

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Childcare Committee Tel (01) 2368030

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Enterprise Board, Tel: (01) 494 8400

Funding

Finance for your enterprise can come from a number of sources :

Income fees

State grants and financial supports

Private Fundraising

National Childcare Investment Programme 2006 – 2010

A new programme to fund the development of childcare in Ireland was announced as part of Budget 2006. The National Childcare Investment Programme 2006 - 2010 succeeds the previous Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme 2000- 2006.

Private Sector

Capital Funding

Applicants may apply for grant assistance of up to €100,000, towards the capital cost of developing a childcare service facility in an area where there is a demonstrated childcare need.

Applications for more than one grant under this scheme may be considered, provided the subsequent childcare facilities are in different catchment areas and subject to an overall ceiling of €500,000 per applicant.

Applicants must provide at least 25% of the total funding required for the project.

Deadweight

If the project would have proceeded regardless of funding. Examples of where deadweight would be expected to apply: Developer, in order to comply with the planning permission, construction already commenced, total cost is in excess of €800,000 I.e. maximum grant is less than 12 1/2 % of the total cost, tax incentives already received.

Community/Not-for-Profit Sector

Capital Funding

Groups may apply for grant assistance based on a demonstrated childcare need in the area.

A general limit of €1.2m on the maximum grant payable per project will apply.

Capital grant applications from community/not-for-profit groups will take account of the sustainability of a project.

The NCIP Community Childcare Subvention Scheme (2008-2010) is available under the Office of the Minister for Children (OMC) to support community-based not for profit childcare services to enable them to provide quality childcare services at reduced rates to disadvantaged parents. Services will be subvented to enable reduced fees to be charged to disadvantaged parents through a Community Childcare Subvention Grant.

The level of funding granted will be determined by the number of places that the group proposes to provide.

Eligibility Criteria for Capital Grants

Eligibility for Capital Grants is to be assessed taking account of a range of factors. The factors are as follows:

- Local need for the service

Number of childcare places created. Projects should aim to create at least five additional places

- The cost / value for money of the projects.
- The capacity of the applicant to manage the service.

Special consideration will be given to projects which offer places for babies, full day care places, part time places, school age places and are open for 48 weeks a year.

To Apply:

STAGE 1

Complete an Expression of Interest (EOI) form. EOI forms are available from our office. Contact us on (01) 2368030 for a form. Alternatively, EOI forms can be downloaded from our website www.dlrcountychildcare.ie

STAGE 2

Complete a Project Proposal Framework. This form will be issued once the initial Expression of Interest Form is returned to our office.

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Enterprise Board

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Enterprise Board provides special support and services for childcare businesses. There are a number of repayable grants available including - Feasibility Grants, Employment Funding, Capital Funding and Preference Share Funding. Mentoring and other supports are also available.

Tel: (01) 494 8400 or visit their website www.dlrceb.ie

The Revenue Commissioners

They provide Capital Allowances for premises used for childcare whereby the cost of constructing, refurbishing or extending premises for use as a childcare facility may be written off for tax purposes on facilities which meet required standards, as provided under the Child Care Act 1991. BIK Tax incentives. (See contact details in section 10)

Further Information on Funding is available from:

The Comhairle website www.comhairle.ie

The Funding Handbook, by CAFÉ Creative Activity for Everyone (2003).

The publication is available from CREATE offices at (01) 4736600

IPPA Funding Information Book (01) 4630020



human resources

Human Resources & Organisational Management

When employing staff, consideration should be given to the qualifications, training and experience of staff, as this will greatly influence the quality of service you provide. Many childcare stakeholders now recommend that childcare staff should have a minimum of a FETAC Level 5 qualification in childcare or an equivalent. Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Childcare Committee can give you further information on training Tel: (01) 2368030.

