

## Acknowledgements

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An extensive range of publications and website information have been vital to the production of this pack - please see Bibliography

Disclaimer: every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this publication is accurate and up to date. Clare County Childcare Committee can accept no responsibility for any loss or distress occasioned to any person acting or refraining from acting as a result of material in this publication.

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## Section One: Introduction

### Introduction to this Pack

Providing a private or community based childcare service can be a challenging but also an exciting and rewarding experience. This type of service allows the opportunity to have a positive influence on the lives of children and their families and the community in general. Early childhood is a significant and unique time in the life of every individual. This manual aims to assist those interested in pursuing the journey of setting up a childcare service.

The Clare County Childcare Committee based in Ennis is committed to providing helpful, comprehensive and current best practice information on all forms of childcare within Clare. The Committee's main purpose is to assist in the co-ordination of childcare, both locally and nationally and to assist in the prioritisation of funding. The key aims include to develop a co-ordinated approach to childcare provision in the County and to increase the supply of childcare services and facilities. The guiding principles underpinning the County Childcare Strategy are the following:

- The needs and rights of children
- Equal opportunities and equality of access and participation
- Diversity
- Partnership
- Quality

### Is Running a Childcare Service for you?

It may be useful to consider the following questions when making the decision to set up a childcare service as an individual/voluntary management committee (not all of the questions below will need to be considered by a management committee as they may not be directly working with the children):

- What are your reasons for setting up a childcare service?
- Is there a need for this service in your area?
- Are you aware of the legal requirements involved in setting up a childcare service?
- Are you aware of available supports in assisting you to set up a childcare service?
- Have you knowledge and understanding of holistic child development and the way young children learn?
- Have you or your management committee visited any services in your county, to meet with providers to learn from their experiences and suggestions?
- Are you suited to this kind of work?
- Do you enjoy spending time with young children?
- Have you experience of working with young children?
- Have you a training qualification in childcare?
- What skills/expertise do you or your management committee have for managing a service, recruiting and employing staff, developing policies and procedures?
- Will you take on the management role and also work directly with children in your service?



## Section Two: Research

It is advisable that sufficient time is allocated for research prior to setting up a childcare service, taking into account your own/management committee's capacity, local needs, available supports, relevant funding and statutory requirements. It is also recommended prior to making any definite plans that you become familiar with the Child Care (Pre-school Services) Regulations 2006 and the Childcare (Amendment) Act 2007<sup>1</sup> (regarding school age services) as they will influence the planning of your service.

The following areas are recommended for consideration at the research stage:

### Choosing the Type of Childcare

Careful thought will need to be given as to what type of childcare your service will be offering and it may be useful at this stage to arrange visits to services similar to what you plan to provide.

According to the **Child Care (Pre-School Services) (No 2) Regulations 2006, Child Care (Pre-School Services) (No 2) (Amendment) Regulations 2006 and the Childcare (Amendment) Act 2007** providers of the following services for children up to the age of 6 years<sup>2</sup>, are required to notify, in writing, the Health Service Executive (HSE), prior to the service commencing:

#### 1. Sessional Services

'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 pre-schools, playgroups, crèches, Montessori pre-schools, Naíonraí, notifiable childminders or similar services, which generally cater for children in 0-6 years age bracket.

#### 2. Part-time Day Care

'Part-time day care' service means a pre-school service 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 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.

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1 At the time of printing of this publication the Childcare (Amendment) Act 2007 had only recently been passed and Regulations were not yet available for school age services.

2 At the time of printing this publication the age category to which 'school age services' refers to were not available. Please consult with the Health Service Executive for further details.

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

### **3. Full- Day Care**

'Full-day care service' means a pre-school service 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.

### **4. Childminders**

'Childminding service' means a pre-school service, which may include an overnight service offered by a person who single-handedly takes care of pre-school children, including the childminders own children, in the childminder's home for a total of more than 2 hours per day, except where the exemptions provided in Section 58 of the Child Care Act 1991 apply.<sup>3</sup>

- This service is offered for the full working day or for different periods during the day.
- If caring for 4 or more children a childminder must notify the Health Service Executive.
- If caring for 3 children or less they can notify the HSE in a voluntary capacity - contact the Childminding Advisory Officer in the HSE or Clare County Childcare Committee to avail of the voluntary notification and support system.
- A single-handed Childminder should look after no more than 5 pre-school children.
- No more than 2 children should be less than 15 months old. *Exemptions in relation to this can be made for multiple births or siblings.*
- On the commencement of the Child Care (Pre-School Services) (No 2) Regulations 2006, if a childminder is minding 6 pre-school children including their own, the childminder will not be required to reduce the numbers to 5 until such time as one of the children leaves the service.

### **5. Pre-school service in a Drop-in Centre and in a temporary Drop-in Centre**

'Pre-school service in a drop-in centre' means a pre-school service offering day care, which is used exclusively on an intermittent basis. 'Pre-school service in a temporary drop-in centre' means a pre-school service offering day care exclusively on a temporary basis. A pre-school service in a drop-in centre refers to a service where a pre-school child is cared for over a period of not more than two hours while the parent or guardian is availing of a

<sup>3</sup> Exemptions from provisions of this Part. **58.**—For the avoidance of doubt it is hereby declared that the provisions of this Part shall not apply to—( *a* ) the care of one or more pre-school children undertaken by a relative of the child or children or the spouse of such relative, ( *b* ) a person taking care of one or more pre-school children of the same family and no other such children (other than that person's own such children) in that person's home, ( *c* ) a person taking care of not more than 3 pre-school children of different families (other than that person's own such children) in that person's home.

service or attending an event. Such services are mainly located in shopping centres, leisure centres or other establishments as part of customer/client service.

A pre-school service in a temporary drop-in centre refers to a service where a parent or guardian is attending a once-off event such as a conference or a sports event. Advice should be sought at an early stage from the Health Service Executive by persons/organisations intending to set up such a service.

## **6. Over Night Pre-School Services**

'Overnight pre-school 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. Overnight services where children are cared for overnight in a crèche type or in a childminding service facilitate parents or guardians working arrangements.

## **7. School Age Childcare**

Under the Childcare (Amendment) Act 2007 providers of school age services must also notify the HSE. 'School age service' means

- (a) a childcare service provided on a regular basis for children (or a class of children) who attend
  - (i) a school or
  - (ii) an establishment which provides an educational programme similar to that provided by a school
- (b) provided outside of normal school hours, and
- (c) the basis of access to which is made publicly known to the parents and guardians of children referred to in paragraph (a)

'School age child' means a child that who is attending a school age service. 'School' means an establishment, which provides primary education, early childhood education or both to its students.

At the time of printing of this publication the Childcare (Amendment) Act 2007 had only recently been passed and details of the age category to which 'school age services' refers to and Regulations were not yet available. Please consult with the Health Service Executive for further details.

## Carrying out a Needs Analysis

The following are some ideas on how to carry out a Needs Analysis in order to establish the type of childcare most needed in your area (and surrounding areas) and how to go about obtaining that information.

Some ideas on gathering information:

### Identify type of childcare most needed:

- Compile a questionnaire for families asking, for example;
  - Are they currently using a childcare service? If not what are the reasons for this?
  - What type of childcare would best suit their needs now or in the future?
  - How many days a week and what opening hours would best suit their needs?
- Circulate the questionnaire to families living in the area and surrounding areas in different types of accommodation e.g. housing estates, hostels, apartments, halting sites and one off houses.
- Following the collection of questionnaires, arrange a meeting with families if further discussion is required regarding their childcare needs and what your service needs to offer.
- Check the parish register for births, and local primary schools for enrolments.
- Visit other childcare providers in the area – do they have long waiting lists? Would you be duplicating an already existing service or causing a service to close down?
- Seek information regarding the needs of any minority groups (including Travellers) in your area. Consult with community and voluntary groups that have a particular remit for target groups e.g. Clarecare, Respond Housing Association, Community Development Projects and Family Resource Centres.

### Identify the profile of population in the area and level of growth:

- Speak with local developers re scale of developments and profile of buyers.
- Refer to the National Census 2006 to see figures for the breakdown of age, and population growth in the area and surrounding areas, refer to in-migration figures if relevant – Contact the Central Statistics Office Tel: 021 4535000, Website: [www.cso.ie](http://www.cso.ie)
- Seek information as to whether the proposed location of the service is in a RAPID, or CLÁR area or falls under DEIS or DES<sup>4</sup>
- Speak with Clare County Childcare Committee to find out about other childcare provision, existing percentage coverage by age group and levels of disadvantage in the area and surrounding areas.

<sup>4</sup> **RAPID** – Revitalise Areas by Planning Investment and Development is a focused initiative by the government to target the most concentrated areas of disadvantage in the country. **DEIS** – Delivering Equality of Opportunity In Schools. Department of Education and Science and Office of Minister for Children, key objective is to meet the educational needs of children (including pre-school) and young people in disadvantaged communities. **DES** – Department of Education and Science, initiatives to tackle educational disadvantage. **CLÁR** - (Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais) is a targeted investment programme in rural areas. **CLÁR** complements both the RAPID programme for disadvantaged urban areas and RAPID 11, the programme for provincial towns.

- Speak with the Planning Section in Clare County Council.
- Speak with the Public Health Nurse about births in the area.
- Source information from 'The People of Clare 1991-2002, A Community in Transition', which gives a 10 year profile of County Clare (County Development Board – www.clarecdb.ie)

#### **Identify local employment and industry:**

- Identify any new businesses in your area.
- Contact local employers re employee's childcare needs.

#### **Identify local services**

- Identify proximity to public transport and other local services (more applicable in urban areas as opposed to some rural areas in Clare).

#### **Identify trends in Clare as a whole**

- For example, research for the Clare County Childcare Committee Strategy showed that Central Statistics Office figures indicate that 80% of fixed place jobs are concentrated within 15% of the county landmass (in the Shannon and Ennis areas). Therefore you may need to consider how far people may travel for a childcare service and access from main transport routes/corridor roads to your service.
- Consult with the Clare County Childcare Committee re their most recent Strategy.

### **Complying with Statutory Requirements**

Consultation with the following bodies at the research stage is recommended:

- Health Service Executive – Pre-School Inspection and Information Officers
- Clare County Council – Planning Officer
- Fire Officer – Central Fire Station

#### **Child Care (Pre-School Services) (No 2) Regulations 2006 and Child Care (Pre-School Services) (No 2) (Amendment) Regulations 2006**

It is advisable to arrange a meeting with your local Pre-School Inspector to discuss the Pre-school regulations in the planning stage of your service.

The Pre-school Regulations will cover the following areas:

- Premises and facilities
- Adult and child ratios
- Notice and notification requirements
- Safety measures
- Behaviour Management

- Management and Staffing
- Child Protection
- Insurance
- Records
- Health, welfare and development of the child

The following **Adult/Child Ratios** and **Floor Area per Child** are recommended in the Explanatory Guide to requirements and procedures for notification for the Child Care (Pre-School Services) 2006 Regulations:

### Sessional Services

Age Range	Adult/Child Ratio	Floor Area per Child (Clear Floor Space)
0-1 year	1:3	0-6 years – 2sq. metres
1-2.5 years	1:5	
2.5 –6 years	1:10	

The maximum number of children to be catered for in one room in a sessional group is 20, subject to area/space.

### Part-time Day Care Service

Age Range	Adult/Child Ratio	Floor Area per Child (Clear Floor Space)
0-1 year	1:3	3.5 sq. metres
1-2 years	1:5	2.8 sq. metres
2-3 years	1:6	2.35 sq. metres
3-6 years	1:8	2.3 sq. metres

### Full Day Care Service

Age Range	Adult/Child Ratio	Floor Area per Child (Clear Floor Space)
0-1 year	1:3	3.5 sq. metres
1-2 years	1:5	2.8 sq. metres
2-3 years	1:6	2.35 sq. metres
3-6 years	1:8	2.3 sq. metres

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, as appropriate.

## Childminding

Age Range	Adult/Child Ratio	Floor Area per Child (Clear Floor Space)
All ages will be integrated in a childminding service.	1:5 – no more than two children under 15 months (exceptions multiple births/siblings)  1:6 - On the commencement of the Child Care (Pre-School Services) (No 2) Regulations 2006, if minding 6 pre-school children including their own, the childminder will not be required to reduce the numbers to 5 until such time as one of the children leaves the service.	Not applicable

A childminder should have access to a telephone and a second person must be available in case of emergencies.

### Pre-school service in a Drop-in Centre and in a temporary Drop-in Centre

Age Range	Adult/Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size	Floor Area per Child (Clear Floor Space)
Full age integration 0-6years	1:4	24	2sq.metres (permanent centre)

1-4 children (No more than 2 children < 15 months) = 1 adult

### Over Night Pre-School Services

Age Range	Adult/Child Ratio
0-1 years	1:3
1-6 years	1:5

### Important to Note:

**Volunteers and students** are not included when calculating ratios. Exceptions may be made in a sessional service that operates a rota system for parents to meet the second adult requirement or to cover an emergency staff shortage situation.

**Floor area per child** measurements refers to clear floor space. Clear floor space means the area available for children's work, play and movement and should not include furniture, surplus to the requirements of the child, or permanent fixtures. Extraneous areas such as kitchens, toilets, sleeping and other ancillary areas are deemed to be separate. The overall space should be considered when calculating child space requirements in the service. Overcrowding in any one area should be avoided.

**Second adult:** A competent and suitable adult must be available to cope with emergencies.

**Interaction of mixed age groups:** It is recommended that adult/child ratios for full day care, part-time and sessional services should be applied in a flexible manner so as to allow a child to be in a group with younger or older children, if this is appropriate to the child's developmental stage. The application of adult/child ratios should insofar as it is practical and safe to do so, facilitate sibling interaction and mixed age groups.

### **Training in Childcare and Childminding**

There are no minimum standards for training and qualifications of staff in the 2006 Pre-School Services Regulations. However, in the explanatory guide it is stated that in a centre-based service, the person in charge should aim to have at least 50% of childcare staff with a qualification appropriate to the care and development of children.

### **Contact Details for Clare Pre-school Inspection and Information Services:**

Health Service Executive  
River House  
Gort Road  
Ennis  
Tel: 065 6863902

### **Fire Services Act 1981 and Building Regulations 1997- 2002**

The Department of the Environment and Local Government have produced a guide on "Fire safety in Pre-schools" to assist persons in meeting their statutory fire safety responsibilities under the Fire Services Act 1981. The guide refers to existing Buildings.

To purchase this guide, contact:  
Government Publications Office  
Tel: 01 6613311 Extension 4040  
Website: [www.enviro.ie](http://www.enviro.ie)

A Fire Safety Certificate is granted by the Building Control Authority. It certifies that the building or works, constructed in accordance with the plans, documents and information submitted to the building control authority, is in compliance with the requirements of Part B of the Second Schedule to the Building Regulations, 1997-2002.

With the exception of houses and certain agricultural buildings, a Fire Safety Certificate is required for

- All new buildings
- Specified material alterations
- Specified extensions
- The material change of use of a building

A Fire Safety Certificate must be obtained before work starts.

Before you begin any work or make a material change of use, you should apply to the local Building Control Authority for a Fire Safety Certificate.

Contact Details:

Fire Officer  
Building Control Authority  
Central Fire Station  
Ennis  
Clare

Tel: (065) 6846302

Email: [fireoff@clarecoco.ie](mailto:fireoff@clarecoco.ie)

Website: [www.clare.ie](http://www.clare.ie)

For Childminders who do not require a Fire Safety Certificate it is still advisable to arrange a visit from your local Fire Officer/local Professional Fire Safety Expert.

### **Planning Permission**

Proposals for new buildings, and renovations or extensions of existing buildings must comply with current statutory requirements.

- It is advised that a pre-planning meeting is arranged with the Planning Officer in Clare County Council.
- Consulting with an architect at the research stage is recommended – you will require a full set of architect's plans for planning application.
- Planning is not required for the use of a house for childminding (caring for no more than 5 children). It is important to note that building regulations are constantly being revised.
- Childminders are also exempt from the "Change of Use" Requirement, and have been since 2002.

The Building Regulations 1997-2006 have 12 sections including a section (Part M) governing Access and Use of a building which states: "Adequate provision shall be made to enable people with disabilities to safely and independently access and use a building":

- Part M applies to all new public buildings, common areas of apartment blocks, houses that received planning permission after the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2001 and material alterations, for example change of use to existing buildings, since June 1992.
- If an extension is added to an existing dwelling, Part M will only apply if this extension creates a new dwelling with separate access.