You will need to identify the particular roles and organisational structure needed to run a childcare service. In addition you will need to work through the following list of procedures when recruiting staff (this list is not exhaustive):

Employment Legislation (visit www.entemp.ie)

Job Descriptions

Advertisements

Short Listings

Interview Procedures (Including score sheets)

Reference checking and Garda Clearance

Record Keeping

Contracts of Employment & Staff Handbook

Volunteers / Students

Useful References

Galway City & County Childcare Committee have produced a very comprehensive guideline to developing 'Recruitment & Selection Policies and Procedures'. Packs are available by contacting them on 091-752039.

'Personnel Practice in Early Years Services - A Guide (Revised Edition)' Updated to include new Policies and Procedures and issues such as recent legislation, qualifications, induction and the company handbook among others, this guide is an invaluable tool in developing best practice and quality standards in personnel. Available from Barnardos' NCRC Tel: (01) 4549699

'A Guide to Labour Law' is available from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. Tel: 1890 220 222

'Employment Rights Explained' is a user-friendly guide to Employment Rights. It is available from Comhairle on (01) 6059000

The Equality Authority has a number of useful guides on their website www.equality.ie which relate to the Employment Equality Acts 1998 & 2004, Acts Relating to Maternity Leave, Parental Leave, Equal Status Acts 2000 & 2004 and much more. Tel: 1890245545.

Good management of your service is critical. There are several possible management structures that your childcare service could have. For example:

A committee managed service such as voluntary organisation, registered charity, parents co-operative, and community business.

A private business that is individually or partnership managed.

The difference lies in the way in which the roles and responsibilities are allocated between the two types. Privately Owned or Non Committee Managed Childcare.

A Manager's Tasks Includes

Complete overall managerial responsibility for the service

Responsibility for the delegation of tasks

Appraisal of team members at regular intervals

Inductions

Arranging and chairing of staff meetings

Responsible for HR matters

Staff Training & Development

Financial Management

Record Keeping

Management Committee

A Management Committee's Task Includes:

The committee will carry out all tasks of a manager or supervise a manager in the implementation of these tasks. Tasks are normally divided out amongst officers and committee members. The managing committee (may also be known as Board of Trustees, an Executive Committee, a Council or a Board of Director) is the governing body of a voluntary organisation. It is important that the management committee be a representative of all sectors of the local community.

Overall Role of the Committee

Managing childcare service

Agreeing constitution (or memorandum & articles of association) and ensuring adequate Policies and Procedures are in place.

Responsibility for financial, legal and official matters

Responsibility for the employment of staff. (N.B it is advisable for the management committees to set up as companies limited by guarantee if employing staff. Please consult your solicitor for further information and log onto www.cro.ie)

It is up to each individual childcare service to decide on their committee structure and officer roles but generally, it is laid out as follows:

Chair

Treasurer

Secretary

Other useful positions

Fundraising Officer

Publicity Officer

Staff Liaison Officer

The following are the main responsibilities and roles of the chair, secretary and treasurer:

Chairperson

Call meetings & draw up agenda in co-operation with secretary

Chair meetings

Ensure that minutes are recorded, if previous minutes, check for accuracy and correct if necessary

Ensure all decisions are minuted

Chair should encourage participation & ensure meetings stick to agreed time and agenda.

Secretary

Ensure requirements of the Companies Office are fulfilled (if a limited company)

Ensure rules outlined in Articles of Association/Constitution are kept

Take minutes and maintain records of minutes

Notify members of all meetings both general and committee

Treasurer

Keep records of all financial transactions

Ensure that all cheques are signed by 2 out of 3 nominated signatories

Pay all bills and expenses that are approved by the committee

Lodge money into appropriate a/c

Inform the committee of its financial position at every meeting

Further Reference

'A guide to Good Employment Practice in the Community & Voluntary Sector' by Jane Clarke (Combat Poverty Agency, 2002) Available from the Combat Poverty Agency at (01) 6706746. It can also be downloaded at www.pobal.ie – childcare publications section.

'Managing Better Series' by Jane Clarke (CPA, 1996) Available from the Combat Poverty Agency at (01) 6706746

A large, light green, stylized human figure is positioned on the left side of the page. The figure is composed of simple, rounded shapes: a circle for the head, a larger shape for the torso, and two arms extending upwards and outwards. The figure is semi-transparent, allowing the text to be seen through it.

policy & procedure

Policies and Procedures

A Policies and Procedures manual will provide important information to your staff and parents of the children in your care on how the service works, what is acceptable and what is not – how you will respond to various situations and what roles all those involved will perform. A carefully thought out Policies and Procedures manual will contribute greatly to the quality of the service you provide and is vital to the efficient running of your business.

It is important to consult with parents and staff in the development of your Policies and Procedures and to ensure that Policies and Procedures are implemented and reviewed regularly.

Policy

A policy is a statement of agreed beliefs proposed/ adopted by the organisation/ individual on a range of topics related to the childcare service provided.

Procedure

A procedure is a course of action being adopted / implemented by a service. It details the action to be taken to address the stated policy. It facilitates decision-making, provides consistency and autonomy and helps ensure that the service is managed effectively.

The following is a sample of Policies and Procedures you could include in your manual.

Management, Finance & Administration

- Mission Statement
- Aims & Objectives
- Range of Services
- Admissions
- Fee Structure
- Opening Hours
- Record Keeping
- Financial Management & Accountability.

Health & Safety

Fire Prevention
Administration of Medicines
Hygiene
Outings
Security
Exclusion
Nutrition
Child Protection
Health & Safety Statement

Childcare Related Policies

Positive Behavioural Management
Equal Opportunities
Child Development
Daily Routine
Timetables
Greetings & Departures
Small & Large Group Circle Time
Adult-Child Interaction
Outside Time
Curriculum
Dealing with an Emergency
Medicine Administration
How to Cover Ratios in Event of Staff Absence

Parents

Parental Involvement
Home Links & Contact
Suggestions & Complaints
Community Links
Setting In

Employment Related

Grievance & Discipline Procedure
Bullying and Sexual Harassment Policy,
Recruitment & Selection Procedures
Support & Supervision
Leave Entitlements
Induction
Staff Management
Training

(Please note that the above is not a comprehensive list of Policies and Procedures, merely a set of some examples, which could be included in your Policies and Procedures manual.)

Further Reference

'A Guide to Policies & Procedures in the Childcare Setting' by ADM Ltd. You can also download this publication by visiting the childcare section of www.pobal.ie

Galway City & County Childcare Committee have produced a very comprehensive guideline to developing 'Recruitment & Selection and general Policies and Procedures'. Packs are available by contacting them on 091-752039.

(In addition the NCNA run short courses in developing Policies and Procedures.

Tel: (01) 4601138)

Quality

The importance of high quality practices to children's development and learning in childcare services is well established. It is equally important to reflect on the fact that the poor quality provision may be detrimental to children and even put them at risk.

To support the childcare sector towards the improvement and enrichment of young children's early life experiences, The Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education has produced Síolta, the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education 2006. The pack is made up of an introductory handbook, four manuals and a CD ROM focusing on

- Full and part-time daycare
- Sessional services
- Infant Classes
- Childminding

The content of each manual includes principles, standards, Components of Quality and Signposts for Reflection

The Ultimate objective of these materials is to promote a holistic approach to quality provision and practice.

Resources can be obtained from contacting Síolta direct, see contacts section.

There is no single definition of quality for the variety of childcare settings. Rather, it is about having a set of core principles that will meet the particular needs of your service. Therefore identifying those needs and deriving the appropriate criteria for your service is the only basis for achieving quality practices. The criteria should be dynamic and subject to ongoing review and evaluation. Geraldine Pugh has listed the following indicators of Quality in childcare services:

Physical Environment	Clear Aims & Objectives
Effective Management Structure	An Equal Opportunities Policy That Promotes Understanding Of Cultural And
Physical Diversity	Good Staff – Parent Relations
Good Record Keeping	Quality Curriculum
Well Trained Staff	Continuity Of Care Through A Key Worker System