For further reading on Accessibility:

- Disability Equality Specialist Support Agency (DESSA), (2005), “Access Inside Out: A Guide to Making Community Facilities Accessible”, DESSA, Dublin.
- Irish Wheelchair Association (2004), “Access for All, A guide to creating a barrier free built environment for people with physical or sensory disabilities”, Dublin.
- National Disability Authority, (2002) “Buildings for Everyone”. These guidelines are currently out of print, however you can download different versions of the guidelines at [www.nda.ie](http://www.nda.ie)

Guidelines have been developed to support those interested in planning, designing and building childcare facilities:

- **A Resource Pack to Support Best Practice in the Design of Childcare Facilities** was launched by POBAL in June 2007 and copies are available from Clare County Childcare Committee (available Winter 2007).
- The National Children’s Nurseries Association under the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme produced **Guidelines for Best Practice in the Design of Childcare Facilities**, 2002.
- Planning and Development Act 2000, **Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2001**, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government - to guide both local authorities, developers and childcare providers in the development of plans, assessing applications and the formulation of development proposals (Do not cover childminding). These guidelines encourage the location of childcare services in appropriate locations.

In establishing a childcare service you may be liable for County Council Commercial Rates –details can be obtained from Clare County Council.

## Health and Safety

Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, employers and the self-employed have duties including the following:

- To provide a safe place and system of work for their staff. In the case of childcare, the employer’s duties extend to include children, their families, visitors and suppliers etc.

- To demonstrate that they are managing and controlling health and safety in their work place by putting policies and procedures and systems in place and reviewing them when required.
- To draw up a written Risk Assessment – identifying potential hazards, assessing the risks and implementation of necessary precautions.
- To provide training on health and safety issues to all staff in a form, manner and language that will be understood by all.
- To provide appropriate personal protective equipment such as gloves.
- To allow for the election of a Safety Representative.
- To appoint a Safety Officer.
- To provide and maintain welfare facilities for employees.
- To report accidents to Health and Safety Authority as required (cannot perform their normal work for more than 3 consecutive days, not including the day of the accident).
- To prevent improper conduct or behaviour.

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 also requires that the employer has a written Safety Statement – outlining how the safety, health and welfare of employees (and children, their families and visitors) will be secured and managed.

For more information on Health and Safety in Childcare, please read, Barnardo's and Border Counties Network publication, "Health and Safety in Childcare: A Guide for Centre Based Services" (2006).

#### **Other Legislation and Statutory requirements to be aware of at the research stage:**

- Equal Status Act 2000 and 2004, Equality Act 2004
- Health and Safety and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998
- Food Hygiene Regulations 1950/1989
- European Communities (Hygiene of foodstuffs) Regulations 2006
- Infectious Diseases Regulations 1981
- Protection of Persons Reporting Abuse Act 1998
- E.C. (Quality of water intended for Human consumption) Regulations, 1988
- Childcare Act 1991
- Children's Act 2001
- Childcare (Amendment) Act 2007
- Tobacco Act 2002/2004

#### **Sourcing Available Supports**

For information on the role of Clare County Childcare Committee in supporting the set up of childcare services please see the section on Grant Aid. The Committee may also be contacted for information and advice regarding childcare; and may also have information about **local childcare networks** in your area, which can be extremely useful for information and advice, learning and support.

## **The National Voluntary Childcare Collaborative (NVCC's)**

The National Voluntary Childcare Collaborative currently comprises 8 National non governmental organisations in Ireland which work with children, each with a special interest and expertise in childcare and early learning for children.

The NVCC organisations are:

- Barnardos
- Childminding Ireland
- Children in Hospital Ireland
- Forbairt Naíonraí Teo
- IPPA, the Early Childhood Organisation
- Irish Steiner Waldorf Early Childhood Association (ISWECA)
- National Children's Nurseries Association
- St. Nicholas Montessori Society of Ireland

Set up in 1999, the NVCC brings together the diverse range of expertise of these organisations to work towards the development of excellence in childcare services in Ireland. For further information please view: [www.nvcc.ie](http://www.nvcc.ie) or contact:

### **NVCC,**

C/o IPPA, The Early Childhood Organisation,

Unit 4,

Broomhill Business Complex,

Broomhill Road,

Tallaght, D 24.

Tel: 01 4630031 or 01 4630010

Fax: 01 4630045

email: [cheadon@ippa.ie](mailto:cheadon@ippa.ie)

### **Clare County Enterprise Board**

It may also be useful for those seeking advice on the business element of their proposed service to link in with Clare County Enterprise Board.

Clare County Enterprise Board is one of 35 Enterprise Boards established by the Government in 1993 with the principal aim being the promotion and development of the small and medium enterprise sector of the county.

The Board is now rightly recognised as a leader in the provision of business advice,

counselling, mentoring, business skills and management development programmes having provided training to over 4,500 people in the small business sector. The Board under the National Development Plan 2007-2013 ensures to provide a quality service for up-skilling, meeting I.T. requirements, provision of enhanced training and developing strategies to assist the marginalised and socially excluded.

Clare County Enterprise Board has recognised that access to professional business training and advice can be difficult and expensive for small businesses. It therefore provides specially designed courses and workshops in business and Management skills at a subsidised rate.

For information on Grants available through CCEB see Grant Aid section.

**Contact Details**

Clare CEB  
Enterprise House  
Mill Road  
Ennis

Tel: (065) 6841922; Fax: (065) 6841887; E-mail (reception): [clareceb@clareceb.ie](mailto:clareceb@clareceb.ie)

**Training Co-ordinator:** Lucy Reidy; Email: [leidy@clareceb.ie](mailto:leidy@clareceb.ie)

## Section Three: Managing a Childcare Service

In taking on the role of managing a childcare service as an individual or in the case of a voluntary management committee for a community service, you may need to consider if you or the members of your committee have skills/expertise in the following areas:

- Leadership
- Communication with children and adults
- Planning
- Record keeping
- Accounting
- Policy development and review
- Team management
- Conflict resolution
- Behaviour management
- Negotiation
- Observation
- Supervision

Knowledge of the following areas will also be required:

- Statutory requirements for childcare services
- Financial requirements in running a business
- Legislation relevant to recruiting and employing staff
- National Children's Strategy
- Rights of the Child and Equality Legislation in Ireland
- Child Protection
- Child centred approach to working with young children
- Programme activities/curriculum in early childhood care and education
- Quality in early childhood care and education
- Childcare training and the National Framework of Qualifications
- Health and Safety

Having carried out the necessary research; carrying out a needs analysis, visiting other services, deciding on the type of childcare, consulting with the relevant bodies re statutory requirements, reflecting on your/committees expertise and having sourced any available supports, the next step of your journey will involve developing a Business Plan.

## **Section Four: Developing A Business Plan**

### **What is a Business Plan?**

A Business Plan is the Why's and How's of your proposed service. Your plan will act as a guide as to how your service will operate and informs others of how you plan to succeed.

In order for your plan to be reflective of your proposed new service you must begin by exploring all aspects of the service e.g. client need, research, marketing, finance etc.

### **Why do you need a Business Plan?**

Developing a Business Plan can be very beneficial when exploring the prospect of setting up a childcare service, as it will highlight for you if your service will be viable – feasible from an economic standpoint. It will also be an important document, which will be required for the purposes of approaching lending institutes to secure additional funding. Therefore whether your business is a private or community based venture a Business Plan will be of benefit either way.

### **The Contents of a Business Plan**

Your Business Plan will need to include the following information:

- Why you are setting up the service
- How the service will operate
- Marketing of the service
- Legal Structure

### **Why you are setting up this service**

This section should outline the type of childcare service proposed based on the information gathered in your Needs Analysis (See section on Carrying out a Needs Analysis). Therefore, the reason for this service being set up should be very clear in this section. The aim and objectives of your service should also be stated.

### **How your service will operate**

This section needs to outline how the service will actually operate and should include the following:

- Set up Costs – start up budget
- Operating Costs – ongoing budget

- Income and expenditure – how will the service be viable /feasible from an economic standpoint.
- Contingency plan – identify the areas of risk to the successful operation of the service, and a contingency plan if original plan is altered in some way – e.g. decrease in numbers attending the service. Explain how risks can be reduced and debt will be repaid if service fails.

**Set up** cost could include the following areas:

- Purchase of site
- Purchase of premises
- Construction of new building
- Renovation of existing building
- Professional fees
- Fittings and Fixtures
- Materials and equipment – indoor and outdoor
- Office equipment and materials
- Kitchen equipment
- Furniture
- Insurance
- Safety Equipment
- Advertising
- Food and house keeping supplies
- Connection to utilities; e.g. water, electricity, phone

Operating Costs would need to include: **Projected Expenditure/Running Costs** such as:

- Salaries and related costs
- Rates
- Insurance
- Mortgage/Rent
- Consumables; food, cleaning products etc
- Utility Overheads
- Other Costs
- Staff training

Operating Costs would also need to include: **Projected Income** such as:

- Annual Fees Income
- Grants being received
- Other income e.g. HSE subsidised fees/ VEC/ FÁS/ Subvention Community Childcare Scheme/Clare Enterprise Board Grant - Year One.

The total yearly expenditure can be calculated by subtracting the projected expenditure from the projected income and this will demonstrate a surplus or deficit.

### **Marketing of the Service**

The proposal should outline how you plan to market your service.

This section can refer to how you plan to sell your service to families and the angle you will take to present the service as an attractive, high quality and practical option for families. Suggested angles for advertising of the service include qualified childcare staff, the environment, curriculum, a unique outdoor play area, or accessibility for children with disabilities. Other angles may be how welcoming the service is to the diverse mix of people that live in Clare in terms of family status, minority groups, and returned emigrants. It is important to note that the type of Admissions Policy your service has will affect who can access your service and to be aware of this when marketing your service e.g. if you have a waiting list, how will families that have recently moved to the area access your service? Do you have a tiered Fee Scale and what is the policy regarding this?

Identify the methods of advertising, which shall be used such as:

- Presenting to Community Groups
- Local and regional newspapers
- Radio slots or advertisements
- Posters in local businesses
- Door to Door Leaflet drops
- Leaflet in school bags
- Internet
- Email
- Notice Boards

In advertising for your service it is important to think about Parents/Guardians that may have literacy issues or a disability such as vision impairment or Parents/Guardians who have little or no English and how they can be made aware of the service. Radio slots or advertisements, presenting to community groups as well as translation of advertisements could also be an option.

A family handbook outlining the policies of the service could also be useful and may need to contain pictorial elements to increase accessibility. The option of emailing the handbook to Parents/Guardians that may need to use a Screen Reader if they have a vision impairment, could also be offered.

### **Legal Structure**

The Business Plan can also outline the legal structure of the service. There are different risks and liabilities associated with each structure:

## Sole Trader

This is a business owned and run by one person. Normal tax returns are required. A sole trader is not required to make public any information about the business.

## Committee Managed Service

A committee-managed service involves a management committee actually running the childcare service, for example, applying for funding, developing policies and procedures, ensuring all statutory requirements are followed, and therefore acting as the employer.

In order to initiate the development of a management committee, a public meeting would need to be held in order to gain as many people as possible that would be interested in joining such a committee. Representation on such a committee could include: Parents, Community Groups, National Voluntary Community Organisation, childcare worker and any other relevant people to the development of a quality childcare service. The process may begin with a steering committee and then members being voted onto the official management committee.

In order for a Committee to function effectively the following roles are required:

- Chairperson
- Secretary
- Treasurer

A Safety Officer will also need to be nominated. Various subcommittees may also be formed for functions such as Fundraising, Finance, Building, Human Resources, and Childcare (Developing policy and procedures). This will facilitate clear roles and agreed responsibilities within the group and the effective use of each person's skills, expertise and talents.

For further reading on setting up a Committee managed service please read:

Kerry County Childcare Committee's, '**Committee Handbook**'. **Contact Details:**

Kerry County Childcare Committee Ltd  
No 1 Powers Court,  
Boherbee,  
Tralee,  
Kerry.

Tel: 066 7102945, Fax: 066 7181582, Email: [info@kerrycountychildcare.com](mailto:info@kerrycountychildcare.com)

Website: [www.kerrycountychildcare.com](http://www.kerrycountychildcare.com)

## Limited Company

A limited company is a legal entity, which exists separately from its owners and from the Directors who run the service. Only the company can be sued for its obligations and can sue to enforce its rights. There are four types of limited company:

- private company limited by shares
- company limited by guarantee not having a share capital
- company limited by guarantee having a share capital
- public limited company

Many charitable and professional bodies find setting up a company limited by guarantee, not having a share capital, to be a suitable vehicle as they wish to secure the benefits of separate legal personality and of limited liability but do not require raising funds from the members. Liability of the members if a company fails depends on the type of limited company formed and whether the members are shareholders or have contributed assets.

In order to form a company the following must be submitted to the Companies Registration Office:

- Registration Fee (2007; €100 Hard copy/ €50 Electronic copy CRO disc)
- Memorandum of Association
- Articles of Association
- Form A1

**For further information contact:** Companies Registration Office, Tel: 01 8045200,  
Website: [www.cro.ie](http://www.cro.ie)

### **Co-operative**

A Co-operative is a self-governing association of people united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically controlled enterprise. Co-operatives are therefore in service to provide what their members want, and they are controlled democratically by their members (See [www.cooonline.coop](http://www.cooonline.coop) for further information). The Irish Co-operative Organisation Society (ICOS is the co-ordinating body of the co-operative movement in Ireland. It serves the co-operative movement providing financial services, policy development, member development and a number of specialised services).

#### **Contact Details:**

Irish Co-operative Organisation Society Ltd.  
84 Merrion Square  
Dublin 2  
Tel: 01 676 4783  
Fax: 01 662 4502

### **Partner in a Partnership**

Two or more people come together to form a partnership each contributing capital to the project. It is advisable to have a formal written agreement when commencing in a partnership. A Deed of Partnership sets out in a legal contract the workings of the company, and includes the profit sharing arrangements and specifications regarding resignation, retirement and death.

## **Charitable Status**

There is no legal framework for the registration of charities in Ireland. The office of the Revenue Commissioners, Charities Section maintains a database of organisations to which they have granted charitable tax exemption. In granting tax exemption the Charities Section give the body a CHY reference number. The full list of bodies granted exemption is published on the Revenue Commissioners website. All charitable organisations, if applying for tax exemption require a legal structure and a Governing Instrument. Charitable organisations mainly take one of three legal forms:

- An unincorporated association with a Constitution or Rules
- A charitable trust established by Trust Deed
- A company governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association

While there is no legislation defining what is legally charitable it is generally determined by considering whether a particular purpose comes within one of four broad categories:

- Trusts for the relief of poverty
- Trusts for the advancement of education
- Trusts for the advancement of religion
- Trusts for other purposes beneficial to the community

For further information or to download forms contact the Charities Section of the Revenue Commissioners on 067 63400/ Website: [www.revenue.ie/leaflets/faq\\_chy.pdf](http://www.revenue.ie/leaflets/faq_chy.pdf)

## Section Five:

### **The National Childcare Investment Programme (NCIP) 2006-2010**

This programme was announced by the Office of the Minister (OMC) for children on 7 December 2005, came into effect on 1 January 2006 and succeeded the existing Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme (EOCP) 2000-2006.

**The Office of the Minister for Children (OMC)** is committed to improving the lives of all children in Ireland under the National Children's Strategy and to bringing greater coherence to policy making for children. The **OMC** 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 and cross-cutting initiatives for children.

#### **County/City Childcare Committees**

All applications for funding for childcare services under the NCIP must go through the County/ City Childcare Committee.

#### **Pobal**

Pobal is a not-for-profit company with charitable status that manages programmes (including the NCIP) on behalf of the Irish Government and The European Union. Pobal's mission is to promote social inclusion, reconciliation and equality through integrated social and economic development within communities.

#### **Development of Quality Childcare to serve Local Needs**

The NCIP 2006-2010 aims to provide a proactive response to the development of quality childcare supports and services, which are grounded in an understanding of local needs.

The following services will be eligible for support based on specific conditions:

- Sessional care
- Full day care
- Part time places
- Pre-school places (Planned programme for 3-4 year olds)
- School age childcare including "wrap around" childcare places (primary level)
- Childminding

Quality, local need and value for money are the guiding principles for this funding.

## **Childcare Initiatives under National Childcare Investment Programme:**

### **National Childminding Initiative and Guidelines**

The National Childminding Initiative provides supports for childminders and for people interested in becoming childminders and is administered locally by the City and County Childcare Committees (CCCs). A first step to becoming a childminder would be to contact your local CCC to avail of their Quality Awareness Lecture Programme. On completion of this programme, childminders may avail of a capital grant of up to €630 under the Childminder Development Grant Scheme. This can be used to buy safety equipment, toys or to make minor adjustments to the childminder's home to enhance or establish the childminding service. To qualify for this grant a childminder must be formally notified or voluntary notified to the HSE, complete the quality awareness lecture programme and provide or propose to provide childminding services for at least 3 children on a part-time basis or 1 child on a full-time basis and 1 child on a part-time basis. A set of guidelines, recently launched by the OMC, will assist childminders by providing guidance for good practice in the area.