(Taken from Barnardos' Supporting Quality – Guidelines for the Best Practice in Early Childhood Services by Geraldine French 2000)

Further Reference

'Quality – A Discussion Paper A Conference Paper ' by IPPA, The Early Childhood Organisation

'Towards Quality Day-care – Minimum Quality Standards in a Nursery', Mary Byrne, Angela Canavan, Maria Egan-Cowman NCNA (2003)

'Quality Childcare & Lifelong Learning' by Dept. of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (2002)



useful contacts

Useful Contact Details

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Childcare Committee

5A Woodpark,

Sallynoggin

Co. Dublin

Tel: (01) 2368030

Fax: (01) 2368012

Email: info@dlrcountychildcare.ie

Web: www.dlrcountychildcare.ie

(Much of the Further Reference mentioned in this Guideline Document is available in our Resource Room)

Childcare organisations

The National Children's Nurseries Association

Unit 12c, Bluebell Business Park

Old Naas Road, Bluebell

Dublin 12

Tel: (01) 4601138

Fax: (01) 4601185

Email: info@ncna.net

Web: www.ncna.net

Childminding Ireland

9 Bulford Business Campus

Kilcoole

Co. Wicklow

Tel: (01) 287 8466

Email: info@childminding.ie

Web: www.childminding.ie

Irish Steiner Waldorf

Cappaduff

Mountshannon

Co. Clare

Tel: (061) 927257

Email: isweca@eircom.net

IPPA

Unit 4, Broomhill Business Complex

Broomhill Road, Tallaght

Dublin 24

Tel: (01) 4630020

Fax: (01) 4601185

Email: info@ippa.ie

Web: www.ippa.ie

High/Scope Ireland

C/o NIPPA,

6c Wildflower Way

Apollo Road,

Belfast BT12 6TA.

Tel/Fax: (028) 9066 2825

Email: highscope@nipppa.org

Katherine Howard Foundation

ISFC, 10 Grattan Crescent,

Inchicore,

Dublin 8

Tel: (01) 400 2107

Fax: (01) 453 1862

Email: info@khf.ie

Web: www.khf.ie

Forbairt Naíonraí Teo

7 Cearnóg Mhuirfean
Baile Atha Cliath
Tel: (01) 6398440
Fax: (01) 6398401
Email: comhchoiste@eircom.net

St. Nicholas Montessori

16 Adelaide Street,
Dún Laoghaire,
Co. Dublin.
Tel: (01) 2806064
Email: snmci@snmci.ie
Web: www.snmci.ie

Business Related

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Enterprise Board

Nutgrove Enterprise Park,
Nutgrove Way,
Rathfarnham, Dublin 14
Tel: (01) 4948400
Fax: (01) 4948410
Email: info@dlrced.ie

Companies Registration Office

Parnell House,
14 Parnell Square,
Dublin 1
Tel: 1890 220 226
Email: info@cro.ie
Web: www.cro.ie

Revenue Commissioners

Lansdowne House,
Lansdowne Road,
Dublin 4.
Tel: (01) 6329400
Email: dublinregoff@revenue.ie
Web: www.revenue.ie

Employment legislation information

Booklets can be obtained from:

Dept. of Enterprise, Trade & Employment

Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
Tel: (01) 6312121
Fax: (01) 6312827
Web: www.entemp.ie

Pre-School Services

Health Services Executive

Pre School Services
Loughlinstown Health Centre
Loughlinstown Drive
Co. Dublin
Tel: (01) 2822122

Health Services Executive

Pre School Services,
34/35 Marrowbone Lane
The Maltings Business Park
Dublin 8
Tel: (01) 4544733

Local Development Agencies

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council

Town Hall,
Marine Road,
Dun Laoghaire,
Co. Dublin.
Tel: (01) 2054700
Web: www.dlrcoco.ie

Southside Partnership

The Old Post Office,
7 Rock Hill,
Main Street,
Blackrock,,
Co. Dublin
Tel: (01) 2090610
Fax: (01) 2755729
Email: info@sspship.ie
Web: www.southsidepartnership.ie

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Enterprise Board

Nutgrove Enterprise Park,
Nutgrove Way,
Rathfarnham,
Dublin 14.
Tel: (01) 494 8400
Fax: (01) 494 8410
E-Mail: info@dlrceb.ie
Web: www.dlrceb.ie

Sources of Childcare Training

The National Children's Nurseries Association

Unit 12c, Bluebell Business Park
Old Naas Road,
Dublin 12
Tel: (01) 4601138
Fax: (01) 4601185
Email: info@ncna.net
Web: www.ncna.net

FAS Training Centre

FÁS Loughlinstown Training Ctr
Wyattville Road,
Loughlinstown,
Co. Dublin
Tel: (01) 2043600
Fax: (01) 2821168
Email: ccrecruit@fas.ie
Web: www.fas.ie

St. Nicholas Montessori

16 Adelaide Street,
Dún Laoghaire,
Co. Dublin.
Tel: (01) 2806064
Email: snmci@snmci.ie
Web: www.snmci.ie

County Dublin Vocational Education Committee (VEC)

No.1 Tuansgate,
Belgard Square East,
Tallaght,
Dublin 24
Tel: (01) 4529600
Fax: (01) 4515196
Email: website@codubvec.ie
Web: www.codubvec.ie

National Agencies

Pobal

Holbrook House
Hollis Street, Dublin 2.
Tel: (01) 2400700
Fax: (01) 6610411
Email: enquiries@adm.ie
Web: www.adm.ie

Barnardos National Office

Christchurch Square,
Dublin 8.
Tel: (01) 4530355
Fax: (01) 4530300
Email: info@barnardos.ie
Web: www.barnardos.ie

National Children's Resource Centre,

Barnardos,
Christchurch Square,
Dublin 8.
Tel: (01) 4549699
Fax: (01) 4530300
Email: ncrc@barnardos.ie
Web: www.barnardos.ie

Health & Safety Authority

10 Hogan Place,
Dublin 2.
Tel: (01) 6147000
Fax: (01) 6147020
Web: www.has.ie

The Department of Health & Children

Hawkins House,
Hawkins Street,
Dublin 2
Tel: 1890209030

Central Statistics Office

Skehard Road,
Cork,
Tel: LoCall: 1890 313 414
Fax: (021) 4535555
Web: www.cso.ie

Combat Poverty Agency

Bridgewater Centre,
Conyngham Road,
Islandbridge,
Dublin 8.
Email: info@cpa.ie
Web: www.cpa.ie

Citizens Information Board

7th Floor,
Hume House
Ballsbridge, Dublin 4.
Tel: (01) 6059000
Fax: (01) 6059099
Web www.citizensinformationboard.ie

Chief Fire Officer

Dublin Fire Brigade HQ,
Townsend Street, Dublin 2
Tel: (01) 6734100
Fax: (01) 6734085

Garda Central Vetting Office

Race Course Road
Thurles,
Co Tipperary.
Tel: (01) 6660000

Office of the Minister for Children

Childcare Directorate
3rd Floor,
Joyce House,
Lombard Street,
Dublin 2.
Tel: 1890209030
Web: www.omc.gov.ie

Centre for Early Childhood Development & Education CCEDCE

Gate Lodge, St Patrick's College,
Drumcondra, Dublin 9
Tel: (01) 8842110
Fax: (01) 8842111
Email: early.childhood@spd.dcu.ie
Web: www.cecde.ie

Síolta - The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education

Web: www.siolta.ie

Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC)

20 Molesworth Street,
Dublin 2
Tel: (01) 679 4944
Web: www.ispcc.ie

Children's Rights Alliance

4 Upper Mount Street,
Dublin 2
Tel: (01) 6629400
Fax: (01) 6629355
Email: info@childrensrights.ie
Web: www.childrensrights.ie

Disclaimer

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www.dlrcountychildcare.ie

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