### **Parent and Toddler Group Initiative**

The Parent and Toddler Group Initiative is a strategic partnership between the OMC and the Katharine Howard Foundation (KHF) under the National Childcare Investment Programme 2006-2010. The primary purpose of the initiative is to provide grants to parent and child groups for the development of their services. It is also designed to develop a support and information strategy, in collaboration with the City and County Childcare Committees, to assist the promotion and expansion of Parent and Child Groups. This initiative also works closely with other agencies and organisations that already provide valuable ongoing support to these groups, ensuring a collaborative approach.

### **School-Age Childcare Initiative**

The report *Developing School-Age Childcare* was published in 2005 and sets out guidelines for the delivery of a quality service. It also makes recommendations for the development of school-age childcare to support the childcare needs of parents, including the use of school premises (where appropriate) as a location to develop a quality school-age childcare service. It is hoped that the publication of this report will give greater impetus to the future development of school-age childcare at local level. The 33 City and County Childcare Committees have a major role to play in advancing this new initiative.

### **Training in Childcare**

The Office of the Minister for Children is developing a strategic programme for standards and training in childcare, as part of the National Childcare Strategy. The new training programme will support the childcare infrastructure as it continues to grow and develop. The new training programme aims to increase the number of trained childcare personnel by 17,000, by the end of 2010. The OMC will work with FÁS, the VECs, the National Voluntary Childcare Organisations and the Centre for Early Childhood Care and Education (CECDE) to deliver an appropriate and effective training programme.

## Section Six: Grant Aid

### National Childcare Investment Programme (NCIP)

Grant Aid
<b>Clare County Childcare Committee:</b> Support applicants to complete the requirements for NCIP funding. Process and submit proposals to POBAL.
<b>Pobal:</b> Present proposals to the Office of Minister for Children, and if applicants are approved by OMC for grant aid Pobal supports beneficiaries with reporting procedures, financial returns, target returns and manages the administration of funding.
<b>Office Minister for Children:</b> Make final decisions on approval of Grant Aid.

### Private Sector Capital Funding (NCIP)

- Applicants may apply for grant assistance based on a demonstrated childcare need in the area.
- Applicants may apply for grant assistance towards the capital cost of developing a childcare service facility in a catchment area where there is a demonstrated childcare need (2007; €100,000 maximum for this funding – figures subject to change).
- Applications for more than one grant under this scheme may be considered, provided the subsequent childcare facilities are in different catchment areas (2007; subject to an overall ceiling of €500,000 per applicant).
- The maximum cost per place for grant purposes is subject to a benchmark for a private sector grant application (2007; €15,000 benchmark – figures subject to change). The benchmark is a maximum and should not be considered as an average cost. This shall be applied when a place is for 5 hours or greater (i.e. full-time) and half the amount where a place is for less than 5 hours (i.e. part-time or sessional).
- A minimum of 5 new places must be created.
- Project proposals must indicate the need for the service, value for money and quality in terms of the provision of a child-centred, sustainable, and well managed service.

### **Quality Related Grant Aid (NCIP) - Private Sector**

- In very exceptional cases, where no new places, or less than 5 are created, an existing service provider is unable to comply with HSE requirements without grant funding and it is considered appropriate to intervene to ensure the on-going provision of the service.
- Grant applications may be considered for funding subject to a maximum amount benchmark per full-time equivalent place (2007; benchmark of €5000 – figures subject to change).

### **Childminders (NCIP)**

- Childminders, subject to voluntary notification or compliance with childcare regulations may be considered for capital grant funding for necessary renovative work or equipment related to the service. Such applications will be subject to a maximum amount benchmark per full-time equivalent childminding place (2007; benchmark of €5000 – figures subject to change).
- A minimum of 5 new places must be created. In each case, an applicant must provide at least 25% of the total funding required for the project.

### **Community/Not-for-Profit Sector Capital Funding (NCIP)**

- Groups may apply for grant assistance based on a demonstrated childcare need in the area.
- The level of funding granted will be determined by the number of places, which the group proposes to provide.
- A general limit on the maximum grant payable per project will apply (2007; 1.2 million maximum pre project – figures subject to change).
- Capital grant applications from community/not-for-profit groups will take account of the sustainability of a project.
- A minimum of 5 new places must be created.
- Services need to be open for at least 3.5 hours (continuously) per day, 5 days per week and 46 weeks per year.
- The benchmark for the maximum cost per place for grant purposes is subject to a benchmark for community-based projects (2007; €24,000 maximum benchmark – figures subject to change). This benchmark will be applied only where a service will be provided for 3.5 hours or more per day (i.e. part-time or full-time). Places, which are provided for less than 3.5 hours per day, (i.e. sessional) will be counted as half places (2007; a maximum of €12,000 per place – figures subject to change).
- Existing places, may, exceptionally be included for the purposes of the benchmark criterion if there is evidence that places will be lost without grant funding e.g. the premises are considered unsuitable by the HSE, it is not possible to renew a lease on a premises used etc.
- Where the benchmark does not allow the grant to meet the full cost of a project,

applicants are expected to adjust their costs or find additional funding from other sources.

- Project proposals must indicate the need for the service, value for money and quality in terms of the provision of a child-centred and well managed service.
- Priority will be given to applicants with the highest focus on Social inclusion in terms of disadvantage.
- All services will be required to operate a tiered system of charges, based on parental ability to pay.

### ***Community Childcare Subvention Scheme (NCIP)***

The introduction of this Scheme meets a commitment made at the launch of the NCIP in December 2005, to bring a new scheme into effect in 2008 when the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme (EOCP) staffing grant support scheme comes to an end.

- The aim of this grant is to support community-based not for profit childcare services to enable them to provide quality childcare services at reduced rates to disadvantaged parents.
- To avail of the Scheme, community not-for-profit childcare services, in addition to providing a quality service, are required to operate an effective tiered fee system, with maximum and minimum fees set at appropriate levels.
- Services will be subvented to enable reduced fees to be charged to disadvantaged parents through a Community Childcare Subvention Grant. The subsidies are available in respect of parents who are in receipt of social welfare payments or are engaged in education, training or work experience programmes where an underlying entitlement to a social welfare payment is established, and for persons in receipt of Family Income Supplement (FIS).
- Childcare services which are deemed eligible under Part A (Quality Assessment) will be assessed for funding on the basis of the number of disadvantaged parents using their service and the type of services which their children are availing of (Part B Assessment).
- Subsidies for full-day care places will range from €80 to €30 (€110 to €60 for a child under 1 year) per week with pro rata subsidies for shorter day care services (Figures for 2007; figures subject to change).

### ***Quality related Grant Aid (NCIP) - Community / Not For Profit Sector***

- Cases will arise where the award of some grant funding may be justified to raise the quality of an existing service up to an acceptable standard, despite the fact that such aid would not create 5 new places.
- Funding may be recommended particularly if the client base of the service is such that the funds could not be raised from increased parental fees. (2007; €5,000 per

enhanced full-time equivalent place and a maximum grant of €125,000 – figures subject to place).

- If such an application also provides for up to 4 additional places, additional funding for these places may be considered (2007; subject to a maximum of €24,000 per place – figures subject to change).

### **Short Time Services - Community & Private Sectors**

Sessional playgroups which are HSE notified and similar services open for only 3 hours continuously and at least 39 weeks per year may now be considered for grant aid (2007; €5,000 per additional place, subject to a maximum of €100,000 – figures subject to change).

For current figures for benchmarks and maximum amounts for funding please contact Clare County Childcare Committee.

### **The Role of Clare County Childcare Committee – NCIP Grant Aid**

- Expression of interest (EOI) forms for the NCIP funding are now available and completed forms should be submitted to your local County/City Childcare Committee.
- Following the EOI form being submitted, a representative of the Committee will meet to discuss the proposal with the applicant.
- If the applicant is still interested they progress to completing a Project Proposal Form, which is then summarised and submitted by Clare CCC to POBAL.
- Clare CCC can make recommendations regarding Proposals through the Programme Evaluation Sub Committee (PESC), which meets (quarterly: 2007, bi-annually:2008) to review the proposals in light of the requirements of the NCIP funding.

The Office for the Minister for Children decide whether or not applicants are successful for NCIP funding and further work on a Project Development Plan is required for successful applicants at this stage.

Pobal review the Project Development Plan and if all the issues have been addressed a contract is offered to the applicant. Clare County Childcare Committee has developed a Finance Pack to assist services in fulfilling financial requirements for Pobal.

Applicants have two years from the signing of a contract to spend allocated funding. Conditions are attached to amount of funding granted, such as the length of operation of the facility in terms of years.

The facilities will also be open to verification visits from POBAL.

### **Other Sources of Funding available for Childcare Providers**

Finance for your service can be obtained from a variety of sources and by a variety of

means:

## **Clare County Enterprise Board**

### ***Feasibility Grant***

A grant to the maximum value of €5,100 (2007 figures, subject to change) or 50% of the cost of preparing a feasibility study may be awarded. Grants can be in respect of the following:

- Market research
- Negotiations with potential joint venture partners
- Selection of suitable plant and equipment
- Assessment of site and building requirements
- Sourcing of raw materials
- Preparation of costings, financial projections and business plan

Feasibility study grants are difficult to obtain and are only allocated when the Board is satisfied that the proposed study is unique and that no similar enterprise exists in Ireland.

### ***Employment Grant***

Grants up to a maximum of €7,500 (2007 figures, subject to change) in respect of an employee in a newly created job may be allocated. 50% of the grant is payable when the employee commences employment and RSI number is supplied. The remaining 50% of grant is payable when the job concerned has remained in existence for at least 6 months and evidence of income tax, PRSI deductions and payments to date being supplied. The employment grant is to stand in place of all capital grants for the same project and it is a condition of grant payment that the guarantee must not be in receipt of similar grant from any other agency.

### ***Capital Grant***

Capital grants of €75,000 maximum (2007 figures, subject to change) may be allocated to projects, which have a capital investment requirement. Grants may be up to 50% of the total cost of the provision of building and machinery. The Board will require the following documentation prior to payment of grant:

- Planning permission
- Tax certificate
- Evidence of ownership
- Evidence of payment of invoices

### ***Refundable Aid***

All grants allocated by the Board under capital grants and employment grants are

on the basis that 60% of the funds allocated will be direct grant aid and 40% will be refundable.

No repayments on the refundable element of the grant will be requested for the first two years of operation. The refundable aid will then be repaid over years 3, 4 and 5 at 3% interest rate per annum.

**Contact Details:** Clare County Enterprise Board, Enterprise House, Mill Road, Ennis, Tel: (065) 6841922, Email: [clareceb@clareceb.ie](mailto:clareceb@clareceb.ie) Website: [www.clareceb.ie](http://www.clareceb.ie)

### **Katharine Howard Foundation**

In 2006 the Grant Scheme for Parent & Toddler Groups received co-funding from the Office Minister for Children (OMC), which allowed KHF to assist 241 applicants. Arising out of this positive experience the OMC has decided to operate a grants scheme on a pilot basis for 2007. It is hoped that following on from this the County Childcare Committees will then operate the scheme directly.

**Contact Details:** ISFC, 10 Grattan Crescent, Inchicore, Dublin 8.  
Tel: 01 400 2107 Fax: 01 453 1862 Email: [info@khf.ie](mailto:info@khf.ie) Website: [www.khf.ie](http://www.khf.ie)

### **The Allen Lane Foundation**

The Allen Lane Foundation is a grant-making trust set up in 1966 by the late Sir Allen Lane, founder of Penguin Books, to support general charitable causes (awarded grants for €10,000 in the Republic of Ireland in the financial year 2005–6). The Foundation wishes to fund work which

- Will make a lasting difference to people's lives rather than simply alleviating the symptoms or current problems
- Is aimed at reducing isolation, stigma and discrimination, and
- Encourages or enables unpopular groups to share in the life of the whole community.

**Contact Details:** Grants Officer: Gill Aconley, 90 The Mount, York YO24 1AR, U.K. Tel: 0044 1904 613223 Fax: 00 44 1904 613133 Email: [info@allenlane.org.uk](mailto:info@allenlane.org.uk)

### **FÁS Community Employment (CE)**

FÁS Community Employment is an employment and training programme, which helps long-term unemployed people to re-enter the active workforce by breaking their experience of unemployment through a return to work routine. The programme assists them to enhance and develop both their technical and personal skills, which can then be used in the workplace. The CE programme is sponsored by groups wishing to benefit the local community, namely voluntary organisations and public bodies involved in not-for-profit activities. FÁS gives financial support in the form of allowances and funding to assist with the Community Employment programme, for example participant wages, supervisor grants, materials grants, and specific skills training grants.

**Contact your local FÁS Office** for further information about Community Employment: 42 Parnell Street, Ennis, Tel: 065 – 6829213, Fax: 065 - 6828502

### **National Lottery Fund**

National Lottery funding is provided via the HSE and may support childcare related activities. Childcare Services can apply for allocations from the National Lottery Fund. Applications are publicly advertised each year.

**Contact Details:** General Manager's Office, HSE, Tobartaoscain, Ennis, Clare. Tel:065 6863601, Fax: 065 6863614

### **Rural Resource Development Ltd. [RRD]**

Rural Resource Development was established in 1991 in order to make application for the **LEADER** pilot programme. The target areas supported under the new programme include: Individuals, Community Groups, Voluntary / Development Groups, Rural Business and the Natural Environment. In order to ensure maximum benefit for the county as a whole under the new initiative, RRD will design and implement the following programmes of activity: Community Development Programme, Environmental Programme, Economic and Social Development Programme.

**Contact Details:** Shannon Business Centre, Town Centre, Shannon, Co. Clare, Tel: 061 – 361144, Fax: 061 – 361954, Email: [info@rrd.ie](mailto:info@rrd.ie), Website: [www.rrd.ie](http://www.rrd.ie)

### **AIB Better Ireland Fund**

After a period of extensive research, AIB introduced the Better Ireland Programme that is committed to tackling the issue of social exclusion at an early stage and focuses its resources into key concerns affecting children in Ireland.

**Contact Details:** Better Ireland Programme Co-ordinator, AIB Brand Management, Bankcentre, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4, Ireland. Tel: 01 6414996

### **Department of Social and Family Affairs**

#### ***Extension of School Meals (Local Projects) Scheme to Preschools***

In 2004 a decision was taken to extend the School Meals Programme to nursery schools that catered for disadvantaged preschool children. The funding is being made available to community based, not for profit, groups that provide preschool education (e.g. Montessori and similar type nursery schools) for disadvantaged children. The scheme does not apply to commercial projects. The purpose of funding is to assist disadvantaged children in gaining maximum benefit from preschool educational services. **For application** go to: or to Department of Social and Family Affairs, School Meals Programme, Social Welfare Services Office, College Road Sligo.

#### **Sub-Programme 4 - Social Inclusion**

#### **Measure 3: Community Development and Family Support**

#### **Sub-Measure 2: Family Services Project**

Resources will be provided to support the provision of high quality locally based information services on the range of supports available from State agencies and the community and voluntary sector (with a particular emphasis on the services available locally) to families in need, and assist the disadvantaged in accessing these services, either through direct provision or referral.

**Contact Details:** Department of Social Community and Family Affairs, Voluntary and Community Services, Aras Mhic Dhiarmada, Store Street, Dublin 1.

Tel: 01 874 8444. Fax: 01 704 3868.

Email: [info@welfare.ie](mailto:info@welfare.ie), Website: [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie)

#### **Health Service Executive - Funding for Voluntary and Community Groups**

Section 10 of the Child Care Act, 1991 allows the HSE to provide funding to voluntary organisations and bodies to provide services of a childcare nature.

**Contact Details:** Community Development Service, HSE, River House, Gort Road, Ennis, Clare. Tel: 065 6863927, Fax: 065 6863983

#### **Clare County Council - The Assistance under the Arts Act Scheme**

This scheme is open to individual artists or organisations for specific projects or events. Assistance shall be given only in respect of activity which when held would stimulate public interest in the arts, provide knowledge, appreciation and practice of the arts or improve the standard of the arts in Clare. Charity events and activities are not eligible for assistance.

**Contact Details:** The Arts Office, County Library Head Quarters, Mill Road, Ennis, Co. Clare. Tel: 065 6846267

#### **Ennis Town Council**

Grants are advertised in Regional Newspapers annually.

#### **St Stephen's Green Trust**

St. Stephen's Green Trust is a grant-giving organisation, which supports organisations working in Ireland to improve the lives of people who are affected by poverty/disadvantage and social exclusion. The Trust was set up in 1992 by a Dutch philanthropic family, which operates worldwide. Since 2003, it has had 3 further sources of funding, all religious orders, which sold property, some of the proceeds being gifted to the Trust to assist it in its mission. They are the Daughters of the Cross of Liege, the Discalced Carmelites and the Oblate Fathers. The Trust operates on a 32-county basis and has 2 grant schemes, From April 2007, the grants focus areas for the Trust are:

- Specific Areas of Disability: Autistic Spectrum Disorder; Hearing Impairment

- Development and Integration: Older people in isolation; New Communities; Travellers
- Breaking the Link: Homelessness: Offenders
- Christian Values and Social Change

**Contact Details:** Orla O’Neill Grants and Development Director, St Stephen’s Green Trust, PO Box 950, Naas, Co Kildare. Tel: (045) 480666, Fax: (045) 480666, Email: info@sstg.ie

### **Colmcille Community Grants Scheme 2006-9**

“To create a vibrant interactive Gaelic community spanning Ireland and Scotland”

Following an extensive review in 2005 and 2006 involving all *Colmcille’s* stakeholders, a new strategy was launched outlining a new programme of events and projects central to the aims of the organisation. With only a small core team and a very wide and important remit spanning the Gaelic worlds of Ireland (North and South) and Scotland, *Colmcille* relies on partnerships and community/other third party organisations to fulfil its objectives. All applications must be relevant to the goal of *Colmcille* and fit into the categories listed below.

Organisations applying must:

- Be registered as a not-for-profit organisation or charity
- Be a community or other group with a constitution and named bank account. However, in exceptional cases, where a community group has not been set up, individuals who are able to produce an income and expenditure account signed by a fellow participant in the project and backup receipts can apply (Small grants scheme only, maximum £2,500)
- Demonstrate a link between their organisation and their project and partners in Ireland – North and South (for Scottish Organisations) or in Scotland (for Northern Ireland or Republic of Ireland organisations).

**Contact Details:** Colmcille, Head Office, 6-10 William St, Belfast, BT1 1PR, Northern Ireland, Tel: +44 (0) 28 90238293, Email: maolcholaim@colmcille.net  
11, The Laundry, Hybreal, Dublin 8, Tel: 01 453 8870, E-mail: aonghus@colmcille.net  
Application Forms are available at [www.colmcille.net](http://www.colmcille.net)

### **Dormant Accounts Funding**

All queries in relation to dormant accounts funding should be directed to the Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs – Tel: 1890 457 058 or email [info@dormantaccounts.ie](mailto:info@dormantaccounts.ie)

€30 million from Dormant Accounts will be allocated in 2007 (figures subject to change). The breakdown of this figure under the various categories is as follows:

A. Economic & Social Disadvantage	€15 million
B. Educational Disadvantage	€7.5 million
C. Persons with a Disability	€7.5 million

## **Fund for Interagency Projects In Relation to the Traveller Community.**

In March 2006 the Government approved the Report of the High Level Group on Traveller Issues. This report places particular emphasis on the need for interagency cooperation. The fund aims to support projects targeting the Traveller Community, which are delivered on an interagency basis, are consistent with the High Level Group Report and arise from the CDB endorsed plans. The funding is available only to CDBs with interagency groups established on foot of circular LG12/06 and with a Strategic Plan for the Traveller Community, endorsed by the CDB and submitted to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

The Fund for Interagency Projects in relation to the Traveller Community is a distinct fund and is designed to give additional impetus to the work of the interagency groups established in each city and county area following on from the Report of the High Level Group on Traveller Issues. Decisions on funding will be made entirely on the assessment of the proposed projects against the criteria detailed in the *Guidelines for Interagency Groups Applying for Funding Under The Fund For Interagency Projects in Relation to the Traveller Community*.

**Contact Details: Pobal**, Holbrook House, Holles Street, Dublin 2, Tel: 01-2400700, Fax: 01-6610411, Email: [enquires@pobal.ie](mailto:enquires@pobal.ie), Website: [www.pobal.ie](http://www.pobal.ie)

## **Department of Rural, Community and Gaeltacht Affairs**

### ***The Local Drugs Task Forces/Drugs Initiative***

Local Drugs Task Forces comprising a partnership between the statutory, voluntary and community sectors, were established in 1997 in the areas experiencing the worst levels of opiate misuse. The type of projects receiving support as part of the plans include local information, advice and support centres for drug users and their families, Community Drug Teams, special projects aimed at children involved in drugs or at risk, the production of drug awareness materials, drugs training programmes for community groups, teachers, youth workers and other professionals, rehabilitation programmes and initiatives to allow local communities to work with the State Agencies in addressing the issues of supply in their areas.

## **Local Development & Drugs Strategy Unit**

### **1st Floor**

Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs  
43/49 Mespil Road, Dublin 4

### **National Advisory Committee on Drugs**

3rd Floor  
Shelbourne House  
Shelbourne Road  
Dublin 4  
Tel: 01 - 6670760

**Drugs Strategy:**

Tel: 01 - 6473006

**Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund:**

Tel: 01 - 6473005

**Local Development:**

Tel: 01 – 6473024

**Programme of Grants for Locally based Community and Voluntary Organisations**

This programme offers three schemes of once-off grants to local voluntary and community groups. The Scheme of Refurbishment Grants provides funding for the refurbishment of existing premises used by such groups. This is complimented by the Scheme of Equipment Grants, which funds the purchase of equipment such as office, kitchen and I.T. equipment for qualifying groups. The Scheme of Education, Training and Research Grants are aimed at enhancing the capacity of local communities. Applications for grants under the Programme are invited once per year, with advertisements placed in national and local newspapers.

**Contact Details:** The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Teeling Street, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo, Tel: (071) 9186758,

**Sustainable Energy Ireland**

Sustainable Energy Ireland operates a number of programmes that provide financial supports to demonstrate superior energy technologies or provide essential support in specifically identified sectors. These supports will allow Ireland become a leader in sustainable supply and the use of energy.

***Renewable and Alternative Energies***

Renewable Heat (Re Heat) Deployment Programme - provides assistance for the deployment of renewable heating systems in industrial, commercial, public and community premises in Ireland. The programme is an expansion of the previous Bioheat Boiler Deployment Programme, which supported woodchip or pellet boilers only but has now expanded to include solar panels and heat pumps under the newly launched scheme.

**Contact Details: Head Office** , Sustainable Energy Ireland, Glasnevin, Dublin 9.

Tel: 01-8369080, Fax: 01-8372848, Website: [www.sei.ie](http://www.sei.ie)

**The Revenue Commissioners**

The Revenue Commissioners provides Capital Allowances for premises used for Childcare whereby the cost of constructing, refurbishing or extending a premises for use as a childcare facility may be written off for tax purposes on facilities which meet the required standards for such facilities, as provided under the Child Care Act, 1991.

**Contact Revenue Commissioners** at 1890222425

### **The Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands**

The Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands through Údarás na Gaeltachta, supports and funds naíonraí in the Gaeltacht areas by offering support to Irish speakers and the initial education of children who are acquiring the Irish language for the first time.

**Contact Details:** Údarás na Gaeltachta,, Na Forbacha, Co. na Gaillimhe. Tel: 091 503100, Fax: 091 503101, Email: [eolas@udaras.ie](mailto:eolas@udaras.ie)

### **The One Foundation**

Small Grant Application: “Enabling minority children to access mainstream activities”. The One Foundation is a philanthropic foundation whose mission over 10 years is to improve the lives of vulnerable people - children, minority communities and people with mental health problems - in Ireland. The grants awarded range from €1,000 to €20,000. They are awarded based on ability to demonstrate some of the following; good practice, innovation, a model that can be replicated and policies & strategies for increasing accessibility, promoting access.

**Contact details:** Vicky Brown, Portfolio Manager, The One Foundation, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, National College of Ireland Research Building, Mayor Street, Dublin 1, Email: [vickybrown@onefoundation.ie](mailto:vickybrown@onefoundation.ie), Website: [www.onefoundation.ie](http://www.onefoundation.ie)

### **The Ireland Funds**

The Ireland Funds is an international charitable organisation operating in 11 countries and has raised over \$300 million for worthy causes in Ireland. The mission of The Ireland Funds is to be the largest worldwide network of people of Irish ancestry and friends of Ireland dedicated to raising funds to support programs of peace and reconciliation, arts and culture, education and community development throughout the island of Ireland. Ireland Funds are currently (2007) restructuring their grants application process and are not accepting applications at this time. For further information please email: [grantsinfo@irlfunds.org](mailto:grantsinfo@irlfunds.org) or view Website: [www.irlfunds.org](http://www.irlfunds.org)

### **For further information on funding:**

The sixth edition of the “**Irish Funding Handbook**” will be published in Autumn 2007 by Create in association with the Citizens Information Board (formerly Comhairle). For further information on this handbook, Contact CREATE: Tel: 01-4736600, Email: [fh6@create-ireland.ie](mailto:fh6@create-ireland.ie), Website: [www.create-ireland.ie](http://www.create-ireland.ie)

## **Section Seven: Quality**

There is no single definition of quality. However, in order to provide a high quality private or community based childcare service the following areas need to be considered:

- Rights of the Child
- Policies and Procedures
- Curriculum/Programme Activities
- Materials and Equipment
- Human Resources – Recruitment and Employment

### **Rights of the Child**

The rights of the child are paramount to providing a quality child-centred service for children. It is vital that children feel safe and respected, are adequately cared for and enjoy participating in their journey of learning about themselves and the world around them.

As explained by the Children's Rights Alliance, 'Children's rights' are human rights for children and young people under 18 years of age. A separate set of rights has been created for children and young people because childhood is a special and very important time in all our lives. It's a time when we do a lot of growing, learning and exploring. It's a time when we are more likely to need others to look after us and help keep us safe. And it's a time that should be about having fun and enjoying ourselves. Rights are like needs. They are basic things that people must have or be able to do to live a healthy, safe and good life. We need food, for example, and so we have a right to food. We need to be able to learn and so we have a right to education. (See [www.childrensrighs.ie/](http://www.childrensrighs.ie/) for further information). In a childcare service, offering children choice and facilitating this process is an example of applying the concept of children's rights in practice, as is having a procedure to protect children from discrimination due to the child's right to be protected from influences that are harmful to their development.

### **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**

As stated by the Office of the Minister for Children, children deserve to be highly valued for the unique contribution they make through just being children. Respect for children as a global ideal has been affirmed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The UN General Assembly unanimously adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child on 20 November 1989 and it entered into force – or became legally binding on States Parties – in September 1990. Ireland ratified the Convention in 1992.

The Convention spells out the basic human rights to which children everywhere are entitled. These are the right to survival; the right to the development of their full physical and mental potential; the right to protection from influences that are harmful to their development; and the right to participation in family, cultural and social life. The Convention protects these rights by setting minimum standards that governments must meet in providing healthcare,

education and legal and social services to children in their countries. The Convention defines a 'child' as a person below the age of 18, unless the laws of a particular country set the legal age for adulthood as younger than 18.

The implementation of the National Children's Strategy is a major initiative to progress the implementation of the Convention in Ireland. In 2005, Ireland submitted its Second Report to the UN Committee on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (See [www.omc.gov.ie](http://www.omc.gov.ie) for further information).

### **Ombudsman for Children**

Emily Logan was appointed as the first Ombudsman for Children in Ireland in 2004. This role covers all children and young people under 18 living in Ireland. The work of the office of the Ombudsman involves making sure that the government and other people who make decisions about young people, really think about what is best for young people (See [www.oco.ie](http://www.oco.ie) for further information).

### **Policies and Procedures**

In order to provide a high quality childcare service it is advised to have developed policies and procedures specifically for your service. Policies and Procedures act as a guide for setting high standards of practice and can be useful to refer to when issues arise. The policy and procedures document should also include a Mission Statement outlining the aims and objectives of the service. Policies should never be seen as documents that are written in stone it is important to consult with all staff, children and their families when developing and reviewing policies. The following areas (not an exhaustive list) should be considered when developing policies and procedures for a childcare service:

## Policies and Procedures for a Childcare service

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Settling Children In</li> <li>• Programme Activities/Curriculum</li> <li>• Adult Child Ratios</li> <li>• Premises and Facilities</li> <li>• Partnership with Families</li> <li>• Behaviour Management</li> <li>• Diversity and Equality<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Health and Safety</li> <li>• Fire safety</li> <li>• Evacuation</li> <li>• Accidents</li> <li>• Anti-Bullying</li> <li>• Manual Handling</li> <li>• Communications</li> <li>• Confidentiality</li> <li>• Transport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collection of Children</li> <li>• Infection Control</li> <li>• Infestation of Rodents</li> <li>• Security</li> <li>• Grievance</li> <li>• Recruitment</li> <li>• Volunteers/Student Placements</li> <li>• Evaluation and Review</li> <li>• Reviewing Policies and Procedures</li> <li>• Child Protection</li> <li>• Administration of Medication</li> <li>• Administration of Sunscreen</li> <li>• Record Keeping</li> <li>• Management and Staff</li> <li>• Food Safety and Hygiene</li> <li>• Nutrition</li> <li>• Sickness during service hours</li> </ul>
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It is also advisable to develop a Code of Behaviour for your service in terms of what is considered to be appropriate/inappropriate behaviour in your service.

For more information on developing Policies and Procedures for childcare services, please read:

- County Childcare Committees North Tipperary, Clare, Limerick City and County and Pre-school Inspection and Information Service, HSE Midwest (2004), **“A Guide to Developing Policies and Procedures in an Early Years Setting”**.

For more information on developing Policies and Procedures on Staff recruitment, please read:

- Appendix 1: POBAL, **“Staff Recruitment and Selection, A Guideline Document for Beneficiaries”**.

<sup>5</sup> Diversity refers to the diverse nature of Irish society e.g. in terms of social class, gender, returned Irish emigrants, family status, minority groups and the majority group. Equality refers to recognising different individual needs and of ensuring equity in terms of access, participation and benefits for all children and their families. It is therefore not about treating all children the same.

For more information on developing a Diversity and Equality policy please read:

- Murray, C., Cooke, M., Doherty, A. and Hanrahan, M. (On behalf of the Advisory Subgroup for Children with Special Requirements, Minority Ethnic Children and Traveller Children), (2006) “**Diversity and Equality Guidelines for Childcare Providers**”, Office Minister Children, Dublin.

## **Curriculum / Programme Activities**

There is a diverse range of educational methods/approaches that can be offered in a childcare setting. Each method/approach is focused on meeting the developmental and educational needs of the children in a positive and caring way that encourages competence, confidence and creativity and the most frequently used methods/approaches in Ireland are:

### **Play**

Many childcare services in Ireland have a curriculum based on play or ‘free’ play as it is also called.

Research has shown that play is an essential need of all children and those children who are not provided adequate opportunity to express themselves through play may not develop all the skills needed to reach their full potential. Play is fundamentally involved in the creation of survival skills and developmental learning. Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, clearly states that children have the right to, ‘engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child’. Active play should encourage children’s gross motor development, while imaginative/pretend play allows children to engage in scenarios to assume roles and attempt tasks that are beyond their ability in reality.

### **Naíonraí**

Naíonraí are playgroups conducted through the medium of Irish, usually with 3-6 year olds. Irish is learnt through play and from hearing the language as opposed to it being formally taught. Forbairt Naíonraí Teoranta is an all-Ireland voluntary organisation, which supports the promotion of education and care services in Irish for children from birth. It was founded in 2003 as the successor to *An Comhchoiste Réamhscolaíochta Teoranta*. They offer Web resources, training courses and advice services. Naíonraí are located in rural and urban areas.

### **Montessori**

The main idea of the Montessori Method (Founded by Maria Montessori - Italy) is that every child is treated with respect, given freedom within the limits of a carefully structured environment, and allowed to develop naturally at their own pace. In Montessori schools the children follow a set programme of tasks or exercises. They learn everyday life skills such as dressing themselves, washing themselves etc. They also cover a wide range of subjects including Mathematics, Reading and Writing, History and Geography, Science,

Biology, Music, Irish, Art, Drama and Literature (See [www.montessorireland.ie/](http://www.montessorireland.ie/) for further information). The Saint Nicholas Montessori College in Dublin has been training Montessori Teachers since 1970 and has branches nationwide.

**High/Scope** – is an approach to early childhood care and education, which is being shaped and developed by research and practice over a forty-year period. High/Scope Ireland is a registered **CACHE** (Council for Awards in Children’s Care and Education) centre and can now offer the CACHE level 3 Certificate in Implementing the High/Scope Approach (IHA). Children in High/Scope settings are encouraged to make choices about materials and activities throughout the day. Children naturally engage in key experiences and activities that foster developmentally important skills and abilities. A central element of the day is the “plan-do-review sequence,” in which children make a plan, carry it out, and then reflect on the results. The daily routine also includes times for small and large group experiences and time for outside play.

**Anti-Bias Approach** – is an approach which can be integrated as part of any curriculum and is described as an activist or active approach challenging stereotypes, prejudice, bias and all forms of oppression (developed by Louise Derman-Sparks and ABC Task Force in the USA). The approach has four main goals. The goals focus on ensuring that ‘all’ young children will feel positive about their identity and have a sense of belonging, are comfortable with difference and also able to notice when a situation or comment is unfair and able to stand up for themselves and others. The goals are applicable to adults and children. The ‘*éist*’ Project in Pavee Point Travellers Centre worked with the County and City Childcare Committees in 2002-2004 providing resources and developing awareness of this approach in early childhood care and education. Clare County Childcare Committee has developed a Pack for Supporting and Developing an Anti-Bias/Anti-Discrimination Approach in Early Childhood. Diversity and Equality Guidelines were launched by the Office of the Minister for Children in December 2006 to support childcare practitioners, early childhood teachers, managers and policy-makers in their exploration, understanding and development of diversity and equality practice.

**Reggio Emilia** – is an approach to preschool education started by the schools of the city of Reggio Emilia in Italy after World War II, founded by Loris Malaguzzi (1920-1994). Some childcare services in Ireland are inspired and influenced by this approach in planning their programme of activities. The Reggio Emilia approach to education aims to enhance and facilitate children’s construction of his or her own powers of thinking through the combination of all the expressive, communicative and cognitive languages. The organisation of the physical environment is crucial to this approach, and is often referred to as the child’s “third teacher”. The Reggio Emilia preschools are generally filled with indoor plants, and there is a strong emphasis on natural light. Classrooms open to a centre piazza, kitchens are open to view, and access to the surrounding community is assured through wall-size windows, courtyards, and doors to the outside in each classroom. Teachers often work on projects with small groups of children, while the rest of the class engages in a wide variety of self-selected activities typical of preschool classrooms. The topic of investigation may derive directly from teacher observations of children’s spontaneous play and exploration.

As children proceed in an investigation, generating and testing their hypotheses, they are encouraged to depict their understanding through one of many symbolic languages, including drawing, sculpture, dramatic play, and writing. There is also a strong emphasis on linking with the community and the involvement of parents/families. For further information: Brefne Nursery School Northern Ireland Website: [www.brefne.ik.org](http://www.brefne.ik.org) or Joint Website of European Networking Preschool & The Reggio Emilia Approach to Preschool Education: [www.reggioemiliaapproach.net/schools.php](http://www.reggioemiliaapproach.net/schools.php).

**Steiner Waldorf – The Irish Steiner Kindergarten Association (ISKA)** is Ireland's national voluntary association of Steiner Waldorf childcare practitioners. The aim of Waldorf schooling is to educate the whole child, "head, heart and hands". The curriculum is broad and balances academic subjects with artistic and practical activities. There is no academic content in the Steiner Waldorf kindergarten experience (although there is a good deal of cultivation of pre-academic skills), and minimal academics in first grade. Dr. Rudolf Steiner was a highly respected and well-published scientific, literary and philosophical scholar who was particularly known for his work on Goethe's scientific writings. Steiner designed a curriculum responsive to the developmental phases in childhood and nurturing of children's imaginations.

## **Materials and Equipment**

Appropriate materials and equipment can provide children with an enriching environment for learning, both indoor and outdoor. In order for a child to feel a sense of belonging and positive about their identity it is important that they see themselves reflected in the materials and equipment in the childcare environment e.g. in terms of their ethnic background, family status, social class, urban or rural way of life or if they have a disability.

## **Safety**

It is important to be aware of safety standards when buying products or toys for children. Specific rules also exist for ensuring the safety of children's products. For example, baby prams, pushchairs, pacifiers (soothers), cots and clothing. Playthings and equipment such as swings, slides, pencils and pens are also regulated. Most of these rules are based on the standards, which are developed by the European Committee for standardisation (CEN). The National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) develops standards governing safety, quality, design, performance etc. of specific products for sale in Ireland

Since 1990, legislation has been in place in Ireland, which prohibits the placing of toys on the market unless they meet minimum safety requirements. In addition, EU rules state that any product offered for sale in the EU that conforms to certain specific health, safety and environmental protection standards must carry a CE mark. The CE mark is a declaration by the producer that the product conforms to all the applicable EU legislation.

For more information please view: [www.citizensinformation.ie/categories](http://www.citizensinformation.ie/categories).

## Human Resources - Recruitment and Employment

In recruiting staff it is important to match the occupational profile of the staff with relevant training and experience e.g. different levels of training and experience will be required for a Manager/Coordinator and Childcare/Playgroup Assistant.

Trained and experienced staff are core to the quality of any childcare service.

A variety of childcare training courses are now available in Ireland for Childcare workers from FETAC to HETAC level; post leaving certificate, diploma, degree and post graduate. The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland has been charged with the creation of a National Qualification Framework, including a framework for the childcare sector.

Consideration should also be given to having an Equal Opportunities Recruitment Policy and therefore awareness of the benefits of having a diverse staff team for example. In having such a policy, consideration will need to be given to how the posts are advertised in terms of ads being accessible to potential staff for example from minority groups, different backgrounds and genders i.e. encouraging male participation. Applicants must have professional skills or relevant experience and be willing to participate in training (For more information please read; Diversity and Equality Guidelines for Childcare Providers, 2006).

There are certain legal requirements, which you must comply with when recruiting and employing staff. The following will need to be addressed when recruiting staff:

- Job description
- Person Specification
- Salary
- Advertising
- Short listing
- Interview – interview panel and set questions
- Written offer of employment
- Gardaí Vetting or a Declaration Form (See 'Our Duty to Care', Department of Health and Children, for sample forms)
- Contract of employment – outlining the terms and conditions of the post and signed by the employee

Awareness of the following pieces of legislation is important when employing staff:

- Health and Safety and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- Equality Act 2004
- Employment Equality Act 1998 and 2004
- Maternity Protection Acts 1994-2004
- Adoptive Leave Act 1995 and 2005
- Parental Leave Act 1998
- Organisation of Working Time Act 1997 Section 111

- Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act, 1996
- Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Act 1973 and 1993
- Unfair Dismissal Act 1977-1993
- Pensions Act 1990
- Industrial Relations Act 1946 and 1990
- Protection of Employment Act 1977
- Juries Act 1976
- Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act 1974

For more information please see:

Appendix 1: Pobal, “**Staff Recruitment and Selection, A Guideline Document for Beneficiaries**”.

Contact the **Information Resource and Organisation Unit of Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment** for queries in relation to employment at LoCall: 1890 220 222, Website: [www.entemp.ie](http://www.entemp.ie)

For further reading please view Barnardos and Border Counties Childcare Network (2005), “**Legislation Handbook for Childcare Providers**”, National Children’s Resource Centre, Dublin.

## **National Developments and Síolta**

Recent national developments have recognised the importance of providing quality Early Childhood Care and Education and the need to develop structures to address quality issues:

- The Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006.
- The National Childcare Strategy 2006 – 2010 key objective is to further develop the childcare infrastructure to meet the needs of children and their parents for ‘quality’ early childhood care.
- The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment – currently (2007) developing a National Framework for Early Learning (See [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie)).
- The Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education (CECDE); one of the main objectives of the CECDE has been to develop a National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and to develop ‘quality standards’ in relation to every aspect of early childhood education. This work led to the development of Síolta, which is currently being piloted nationwide through the County/City Childcare Committees (2007).

### **Síolta – Self Evaluation Tool to Assist Childcare Providers in Enhancing Quality**

**Síolta**, the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education, was launched in May 2006 as a result of work carried out by the CECDE. The framework sets out the standards, principles and components to be addressed in ensuring a quality experience for early childhood education and is designed to be applied across the many different settings and types of childcare provision in Ireland. In order to enhance quality in childcare services,

Siolta provides a tool to assist providers in this process (See [www.siolta.ie](http://www.siolta.ie)).

**As presented on Siolta website/literature;**

The following principles were developed based on a consultative process with relevant stakeholders nationwide:

**1. Early childhood is a significant and distinct time in life that must be nurtured, respected, valued and supported in its own right.**

Early childhood, the period from birth to six years, is a significant and unique time in the life of every individual. Every child needs and has the right to positive experiences in early childhood. As with every other phase in life, positive supports and adequate resources are necessary to make the most of this period. Provision of such supports and resources should not be conditional on the expectations of the economy, society or other interests.

**2. The child's individuality, strengths, rights and needs are central in the provision of quality early childhood experiences.**

The child is an active agent in her/his own development through her/his interactions with the world. These interactions are motivated by the individual child's abilities, interests, previous experiences and desire for independence. Each child is a competent learner from birth and quality early years experiences can support each child to realise their full potential. Provision of these experiences must reflect and support the child's strengths, needs and interests. Children have the right to be listened to and have their views on issues that affect them heard, valued and responded to.

**3. Parents are the primary educators of the child and have a pre-eminent role in promoting her/his well-being, learning and development.**

Quality early childhood care and education must value and support the role of parents. Open, honest and respectful partnership with parents is essential in promoting the best interests of the child. Mutual partnership contributes to establishing harmony and continuity between the diverse environments the child experiences in the early years. The development of connections and interactions between the early childhood setting, parents, the extended family and the wider community also adds to the enrichment of early childhood experiences by reflecting the environment in which the child lives and grows.

**4. Responsive, sensitive and reciprocal relationships, which are consistent over time, are essential to the wellbeing, learning and development of the young child.**

The relationships that the child forms within her/his immediate and extended environment from birth will significantly influence her/his well-being, development and learning. These relationships are two-way and include adults, peers, family and the extended community. Positive relationships, which are secure, responsive and respectful and which provide consistency and continuity over time, are the cornerstone of the child's well-being.

**5. Equality is an essential characteristic of quality early childhood care and education.**

Equality, as articulated in Article 2 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and in the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004, is a fundamental characteristic of quality early

childhood care and education provision. It is a critical prerequisite for supporting the optimal development of all children in Ireland. It requires that the individual needs and abilities of each child are recognised and supported from birth towards the realisation of her/his unique potential. This means that all children should be able to gain access to, participate in, and benefit from early years services on an equal basis.

**6. Quality early childhood settings acknowledge and respect diversity and ensure that all children and families have their individual, personal, cultural and linguistic identity validated.**

Diversity is a term which is generally used to describe differences in individuals by virtue of gender, age, skin colour, language, sexual orientation, ethnicity, ability, religion, race or other background factors such as family structure, economic circumstances, etc. Quality early childhood environments should demonstrate respect for diversity through promoting a sense of belonging for all children within the cultural heritage of Ireland. They should also provide rich and varied experiences which will support children's ability to value social and cultural diversity.

**7. The physical environment of the young child has a direct impact on her/his well-being, learning and development.**

The child's experiences in early childhood are positively enhanced by interactions with a broad range of environments. These include the indoor and outdoor, built and natural, home and out-of-home environments. The environment should be high quality and should extend and enrich the child's development and learning. These experiences stimulate curiosity, foster independence and promote a sense of belonging. The development of respect for the environment will also result from such experiences.

**8. The safety, welfare and well-being of all children must be protected and promoted in all early childhood environments.**

The promotion of child well-being is a characteristic of a quality environment. This involves the protection of each child from harmful experiences and the promotion of child welfare. Additionally, the opportunity to form trusting relationships with adults and other children is a key characteristic of quality. Promotion of safety should not prevent the child from having a rich and varied array of experiences in line with her/his age and stage of development.

**9. The role of the adult in providing quality early childhood experiences is fundamental.**

Quality early childhood practice is built upon the unique role of the adult. The competencies, qualifications, dispositions and experience of adults, in addition to their capacity to reflect upon their role, are essential in supporting and ensuring quality experiences for each child. This demanding and central role in the life of the young child needs to be appropriately resourced, supported and valued.

**10. The provision of quality early childhood experiences requires cooperation, communication and mutual respect.**

Teamwork is a vital component of quality in early childhood care and education. It is the expression of cooperative, coordinated practice in any setting. Shared knowledge and understanding, clearly communicated among the team within the setting; with and among other professionals involved with the child; and with the parents is a prerequisite of quality practice and reflects a “whole-child perspective”. This also ensures the promotion of respectful working relationships among all adults supporting the well-being, learning and development of the child. Such teamwork, coordination and communication must be valued, supported and resourced by an appropriate infrastructure at local, regional and national levels.

**11. Pedagogy in early childhood is expressed by curricula or programmes of activities, which take a holistic approach to the development and learning of the child and reflect the inseparable nature of care and education.**

Pedagogy is a term that is used to refer to the whole range of interactions, which support the child’s development. It takes a holistic approach by embracing both care and education. It acknowledges the wide range of relationships and experiences within which development takes place and recognises the connections between them. It also supports the concept of the child as an active learner. Such pedagogy must be supported within a flexible and dynamic framework that addresses the learning potential of the ‘whole child.’ Furthermore, it requires that early childhood practitioners are adequately prepared and supported for its implementation.

**12. Play is central to the well-being, development and learning of the young child.**

Play is an important medium through which the child interacts with, explores and makes sense of the world around her/his. These interactions with, for example, other children, adults, materials, events and ideas, are key to the child’s well-being, development and learning. Play is a source of joy and fulfilment for the child. It provides an important context and opportunity to enhance and optimise quality early childhood experiences. As such, play will be a primary focus in quality early childhood settings.

For further information view [www.siolta.ie](http://www.siolta.ie)

## Section Eight: Checklist for Setting Up a Childcare Service

Have you carried out a needs analysis to establish the level of local need in your area for the type of childcare service you are hoping to set up?	Yes	No
Before making definite plans about your service have you taken into account the Childcare (Pre-school services) Regulations 2006 and the Childcare (Amendment) Act 2007 (School Age Services)?	Yes	No
Have you contacted the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pre-School Inspection and Information Services, Health Service Executive</li> <li>- Planning Department, Clare County Council</li> <li>- Clare County Childcare Committee</li> <li>- Fire Officer, Central Fire Station</li> <li>- Clare County Enterprise Board</li> <li>- National Voluntary Childcare Collaborative</li> <li>- Other support agencies</li> </ul>	Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes	No No No No No No No
Have you visited services similar to that which you are planning to provide in order to learn from the experience of other providers?	Yes	No
Have you sourced information on grant aid, which you may be eligible for to support you in setting up or running your service?	Yes	No
Have you developed a business plan?	Yes	No
Have you decided on the legal structure of your service and taken the necessary steps?	Yes	No
Have you organised insurance?	Yes	No
If your service is managed by a Voluntary Committee, have you set up sub-committees to assist in the effective completion of necessary tasks?	Yes	No
Have you developed a policy and procedures for staff recruitment?	Yes	No
Have you developed policies and procedures to support the running of a high quality service and written the Health and Safety statement?	Yes	No
Have you written a Code of Behaviour?	Yes	No
Have you chosen a curriculum/ programme of activities that will be offered to children using a child-centred approach?	Yes	No

## Section Nine: Bibliography

Title	Author(s), Date, Publisher
"Legislation Handbook for Childcare Providers"	Barnardos and Border Counties Childcare Network (2005), National Children's Resource Centre, Dublin
"Health and Safety In Childcare: A Guide for Centre Based Services"	Barnardos and Border Counties Childcare Network, (2006), National Children's Resource Centre, Dublin
"Information Pack for Pre-School Service Providers"	Border Counties Childcare Network Limited, (2002), Monaghan
"Supporting and Developing an Anti-Bias/Anti-Discrimination Approach in Early Childhood"	Clare County Childcare Committee, (2004), Ennis
"Refugee Children and Childcare".	Cork City Childcare Company Ltd, (No year given)
"A Guide to Developing Policies and Procedures in an Early Years Setting".	County Childcare Committees North Tipperary, Clare, Limerick City and County and Pre-school Inspection and Information Services of the Mid-Western Health Board (2004)
"Children First, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children"	Department of Health and Children, (1999)
"Our Duty to Care, The Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People"	Department of Health and Children, (2004)
"Access Inside Out: A Guide to Making Community Facilities Accessible"	Disability Equality Specialist Support Agency (DESSA), (2005), Dublin.
"Opening a Childcare Service, A Step by Step Guide"	Fingal County Childcare Committee, (2005)

<b>“Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Pre-school Services”</b>	Health Promotion Unit (2004), Department of Health and Children
<b>“Access for All, A guide to creating a Barrier free built environment for people with physical or sensory disabilities”</b>	Irish Wheelchair Association (2004), Dublin.
<b>“Committee Handbook”</b>	Kerry County Childcare Committee (No year given)
<b>“Diversity and Equality Guidelines for Childcare Providers”</b>	Murray, C., Cooke, M., Doherty, A. and Hanrahan, M. (On behalf of the Advisory Subgroup for Children with Special Requirements, Minority Ethnic Children and Traveller Children), (2006), Office Minister Children, Dublin.
<b>“Schools Out, A Practice Manual for Providers”</b>	Maloney M. (2005), Limerick City Childcare Committee.
<b>“We Like this Place, Guidelines for Best Practice in the Design of Childcare Facilities”</b>	National Children’s Nurseries Association, (2002), Area Development Management, Dublin
<b>“National Guidelines for Childminders”</b>	Office Minister Children, (2006), Stationery Office, Dublin.
<b>“The National Childcare Investment Programme, Application Process, Resource Toolkit for CCC’s”</b>	POBAL, (2006), Dublin.
<b>“Developing School Age Childcare”</b>	Report of a Working Group of the National Childcare Co-ordinating Committee, (2005), Childcare Directorate, Department of Justice, Equality and Law reform

Information was also sourced from the following websites in developing this Pack:

<b>Organisation/Company/Government Department</b>	<b>Website Address</b>
Brefine Nursery School Northern Ireland	<a href="http://www.brefne.ik.org">www.brefne.ik.org</a>
Central Statistics Office	<a href="http://www.cso.ie">www.cso.ie</a>
Children's Rights Alliance	<a href="http://www.childrensrights.ie/">www.childrensrights.ie/</a>
Clare County Childcare Committee	<a href="http://www.clarechildcare.ie">www.clarechildcare.ie</a>
Clare County Council	<a href="http://www.clare.ie">www.clare.ie</a>
Clare County Enterprise Board	<a href="http://www.clareceb.ie">www.clareceb.ie</a>
Clare County Development Board	<a href="http://www.clarecdb.ie">www.clarecdb.ie</a>
Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education	<a href="http://www.cecde.ie">www.cecde.ie</a>
Citizens Information	<a href="http://www.citizensinformation.ie/categories">www.citizensinformation.ie/categories</a>
CREATE	<a href="http://www.create-ireland.ie">www.create-ireland.ie</a>
DECET – Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training	<a href="http://www.decet.org">www.decet.org</a>
Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government	<a href="http://www.environ.ie">www.environ.ie</a>
Equality Authority	<a href="http://www.equality.ie">www.equality.ie</a>
Forbairt Naíonraí Teoranta	<a href="http://www.naionrai.ie">www.naionrai.ie</a>
Hightscope Ireland	<a href="http://www.nippa.org">www.nippa.org</a>
Irish Pre-Schools Playgroups Association	<a href="http://www.ippa.ie/">www.ippa.ie/</a>

Irish Steiner Kindergarten Association	<a href="http://www.steinerireland.org">www.steinerireland.org</a>
Joint Website of European Networking Preschool & The Reggio Emilia Approach to Preschool Education	<a href="http://www.reggioemiliaapproach.net/schools.php">www.reggioemiliaapproach.net/schools.php</a>
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment	<a href="http://www.ncca.ie">www.ncca.ie</a>
National Children's Nurseries Association	<a href="http://www.ncna.net">www.ncna.net</a>
National Disability Authority	<a href="http://www.nda.ie">www.nda.ie</a>
National Qualifications Authority Ireland	<a href="http://www.nqai.ie">www.nqai.ie</a>
National Voluntary Childcare Collaborative	<a href="http://www.nvcc.ie">www.nvcc.ie</a>
Office of Minister for Children	<a href="http://www.omc.gov.ie">www.omc.gov.ie</a>
Ombudsman for Children	<a href="http://www.oco.ie">www.oco.ie</a>
Pavee Point Travellers Centre	<a href="http://www.paveepoint.ie">www.paveepoint.ie</a>
Pobal	<a href="http://www.pobal.ie">www.pobal.ie</a>
Saint Nicholas Montessori College Ireland	<a href="http://www.snmci.ie">www.snmci.ie</a>
St.Nicholas Montessori Society of Ireland	<a href="http://www.montessorireland.ie/">www.montessorireland.ie/</a>
Síolta	<a href="http://www.siolta.ie">www.siolta.ie</a>

## Section Ten: Useful Contacts

Name	Address & Contact Details
<b>Access Ireland - Refugee Social Integration Project</b>	Dominick Court, 40/41 Dominick Street Lower, Dublin 1. Tel: (01) 8780589, Fax: (01) 8780591, Email: info@accessireland.ie
<b>Adult Education Centre</b>	Clare Adult Education Service, Clonroad Business Park, Clonroad, Ennis, Co. Clare, Ireland Tel: (065) 6824819, Fax: (065) 6840515. E-mail: info@clareadulteducation.org, Website: www. clareadulteducation.org
<b>Barnardo's National Children's Resource Centre</b>	Christchurch Square, Dublin 8, Tel: (01) 4549699, Email: ncrc@barnardos.ie, Website: www.barnardos.ie
<b>Border Counties Childcare Network</b>	Unit 10D, M:TEK Building, Knockaconny, Armagh Road, Monaghan, Tel: (047) 72469, Email: bccn@eircom.net
<b>Central Statistics Office</b>	Skehard Road, Cork, Tel: (021) 4535000, Fax: (021) 4535555, Local: 1890313411, Email: webmaster@cso.ie, Website: www.cso.ie
<b>Centre for Environmental Living and Training</b>	C/o East Clare Community Co-op, Main Street, Scariff, Co Clare, Ireland. Tel: (061) 640765 / 087-632 4644 Email: info@celnet.org
<b>Childminding Ireland</b>	9 Bulford Business Campus, Kilcoole, Co Wicklow, Tel: (01) 287 8466, Email: info@childminding.ie, Website: www. childminding.ie
<b>Clarecare</b>	Harmony Row, Ennis, Co. Clare. Tel: (065) 6828178, Fax: (065) 6841310 Email: info@clarecare.ie
<b>Clare County Childcare Committee</b>	1Kilrush Road, Ennis. Co. Clare, Tel: (065) 6864862, Email: info@clarechildcare.ie, Website: www.clarechildcare.ie
<b>Clare County Council Building Control Authority,</b>	Central Fire Station, New Road, Ennis, Co Clare, Tel: (065) 6846302, Website: www.clare.ie

<b>Clare County Council Economic Development &amp; Planning</b>	Unit 1 Westgate, Business Park, Kilrush Road, Ennis, Co. Clare, Tel: (065) 6846232, Email: planoff@clarecoco.ie
<b>Clare County Development Board</b>	The Office of Director of Community and Enterprise, Quin Road Business Park, Quin Road, Ennis, Tel: (065) 6846222, Email: dceoff@clarecococ.ie
<b>Clare County Enterprise Board</b>	Enterprise House, Mill Road, Ennis, Tel: (065) 6841922, Email: clareceb@clareceb.ie, Website: www.clareceb.ie
<b>Clare Early Intervention Team</b>	Lifford Road, Ennis, Tel: (065) 6863518, Email: ceis@mailh.hse.ie
<b>Clare Immigrant Support Centre</b>	Unit 13, Carmody Street, Business Park, Carmody Street, Ennis. Tel: 065 6822026
<b>Clare Life Long Learning Network (CLLN)</b>	Co. Clare VEC Adult & Community Education Service, Unit 10A Carmody St Business Park, Carmody Street, Ennis, Co Clare. Tel: (065) 6843490
<b>Clare Sports Partnership</b>	10 Carmody Street Business Park, Carmody Street, Ennis, Co. Clare, Tel: (065) 6865434, Fax: (065) 6824928, E-mail: info@claresportspartnership.ie, Website: www.claresportspartnership.ie
<b>Clare Women's Network</b>	Clonroad Business Park, Ennis, Co Clare. Tel: (065) 6828731, Fax: (065) 6828731, E-mail: clarewomen@eircom.net
<b>Department of Education &amp; Science</b>	Rosbrien Road, Punch's Cross, Limerick, Tel: (061) 430000, Email: Midwestern@education.gov.ie
<b>Department of Health and Children</b>	Hawkins House, Hawkins Street, Dublin 2, Tel: (01) 6354000, Email: info@health.gov.ie
<b>Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment</b>	23 Kildare Street, Dublin 2. Tel: (01) 6312121, LoCall: 1890 220 222, Fax: (01) 6312827, Email: info@entemp.ie
<b>Department of the Environment</b>	Custom House, Dublin 1, Tel: (01) 8882000, Email: department@environ.ie
<b>DESSA – Disability Equality Specialist Support Agency</b>	Fumbally Court, Fumbally Lane, Dublin 8, Tel: (01) 4163548, Fax: (01) 4536861, Email: info@dessa.ie, Website: www.dessa.ie

<b>Disabled People of Clare</b>	Unit 11, Clonroad Business Park, Clonroad, Ennis, Co. Clare, Tel: (065) 6843488 / 6843955, Email: dpoclare@eircom.net
<b>Eirí Corca Baiscinn</b>	Community Centre, Circular Road, Kilkee, Co. Clare. Tel: (065) 9056611, Fax: (065) 9056602, Email: info@eir.org
<b>Enable Ireland</b>	Unit 2, Clonroad Business Park, Ennis, Co Clare. Tel: (065) 682 3060
<b>Ennis Chamber of Commerce</b>	54 O'Connell Street, Ennis Co Clare. Tel: (065) 6842988, Fax: (065) 6821544, E-mail: info@ennischamber.ie
<b>Ennis Citizens Information Centre</b>	Bindon Lane, Bank Place, Ennis, Co. Clare, Tel: (065) 684 1221, Fax: (065) 684 0372, Email: ennis.cici@citizensinformation.ie
<b>Ennis Community Development Project</b>	Ennis Community Development Project, Unit 2, Mill House, Mill Road, Ennis, Tel: (065) 6869026.
<b>Ennis West Partners</b>	Centrepont, Ennis, Co. Clare. Tel: (065) 6823339, E-mail: ewpennis@eircom.net
<b>Environmental Health Officer</b>	Sandfield Centre, Sandfield, Ennis, Tel: (065) 686800
<b>Equality Authority</b>	2 Clonmel Street, Dublin 2, Tel: LoCall 1890 245 545/ 01 4173333, Email: info@equality.ie
<b>Family Resource Centres</b>	<p>East Clare Community Support, Derg House, Connaught Rd., Scarriff, Co.Clare. Tel: (061) 640977, Email: eastclarecdp@eircom.net</p> <p>Killaloe/Ballina Family Resource Centre, 2 Ryagan House, Shantraud, Killaloe, Co.Clare. Tel: (061) 374741, Email: killaloeballinafrfc@eircom.net</p> <p>Kilrush Family Resource Centre, Toler Street, Kilrush, Co.Clare. Tel: (065) 9052173, Email: kilrushfrfc@eircom.net</p> <p>North West Clare Family Resource Centre, 12 New Road, Ennistymon, Co.Clare. Tel: (065) 7071144 Email: efrfc@eircom.net</p> <p>Shannon Family Resource Centre, Respond Community Building, Rineannea View Estate, Shannon, Clare. Tel: (061) 707600 Email: shannonfrfc1@eircom.net</p>

<b>FÁS - Ennis Employment Services Office</b>	42 Parnell Street, Ennis, Co Clare, Tel: (065) 6829213, Fax: (065) 6828502
<b>Food Safety Authority of Ireland</b>	Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1, Tel: (01) 8171300, Email: info@fsa.ie
<b>Forbairt Náíonraí Teoranta</b>	7 Cearnróg Mhuirfean, Baile Átha Cliath 2, Tel: (01) 6398442, Email: forbairtnaionrai@eircom.net
<b>Garda Central Vetting Unit</b>	Racecourse Road, Thurles, Co. Tipperary, Tel: (050) 427300
<b>Government Publications, Sales Office</b>	Sun Alliance House, Molesworth Street, Dublin 2. Tel: (01) 6793515 Website: www.opw.ie/ view goverment supplies agency section
<b>Health and Safety Authority of Ireland</b>	The Metropolitan Building, James Joyce Street, Dublin 1, Tel: 1890 289 389, email: info@hsa.ie, Website: www.hsa.ie
<b>Health and Safety Authority Limerick</b>	Ground Floor, Park House, 1 - 2 Barrington Street, Limerick, Fax: (061) 419559
<b>Health Promotion Unit</b>	Department of Health and Children, Hawkins House, Hawkins Street, Dublin 2, Ireland. Tel: (01) 6354000, Fax: (01) 6354372, Web: www.healthpromotion.ie
<b>Health Service Executive West</b>	<p><b>Children First Advice and Information Officer</b> River House, Gort Road, Ennis, Tel: (065) 6863919</p> <p><b>Community Development Service</b> River House, Gort road, Ennis, Tel: (065) 6863927, Fax: (065) 6863983</p> <p><b>Pre-school Inspection and Information Services (Clare)</b> River House, Gort Road, Ennis, Tel: (065) 6863902</p> <p><b>Sláinte Health Information Centre</b> Museum House, Francis Street, Ennis. Tel: ((065) 6865800/6865839</p>

<b>Irish Congress of Trade Unions</b>	Springfield House, Harmony Row, Ennis, Co Clare. Tel: (065) 6841009, Fax: (065) 6842132
<b>Irish Co-operative Organisation Society Ltd.</b>	84 Merrion Square, Dublin 2, Phone: (01) 676 4783, Fax: (01) 662 4502
<b>Irish Pre-school Playgroups Association</b>	The Early Childhood Organisation, Unit 4, Broomhill Business Complex, Broomhill Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24, Tel: (01) 6719245, Email: info@ippa.ie
<b>Irish Refugee Council</b>	88 Capel Street, Dublin 1. Tel: (01) 8730042, Fax: (01) 8730088, Email: refugee@iol.ie
<b>Irish Steiner Kindergarten Association</b>	Cappaduff, Mountshannon, Co.Clare, Tel: (061) 927944, Email: info@steinerireland.org
<b>Irish Wheelchair Association</b>	Áras Chúchulainn, Blackheath Drive, Clontarf, Dublin 3. Tel: (01) 8186 400, Fax: (01) 8333 873, Email: info@iwa.ie, Website: www.iwa.ie
<b>Islamic Foundation of Ireland</b>	163 South Circular Road, Dublin 8. Tel: (01) 4533242, Email: info@islaminireland.com, Website: www.islaminireland.com
<b>ISPCC - Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children</b>	29 Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2, Telephone: (01) 676 7960, Fax: (01) 678 9012, E-mail: ispcc@ispcc.ie
<b>Mary Immaculate College</b>	South Circular Road, Limerick. Tel: (061) 204929, Fax: (061) 204903. Website: www.mic.ul.ie
<b>NAD - National Association for the Deaf</b>	35 North Frederick Street, Dublin 1. Tel: (01) 8723800, Videophone: (01) 8171400, Minicom: (01) 8175777, Fax: (01) 8783629, Textmsgs: (01) 8783629. Email: nad@iol.ie, Website: www.nadi.ie
<b>National Council for Curriculum and Assessment</b>	24 Merrion Square, Dublin 2, Tel: (01) 6617177, Email: info@ncca.ie, Website: www.ncca.ie
<b>National Children's Nurseries Association (NCNA)</b>	Unit 12c, Bluebell Business Park, Old Naas Road, Bluebell, Dublin 12, Tel: (01) 460 1138, Email: info@ncna.ie

<b>National Council for Blind Ireland</b>	Head Office, Whitworth Road, Drumcondra, Dublin 9, Tel: 1850 334353, Email: info@ncbi.ie, Website: www.ncbi.ie/
<b>National Council for the Blind Ireland Limerick Office</b>	Lantern House, 48 Wolfe Tone St, Limerick Tel: (061) 316388
<b>National Disability Authority</b>	25 Clyde Road, Dublin 4, Tel: (01) 6080400, Email: nda@nda.ie
<b>OBAIR</b>	Main Street, Newmarket on Fergus, Co Clare. Tel: (061) 368845, Fax: (061) 368717, Email: obairnewmarket@eircom.net
<b>Office of the Minister for Children</b>	Hawkins House, Dublin 2, Tel: (01) 635 4000, Fax: (01) 674 3223, E-mail: omc@health.gov.ie, Website: www.omc.gov.ie
<b>Pobal</b>	Dublin Office, Holbrook House, Holles Street, Dublin 2, Tel: (01) 2400700, Email: enquires@pobal.ie
<b>Respond Housing Association</b>	<b>Head Office</b> , Airmount, Dominick Place, Waterford. Tel: (0818) 357901 (National Number) Fax: (051) 304007 <b>Limerick Office</b> , Community Building, Ballygrenan Close, Moyross, Limerick. Tel: (0818) 357901 Fax: (061) 326217
<b>RIA - Reception and Integration Agency</b>	Block C, Ardilaun Centre, 112-114 St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2. Tel: (01) 4183200, Fax: (01) 4183271, Email: RIA_Inbox@justice.ie
<b>Rural Resource Development</b>	Shannon Business Centre, Town Centre, Shannon, Tel: (061) 361144, Email: info@rrd.ie
<b>St. Josephs Training Centre (Education and Training Centre for Travellers)</b>	Gort Road Industrial Estate, Ennis, Co.Clare. Tel: (065) 6822922 Email: stjosephstc.ennis@eircom.net, Website: www.stjotc.ie

<b>St. Nicholas Montessori Society of Ireland</b>	Ground Floor, 29 Patrick Street, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Tel: (01) 2805705, Email: <a href="mailto:snmta@eircom.net">snmta@eircom.net</a>
<b>The 'éist' Project</b>	Pavee Point Travellers Resource Centre, 46 North Great Charles Street, Dublin 1, Tel: (01) 8780255, Email: <a href="mailto:ecce@pavee.iol.ie">ecce@pavee.iol.ie</a> , Website: <a href="http://www.paveepoint.ie">www.paveepoint.ie</a>
<b>Volunteer Centres Ireland</b>	DMG Business Centre, 9/13 Blackhall Place, Dublin 7, Ireland, Tel: (01) 799 4517, Fax: (01) 799 4501, Website: <a href="http://www.volunteer.ie">www.volunteer.ie</a>

## APPENDIX 1

# Recruitment & Selection

## A Guideline Document for Beneficiaries.

This is an updated version of Pobal's Guidelines on Recruitment and Selection for Beneficiaries, which may be of assistance to you.

In particular we would like to draw your attention to the section in this document dealing with the retention of records – Section 11. Recent case law has highlighted the necessity for employers to keep all notes relating to interviews and this document suggests possible approaches to addressing this issue.

**The document is a guideline document and it is ultimately a matter for your company to decide on the appropriate course of action. While every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this guide is correct, Pobal accepts no responsibility for any error or omissions.**



## 1. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND RECRUITMENT & SELECTION

Pobal came under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act, 1997 with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2002. The Act confers on individuals a legal right of access to their own personal information held by Pobal and to their own employment records. It also confers on individuals a legal right to have made known to them, in writing, the reasons for decisions made by Pobal that have materially affected them. The Board of Pobal decided that all records relating to an individual's application for a position in Pobal should be made available automatically on written request without the need to go through the Freedom of Information process.

The Freedom of Information Act extends to records held by groups relating to any contract that they may have with Pobal. Individuals who are employed under Pobal funding may make a request to Pobal for access to their recruitment records in accordance with the terms of the Act. Groups will be required to make these records available to Pobal for forwarding to the requester.

The Board of Pobal decided that all groups with whom it has contracts should operate on the spirit of Freedom of Information during the recruitment and selection process. This means that groups should make an individual's recruitment records available to him/ her on written request. These guidelines on recruitment and selection have been drafted to assist you in ensuring that proper records are maintained and that decisions are properly documented, in order that you can respond to requests for reasons for decisions on an individual job application.

These guidelines are also designed to assist you in implementing effective and fair recruitment and selection processes, which will contribute to your success in appointing the best candidate to each post.

It is essential that these processes are rigorous, transparent and professionally conducted. All decisions relating to recruitment and selection should be justifiable in relation to criteria outlined for the post.

## 2. THE POSITION

The recruitment and selection process begins with either a new position or an existing vacant position arising.

In relation to a new position, the first task to be performed will be a job analysis, which will identify the following:

- The key role and requirements of the post and how the role may develop into the future
- The reporting and working relationships of the post
- The impact the new position will have on existing roles/posts
- The status / tenure /grading of the post.

**If it is an existing position the following issues need to be considered:**

- Whether the job has changed, and why
- Whether the job description needs to be changed to accurately reflect the role and responsibilities of the post and how the role will develop into the future.

### 3. **THE JOB DESCRIPTION/PERSON SPECIFICATION**

In addition to recruitment & selection, the job description can be used for a variety of purposes, including:

- Training and Development
- Job Grading
- Ensuring mutual understanding between the employee, the line manager and other co-workers about the allocation of responsibilities and priorities, and associated job accountabilities
- Reviewing performance and identifying development needs.

#### **A clear job description of exactly what is required of the position will help**

- You to select the most suitable candidate for the post
- Provide an opportunity for the applicants to inform themselves about what your organisation can offer them.

#### ***Writing the Job Description***

It is the responsibility of the Board/ Manager in consultation with the appropriate staff to draft the job description.

The job description is a summary of the tasks and responsibilities of the jobholder. It should include the following information

- The main purpose of the job and the context in which it exists
- The responsibilities and accountabilities involved
- The reporting relationships
- The tasks and skills involved.

#### **In writing a job description, the following broad principles should be borne in mind:**

- The job description describes the job, not the person in it
- The job description describes what the job will be and what the post holder will be required to do now and into the future
- The aim is to describe the principal tasks of the job
- Specific conditions pertaining to the functions of the post are clearly defined
- The job description allows some flexibility for the allocation of new duties relevant to the core functions of the post.

The job description should not be discriminatory or make explicit or implicit reference to the age, gender or any other irrelevant characteristics of the position holder.

#### ***Person Specification***

When the job description has been written, the person specification outlining the skills, knowledge, behavior, competencies and experiences that will be required of the person being sought can be decided. The person specification contains the selection criteria against which applicants will be assessed. The more accurate the criteria, the more likely that the best candidate will be selected for the job.

Selection criteria assist the recruitment and selection process by providing:

- A consistent and objective set of standards for all applicants which can be Observed/measured
- A structured means for an assessment of an applicant
- Selection criteria that can be divided into essential and desirable.

**Essential Criteria** are those that are critical for the satisfactory performance of the job. All applicants must meet all essential criteria to be considered for the next stage of the recruitment and selection process.

**Desirable Criteria** are those, which enhance a person's capacity to do the job. They are usually not listed as essential because it is expected that they can be acquired once in employment. For instance, while specific knowledge about your programmes may be of benefit, it can also be learned.

#### **Conditions Of Employment**

The job details should include the following:

- Salary
- Pension
- Annual Leave
- Expenses
- Duration of the contract

#### **Selection Process**

Details of selection process should be included in the job description eg short listing and structured interviews.

#### **Final Draft**

The Board/ Manager should ensure that the job description conforms to current HR Policies and relevant legislation and agreed organisational format.

### **4. APPLICATION FORM**

You may decide to use application forms in the recruitment and selection process. The application form should only contain questions relating to the requirements of the job i.e. questions on the skills and the experiences required for the position. Questions on marital status, numbers of children, date of birth, medical history or any other of the grounds listed in the Employment Equality Act, 1998 should not be included in the application form.

### **5. ADVERTISING THE POSITION**

Having regard to the potential vacancy to be filled, a decision should be made at the outset on the recruitment source and method.

#### **Draft Advertisement**

The advertisement (internal or external) should be drafted with specific regard to the job description and person specification. The advertisement should conform to current HR Policies and relevant legislation and agreed organisational format.

#### **The draft advertisement should include the following:**

- The job title
- The level of the position/ remuneration
- The key duties and responsibilities of the position
- The location/base of the post
- The essential and desirable selection criteria (taken from the job description)
- The closing date for receipt of applications
- The availability of the complete job details, Tel/Fax No, email and website address
- Company logo and NDP logo and EU logo, if appropriate.

## 6. SELECTION

### ***Confidentiality***

It is very important to remember that all documentation throughout the selection process will be submitted in confidence. Everybody involved in the recruitment process must respect the candidates right to confidence. Discussions regarding individual candidates must not be engaged in by members of the interview board or staff involved in the management of the recruitment and selection process outside of the selection process. Neither should you disclose the names of candidates who may have applied for positions to anyone who is not involved in the selection process.

### ***Selecting Staff***

The most common method of selection is by means of a formal structured interview, supplemented in some cases by other assessment techniques such as presentations and second interview.

### ***Every Interview Board should:***

- In most cases comprise of a minimum of 3 persons (including chairperson). In the case of short term appointments or more junior positions, an interview Board may comprise of a minimum of 2 persons
- Be of a composition appropriate to the post being filled
- Have gender representation where possible
- Where appropriate, include a member of the Board
- Be given a copy of the recruitment and selection guidelines
- Receive appropriate interviewing training/briefing, including equality training.

### ***Conflict of interest***

There are times when a member of an Interview Board has a family relationship, well-known friendship or other form of relationship, positive or negative, with one or more of the applicants for a position. In these circumstances, if a member of the Interview Board feels that he/she may have a conflict of interest, then the Interview Board member can opt to withdraw from the selection process. Alternatively, s/he should inform the Chairperson and other Interview Board members prior to commencement of the short listing and interview processes. If the interview member feels, that his/ her participation may compromise the application of fair process, then the Interview Board should decide whether it is appropriate for the Interview member to be part of the selection process.

## 7. THE SHORTLIST PROCESS

At least two members of the Interview Board should assess the applications, to shortlist who will be invited to interview. Once the application deadline has closed, all members of the Shortlisting Board should be given a full set of, job description, person specification, and advertisement, together with a list of all applicants and their complete application documentation.

### ***What is shortlisting?***

Shortlisting is the process whereby candidates are assessed by at least two members of the Interview Board against the agreed criteria, on the basis of information provided in the application documentation, in order to eliminate unsuitable candidates and identify those candidates who most closely meet the criteria for further assessment.

### **Agreed shortlisting criteria**

The Shortlisting board should agree the shortlist criteria in advance of the shortlist process. The shortlist criteria should be based on the specific requirements of the job as outlined in the job description and person specification. These criteria and a rating system should be agreed in advance of the shortlisting meeting and should be applied consistently in respect of all applicants.

### **The Process of Short listing**

#### **Each Member of the Short-listing Board should:**

- Agree on a set of criteria for shortlisting – (**Suggested assessment sheet Appendix A**)
- In the first instance, shortlist all applicants who possess the essential criteria stated in the advertisement or information package
- Shortlist further by rating remaining applicants against the essential and desirable selection criteria only
- Note briefly the reasons for not short-listing each unsuccessful applicant.

At the commencement of the process, a meeting of the short-listing board should be arranged, and a person to chair the Board should be agreed. The designated person should be fully briefed and equipped to properly discharge this role, having particular regard to the requirements of Pobal under FOI. Ideally, all members of the Shortlisting Board should then attend a short-listing meeting arranged by the Chairperson.

Where this is not possible he/she should forward their draft shortlist, together with the applicant ratings to the Chairperson in advance of the shortlisting meeting. The Chairperson should consult with them before the final shortlist is agreed.

#### **The Short listing Board should:**

- Agree on and record a final shortlist of candidates that have been assessed as being competitive in the format suggested in **Appendix B**
- Include in the shortlist those applicants about whom there is dispute if unanimity cannot be achieved
- Consider re-advertising the position if no applicants meet all the essential criteria

#### **When shortlisting, board members should not:**

- Make negative assumptions or decisions on the basis of perceived over-qualification;
- Recommend for interview any applicant, whether internal or external, who does not meet the essential criteria, or
- Exclude candidates from further consideration for reasons that are not related to the selection criteria such as personal bias, age, disability, gender, race or any other of the nine grounds listed in the Employment Equality Act, 1998.

At the end of the shortlisting process the Chairperson of the Short-listing Board should return a copy of the shortlist report signed by all members of the shortlisting board together with a signed copy of the shortlist assessment sheet to a person nominated by the Board. The shortlist assessment sheet should include a brief comment as to why a candidate has **not** been shortlisted.

A person nominated by the Board should arrange to notify unsuccessful candidates by letter as soon as possible after the short-listing process has been completed. Unsuccessful candidates should be advised that written feedback on the shortlisting process is available by written request. This feedback will only relate to the individual applicant. No reference should be made to the performance of another individual applicant.

## 8. INTERVIEW PLAN

The Interview Board prior to the interview should draft an Interview Plan with specific areas of questioning for each interview board member.

### ***In preparing questions, Interview Board members will need to:***

- Base the questions on selection criteria as specified in the Job Description, see suggested interview assessment sheet at **Appendix C**
- Focus on the knowledge, skills, attainments, competencies and behavior required for the job
- Ensure questions are sufficiently rigorous and searching to assess ability and differentiate between candidates
- Ensure that questions are well structured, relevant and probing.

### ***Interview Board members should***

- Agree the order in which the questions will be asked and allocate specific areas to each member based on their particular area of expertise
- Determine how they will rate each of the applicants against the answers they give to each question – **Suggested rating system at appendix D**

### ***Questions***

The questions asked at selection interviews should be relevant to the specific job. The Chairperson should ensure that questions asked:

- Are relevant to the position
- Are aimed at assessing the candidates in relation to the agreed criteria and at eliciting information which will assist the Interview Board in selecting the best candidate for the job
- Cannot be construed as potentially discriminatory under the nine areas covered by the Employment Equality Act, 1998, i.e.
  - Gender
  - Marital status
  - Family status
  - Sexual orientation
  - Religion
  - Age
  - Disability
  - Race
  - Membership of the traveler community

### ***Other forms of assessment***

For some posts it may be necessary to supplement the interview with other forms of assessment. Short listed candidates should be advised in advance of any alternative forms of assessment. Such additional forms of assessment may include,

- Giving a brief presentation on a particular subject;
- Completing an assessment of computing skills, for example word processing, spreadsheet or desktop publishing skills;
- Testing report writing

## 9. THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

### ***Conduct of the interview***

At the start of each interview, the Chairperson should introduce each applicant to the Interview Board, explain the purpose, expected duration and structure of the interview to the applicant, and indicate that notes may be taken by Interview Board members.

- The applicant should be put at ease so that he/she can answer questions to the best of their ability. This may involve asking an early 'ice-breaking' question
- The Interview Board should question all applicants against the same selection criteria. Only questions relevant to evaluating an applicant's ability to fulfill the requirements of the job should be asked
- The Interview Board should ask all applicants the same core questions to ensure a consistent and fair approach. Supplementary questions, may be asked if required to clarify issues, obtain further information or to explore areas that arise in the interview
- The Interview Board should actively listen and actively seek clarification
- Members of the Interview Board should obtain sufficient information from applicants to make accurate decisions. Assumptions should not be made about an applicant's capabilities to perform various aspects of the position under consideration
- A brief record of the questions asked and answers given should be taken during the interview – see Paragraph 11
- Applicants should be asked if they wish to discuss matters that may not have emerged in response to questions raised during the interview, to add any information, or to ask any questions
- Applicants should be advised about the timing of decision-making and notification of the outcome of the process.

All Interview Board members should be present for all interviews. If, in exceptional circumstances, a Board member cannot be present for all interviews he/she should withdraw from the Board. In exceptional circumstances where a Board member has to withdraw, a substitute may be invited to participate on the Board in order to cover a particular area of expertise. This substitute should receive all necessary documentation and should be properly briefed to satisfactorily complete their role. The substitution should be clearly noted in interview files/papers.

## 10. RECOMMENDATION

### **When making a decision on the most suitable applicant:**

- Applicants should be ranked suitable/unsuitable for appointment based on:
  - Performance at interview(s)
  - The written application
- The Chairperson should seek to facilitate the interview board in jointly completing the Interview Assessment Form. This will detail an assessment of the candidate against the core competencies, knowledge skills, attainments & behavior required to carry out the particular role
- Effort should be made to reach a unanimous decision, however if a unanimous decision is not reached a majority decision is acceptable. Where the Interview Board vote is tied it is suggested that, the Chairperson has a casting vote.

### ***Preparing the Interview Board Report***

The Chairperson should prepare a final report which will include the Interview Board's recommendation naming the candidate recommended for appointment, or in the case of

multiple posts the recommended candidates in order of merit. Where possible, reserve candidates should be named by the Interview Board and will be listed on a panel in order of merit. It is imperative that only candidates deemed suitable to perform the job should be placed on the panel. The Chairperson should ensure the following is completed and returned to a person assigned by the Board:

- The Interview Board report is signed by all members of the Interview Board in the format suggested in **Appendix E**
- The assessment sheet is signed by all members of the Interview Board and includes a brief comment on the following:
  - The reasons why a candidate has not been found suitable for the appointment
  - The relative merit of recommended applicant(s) on the basis of the selection criteria only.

Clear and detailed reporting will assist if post-interview feedback is requested and/or if an appeal is lodged.

- Interview Board members should be aware that any notes that they make about any of the candidates may be discoverable under Freedom of Information legislation. The Chairperson should collect all documents relating to the interview process and return them to a person designated by the Board.

## 11. RECORD MANAGEMENT

Recruitment and selection procedures are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 1997. Given this, it is important that the decision making process is clearly documented and that all documents relating to the recruitment and selection process are returned to a person designated by the Board.

At the end of the interview process the Chairman should ensure that all documentation held by all members of the Board is returned to a person nominated to take responsibility for the recruitment process. One copy of the following documents relating to the process should be retained for a period of 1½ years:

- Job description/person specification
- Advertisement
- Application forms/Curriculum Vitae
- Signed shortlist assessment form
- Shortlist Rating Criteria
- Signed Shortlist Board report
- Signed Interview assessment form
- Interview Rating Criteria
- Signed Interview Board report.
- One set of signed interview notes<sup>5</sup>
- Any other notes that are taken by the Board during the interview process<sup>6</sup>

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These notes need only include a brief record of questions and answers in bullet form. The reason for keeping these notes is so as to be in a position to respond to any potential cases that may arise following the interview process. It will strengthen an employer's position if such records are retained when responding to a complaint.

6 Interview Board members should refrain from taking unnecessary notes during the course of interviews because they may be accessed under the Freedom of Information request.

## 12. REFEREE REPORTS

Referee reports provide an additional source of information about the candidate(s). They should be seen as one part of the selection process. In general, references should be requested in respect of the candidate recommended, by the interview Board. References should not be sought without the candidates' prior permission. You should not make a job offer to a candidate until after you check their reference.

The Freedom of Information Act confers an individual's legal right to have made known to them, in writing, the reasons for decisions made by a prescribed body that have materially affected them. Therefore it may be argued that if a decision is made not to recruit a candidate on the basis of a poor reference, the record of the reference may be accessed under the Freedom of Information Act. It is for this reason that it is very important to keep records of references. In this regard, a template form, which may be forwarded to potential employees' referees, is attached at **Appendix F**.

You will note the following clause is included in the reference form

*"xxxx Company undertakes to use its best endeavors to hold confidential any information provided by you to xxxx Company, subject to our obligations under the law, including the Freedom of Information Act, 1997.*

*Xxxx Company will consult with you about the release of any information provided by you before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request".*

Written references may be followed up by a telephone call. Alternatively you may decide to obtain references by telephone only. In both cases the referee should be advised of your organisation's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act. A record of the telephone conversation should be kept on file.

## 13. OFFERING APPOINTMENT

Interview Board members should not commit the organisation to an appointment or to a specified salary.

- Candidates should be told only that salary will be within the advertised range, although notation may be made on the report of any comment an applicant wishes to make in regard to salary.
- Interview Board members should not contact the successful applicant until after an offer has been made by a person nominated by the Board.

## 14. ADVISING UNSUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

A person nominated by the Board should advise unsuccessful applicants as soon as possible after receipt of the Interview Board's Report. Interview Board Members should not contact the unsuccessful applicants after the interview process unless specifically agreed by the Company Board.

## 15. POST INTERVIEW FEEDBACK

- Post -interview feedback in writing may be provided by a person nominated by the Board on receipt of a written request by applicants.
- The feedback will only relate to the individual applicant. No reference should be made to the performance of any other individual candidates.

## SHORTLISTING ASSESSMENT

<b>Job Title:</b>
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### APPENDIX A

Name of Applicant	SC1	SC2	SC3	SC4	SC5	SC6	Interview? Y/N	Comments

NB - Comments should be made in the case of all candidates, especially those not shortlisted for interview. Comments should explain why the candidate's application was/was not considered competitive.

SC= Shortlist Criteria

Rating Guidelines:

1= Poor
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2= Adequate
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3= Excellent
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## SHORTLIST BOARD REPORT

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### Post Information

Post Title	
Programme	
Grade	

### Advertising Information

Dates advertised	
Locations advertised	
Closing date	
Number of applications received:	

### Shortlist Board Information

Member	
Member	

## SHORTLISTING REPORT

The Shortlisting Board met on xxxxx to consider all applications of candidates for the position of

A total of applications were received from the following:

The following criteria based on the position requirements as outlined in the job description were used in selection for interview:

Based on the selection criteria the following applicants were short listed for interview:

A signed copy of the shortlisting assessment sheet is attached.

**Signed:**\_\_\_\_\_.

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_.

# INTERVIEW ASSESSMENT

<b>Job Title:</b>
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## APPENDIX C

Name of Applicant	SC1	SC2	SC3	SC4	SC5	SC6	Order of merit	Comments

SC= Selection Criteria

NB - If an interviewed candidate is found unsuitable for appointment, they should not be given a placing in the order of merit. The order of merit may be used for appointment to the post should the recommended candidate decline the offer.

Comments should be made in the case of all candidates ESPECIALLY those not recommended for appointment.

Comments should explain why the candidate's application was/ was not considered suitable for appointment.

**APPENDIX D**

**Knowledge/Experience Rating System**

Education 15 (max)	Knowledge/Experience 60 (max)	Knowledge of people management and general management experience/skills 60 (max)	Communication/Interpersonal/motivation skills 30 (max)	Computer Literacy and Familiarity with IT systems 15 (max)	General Suitability 60 (max)
<p>Relevant training + education courses = 10</p> <p>Relevant 3<sup>rd</sup> Level = 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Break down into relevant Categories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Problem solving</li> <li>Operational Planning</li> <li>Leading</li> <li>Organising</li> <li>Controlling</li> <li>Supervision</li> <li>Negotiating</li> <li>Conflict resolution</li> <li>Industrial / employee relations</li> <li>Training &amp; Development of staff</li> <li>Induction</li> <li>Staff Appraisal</li> <li>Contribution to strategic management issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to communicate clearly</li> <li>Tact and diplomacy</li> <li>Ability to listen &amp; understand</li> <li>Ability to assimilate &amp; interpret information</li> <li>Ability to think quickly</li> <li>Presentation skills</li> <li>Ability to motivate/ gain respect and loyalty</li> <li>Openness</li> <li>Confidence</li> <li>Self reliance</li> <li>Concentration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Word</li> <li>Excel</li> <li>Powerpoint</li> <li>Use of laptops</li> <li>E-mail</li> <li>Electronic information gathering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to perform to a satisfactory standard a broad range of tasks which may arise in the role of xxxx.</li> <li>Ability to relate to and work with staff and senior management (team player).</li> <li>Corporate Awareness</li> <li>Level of flexibility / open-mindedness</li> <li>Imitative</li> <li>Level of drive &amp; commitment</li> </ul>
<p><b>Marks:</b>                  Poor = 1-15                  Fair = 16-30                  Good = 31-45                  Excellent = 46 -60</p>					

**APPENDIX E**

**INTERVIEW BOARD REPORT**

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**Post Information**

Post Title	
Programme	
Grade	

**Advertising Information**

Dates advertised	
Locations advertised	
Closing date	
Number of applicants shortlisted:	

**Selection Committee Information**

Chair	
Member	
Member	
Member	

**Report of Interview**

An interview board was convened on xxx to interview for the position of

The following applicants were invited to interview:

The following applicants did not attend:

Following the completion of each interview the Assessment Board discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate, and reached a consensus on the scoring under each selection criteria, which are based on the job requirements. The attached Interview Assessment form outlines the scoring and final results. (A signed copy of the rating system is also attached.)

Based on the assessment of both application and interview performance, the Interview Board believes that the scores accurately reflect the relativities between the candidates. On that basis the Interview Board find the following candidates suitable for the position in order of merit:

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_.

**APPENDIX F**

**STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**

Ms \_\_\_\_\_ is being considered for the post of ..... with . and has submitted your name as a referee. In the circumstances I would ask you to confirm the following :

What was her/his position with your Company/Organisation ? :

\_\_\_\_\_

What dates was s/he employed? \_\_\_\_\_

What was her/his attendance pattern? : \_\_\_\_\_

Who did s/he report to? \_\_\_\_\_

What were the nature of her/his duties? \_\_\_\_\_

Did s/he have any staff reporting to her/him? \_\_\_\_\_

How would you rate her/his working relationship with the following?

(a) Her/his staff (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) Her/his colleagues \_\_\_\_\_

© Her/his supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

How would you rate her/his performance & achievements: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What was her/his salary? \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for leaving (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

**Would you re-employ her/him ?** \_\_\_\_\_

Any obvious strengths and/or weaknesses \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is there any other information of relevance you feel we ought to be aware of (please use a separate page if necessary): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Signed :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position/Title :** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Relationship to** \_\_\_\_\_

If you wish to provide additional information, in the form of a covering letter, please do so.

Pobal undertakes to use its best endeavours to hold confidential any information provided by you to Pobal subject to our obligations under law including the Freedom of Information Act, 1997.

***Pobal consult with you about the release of any information provided by you before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request.***

## Appendix 2

### Section Ten: Useful Contacts

Name	Address & Contact Details
<b>Access Ireland - Refugee Social Integration Project</b>	Dominick Court, 40/41 Dominick Street Lower, Dublin 1. Tel: (01) 8780589, Fax: (01) 8780591, Email: info@accessireland.ie
<b>Adult Education Centre</b>	
<b>Barnardo's National Children's Resource Centre</b>	Christchurch Square, Dublin 8, Tel: (01) 4549699, Email: nrcr@barnardos.ie, Website: www.barnardos.ie
<b>Border Counties Childcare Network</b>	Unit 10D, M:TEK Building, Knockaconny, Armagh Road, Monaghan, Tel: (047) 72469, Email: bccn@eircom.net
<b>Central Statistics Office</b>	Skehard Road, Cork, Tel: (021) 4535000, Fax: (021) 4535555, Locall: 1890313411, Email: webmaster@cso.ie, Website: www.cso.ie
<b>Childminding Ireland</b>	9 Bulford Business Campus, Kilcoole, Co Wicklow, Tel: (01) 287 8466, Email: info@childminding.ie, Website: www.childminding.ie
<b>Children First Advice and Information Officer</b>	
<b>Local County/City Childcare Committee</b>	
<b>County Council Building Control Authority, Central Fire Station</b>	
<b>County Council Economic Development &amp; Planning</b>	
<b>County Development Board</b>	

<b>County Enterprise Board</b>	
<b>Early Intervention Team</b>	
<b>Sports Partnership</b>	
<b>Women's Networks</b>	
<b>Department of Education &amp; Science</b>	Rosbrien Road, Punch's Cross, Limerick, Tel: (061) 430000, Email: <a href="mailto:Midwestern@education.gov.ie">Midwestern@education.gov.ie</a>
<b>Department of Health and Children</b>	Hawkins House, Hawkins Street, Dublin 2, Tel: (01) 6354000, Email: <a href="mailto:info@health.gov.ie">info@health.gov.ie</a>
<b>Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment</b>	23 Kildare Street, Dublin 2. Tel: (01) 6312121, LoCall:1890 220 222, Fax: (01) 6312827, Email: <a href="mailto:info@entemp.ie">info@entemp.ie</a>
<b>Department of the Environment</b>	Custom House, Dublin 1, Tel: (01) 8882000, Email: <a href="mailto:department@environ.ie">department@environ.ie</a>
<b>DESSA – Disability Equality Specialist Support Agency</b>	Fumbally Court, Fumbally Lane, Dublin 8, Tel: (01) 4163548, Fax: (01) 4536861, Email: <a href="mailto:info@dessa.ie">info@dessa.ie</a> , Website: <a href="http://www.dessa.ie">www.dessa.ie</a>
<b>Enable Ireland</b>	
<b>Chamber of Commerce</b>	
<b>Citizens Information Centre</b>	
<b>Community Development Projects</b>	
<b>Partnerships</b>	

<b>Environmental Health Officer</b>	
<b>Equality Authority</b>	2 Clonmel Street, Dublin 2, Tel: LoCall 1890 245 545/ (01) 4173333, Email: info@equality.ie
<b>Family Resource Centres</b>	
<b>FÁS - Employment Services Office</b>	
<b>Food Safety Authority of Ireland</b>	Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1, Tel: (01) 8171300, Email: info@fsa.ie
<b>Forbairt Náionraí Teoranta</b>	7 Cearnróg Mhuirfean, Baile Átha Cliath 2, Tel: (01) 6398442, Email: forbairtnaionrai@eircom.net
<b>Garda Central Vetting Unit</b>	Racecourse Road, Thurles, Co. Tipperary, Tel: (050) 427300
<b>Government Publications, Sales Office</b>	Sun Alliance House, Molesworth Street, Dublin 2, Tel: (01) 6793515 Website: www.opw.ie/ view government supplies agency section
<b>Health and Safety Authority of Ireland</b>	The Metropolitan Building, James Joyce Street, Dublin 1, Tel: 1890 289 389, email: info@hsa.ie, Website: www.hsa.ie
<b>Health Promotion Unit</b>	Department of Health and Children, Hawkins House, Hawkins Street, Dublin 2, Ireland. Tel: (01) 6354000, Fax: (01) 6354372, Web: www.healthpromotion.ie
<b>Irish Congress of Trade Unions</b>	Springfield House, Harmony Row, Ennis, Co Clare. Tel: ((065) 6841009, Fax: (065) 6842132
<b>Irish Co-operative Organisation Society Ltd.</b>	84 Merrion Square, Dublin 2, Phone: (01) 676 4783, Fax: (01) 662 4502
<b>Irish Pre-school Playgroups Association</b>	The Early Childhood Organisation, Unit 4, Broomhill Business Complex, Broomhill Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24, Tel: (01) 6719245, Email: info@ippa.ie
<b>Irish Refugee Council</b>	88 Capel Street, Dublin 1. Tel.: (01) 8730042, Fax: (01) 8730088, Email: refugee@iol.ie

<b>Irish Steiner Kindergarten Association</b>	Cappaduff, Mountshannon, Co.Clare, Tel: (061) 927944, Email: <a href="mailto:info@steinerireland.org">info@steinerireland.org</a>
<b>Irish Wheelchair Association</b>	Áras Chúchulainn, Blackheath Drive, Clontarf, Dublin 3. Tel: (01) 8186 400, Fax: (01) 8333 873, Email: <a href="mailto:info@iwa.ie">info@iwa.ie</a> , Website: <a href="http://www.iwa.ie">www.iwa.ie</a>
<b>Islamic Foundation of Ireland</b>	163 South Circular Road, Dublin 8. Tel: (01) 4533242 , Email: <a href="mailto:info@islaminireland.com">info@islaminireland.com</a> , Website: <a href="http://www.islaminireland.com">www.islaminireland.com</a>
<b>ISPCC - Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children</b>	29 Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2, Telephone: (01) 676 7960, Fax: (01) 678 9012, Email: <a href="mailto:ispcc@ispcc.ie">ispcc@ispcc.ie</a>
<b>Childcare Training Colleges</b>	
<b>NAD - National Association for the Deaf</b>	35 North Frederick Street, Dublin 1. Tel: 01-8723800, Videophone: ( 01) 8171400, Minicom: (01) 8175777, Fax: (01) 8783629, Textmsgs: (01) 8783629. Email: <a href="mailto:nad@iol.ie">nad@iol.ie</a> , Website: <a href="http://www.nadi.ie">www.nadi.ie</a>
<b>National Council for Curriculum and Assessment</b>	24 Merrion Square, Dublin 2, Tel: (01) 6617177, Email: <a href="mailto:info@ncc.ie">info@ncc.ie</a> , Website: <a href="http://www.ncca.ie">www.ncca.ie</a>
<b>National Children's Nurseries Association (NCNA)</b>	Unit 12c, Bluebell Business Park, Old Naas Road, Bluebell, Dublin 12, Tel: (01) 460 1138 , Email: <a href="mailto:info@ncna.ie">info@ncna.ie</a>
<b>National Council for Blind Ireland</b>	Head Office, Whitworth Road, Drumcondra, Dublin 9, Tel: 1850 334353, Email: <a href="mailto:info@ncbi.ie">info@ncbi.ie</a> , Website: <a href="http://www.ncbi.ie/">www.ncbi.ie/</a>
<b>National Disability Authority</b>	25 Clyde Road, Dublin 4, Tel: (01) 6080400, Email: <a href="mailto:nda@nda.ie">nda@nda.ie</a>
<b>Office of the Minister for Children</b>	Hawkins House, Dublin 2, Tel: (01) 635 4000, Fax: (01) 674 3223, Email: <a href="mailto:omc@health.gov.ie">omc@health.gov.ie</a> , Website: <a href="http://www.omc.gov.ie">www.omc.gov.ie</a>
<b>Pobal</b>	Dublin Office, Holbrook House, Holles Street, Dublin 2, Tel: (0) 2400700, Email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@pobal.ie">enquiries@pobal.ie</a>

<b>Pre-school Inspection and Information Services</b>	
<b>Respond Housing Association</b>	Head Office, Airmount, Dominick Place, Waterford. Tel: (0818) 357901 (National Number) Fax: ( 051) 304007
<b>RIA - Reception and Integration Agency</b>	Block C, Ardilaun Centre, 112-114 St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2. Tel: (01) 4183200, Fax: (01) 4183271, Email: RIA_inbox@justice.ie
<b>Rural Resource Development</b>	
<b>Sláinte Health Information Centre</b>	
<b>Traveller Organisation</b>	
<b>St. Nicholas Montessori Society of Ireland</b>	Ground Floor, 29 Patrick Street, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Tel: (01) 2805705, Email: snmta@eircom.net
<b>The 'éist' Project</b>	Pavee Point Travellers Resource Centre, 46 North Great Charles Street, Dublin 1, Tel: (01) 8780255, Email: ecce@pavee.iol.ie, Website: www.paveepoint.ie
<b>Volunteer Centres Ireland</b>	DMG Business Centre, 9/13 Blackhall Place, Dublin 7, Ireland, Tel: (01) 799 4517, Fax: (01) 799 4501, Website: www.volunteer.ie

