



Frenchpark and Districts Childcare CLG

Parents/Guardians Handbook

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Early Childhood
Ireland



Roscommon County
Childcare
Committee CLG



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lámhárdeachra agus Oige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth



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Section 1: Welcome & Our Ethos



Welcome

On behalf of all of us here at Frenchpark and Districts Childcare CLG (referred to as FDCL throughout this handbook), I would like to extend a warm welcome to you, and most importantly, to your child. We hope their time here will be happy, enriching, and full of meaningful learning experiences.

At FDCL, we respect that you, as parents/guardians, know your child best – their strengths, challenges, likes, and dislikes, and what comforts them. We believe that open and honest communication between home and setting is key to ensuring the best possible care and education for your child. Our partnership with you is just as important to us as the relationship we build with your child.

All members of our early years team hold a minimum of FETAC Level 5 in Early Years Education and Care. (Please note that whilst many of our after-school team are qualified, this qualification is not currently required for school age childcare). You can rest assured that your child is in the care of trained professionals who are committed to supporting their holistic development through age-appropriate and engaging activities.

If you have any questions that are not answered in this handbook, please don't hesitate to ask. We are always here to help!

Warm Regards,

Grainne Gibbons

Childcare Manager

BA (Hons) Early Childhood Education & Care



About us

Frenchpark Community Playgroup, a mobile playgroup service, was initially formed in 1995 by a group of professional women, with a diversity of skills to provide an accessible and affordable service to meet the childcare needs of the local community. In 1996, the group, with the advice of the regional statutory health board, invested €35'000 in the refurbishment of a local church hall and moved to a fixed premises. The group subsequently registered as a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee, achieved charitable status (charity number 20037345), and is formally known as Frenchpark and Districts Childcare CLG (FDCL). The voluntary management committee, which includes service users, secured additional funding under the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme (2000 – 2006). In 2005, we moved into a purpose-built facility, expanding our services to include full day care, preschool, and school age childcare. Today, FDCL caters for up to 132 children, aged from 0 to 12 years.

FDCL is governed by a voluntary Board of Management, made up of local community members and professionals who are committed to overseeing the strategic direction and governance of the service. Their support ensures that FDCL remains accountable, sustainable, and responsive to the needs of families in our area.

We are proud of our strong community connections and regularly engage with local schools, support services, health professionals, and community groups to support children's well-being and development.

FDCL has been recognised for its commitment to innovation and best practice in early childhood care and education, earning several awards over the years. At the heart of everything we do is our belief that children thrive when they feel secure, valued, and free to explore. In 2011, FDCL was awarded the NCNA All Ireland Centre of Excellence and was one of the first creche facilities in Roscommon to be awarded a Green Flag that same year. In 2012 the centre was awarded the highest level (Level 4) in Siolta which is the



national quality framework for Early Childhood Education in Ireland. FDCL was awarded the Healthy Ireland Smart Start Award in 2015 which recognises the service as promoting children's health and well-being.

In April 2017 FDCL was awarded the Investing in Children Membership award which recognises and celebrates examples of imaginative and inclusive practice and was the first early year's organisation in Ireland to receive this award.

Our goal is to create a home-from-home environment where each child feels safe to express themselves and engage in a variety of play-based learning experiences that support their holistic development.

Our Mission, Curriculum & Ethos

Mission Statement

The mission of Frenchpark and Districts Childcare CLG (hereafter referred to as FDCL within this document) is to provide high quality, affordable childcare services to the children and parents within the community and surrounding areas, catering for the disadvantaged, and supporting social inclusion.

We promote and deliver support and services for social inclusion, rural and community development, both from our own resources and in collaboration with other agencies.

Our service is now one of the Equal Start Services within the county and we liaise with Roscommon CCC for support with all of the national childcare programmes

Aims and Objectives

- To provide affordable, accessible, high-quality childcare and education to the children of the area who will be encouraged to develop in a holistic manner.
- To deliver a childcare service of the highest quality that will develop, improve, and sustain each child's quality of life.



- To deliver a quality curriculum which addresses children's well-being, identity and belonging, communication and exploring and thinking, along the principles of Aistear, the Early Childhood Curriculum Framework
- To ensure each child's needs and values are respected in matters of religion, culture, race or ethnic origin, disabilities, or impairments.
- To provide facilities for children with special needs, for example access to and the promotion of the Access and Inclusion Module Programme to allow them to integrate with children of their own age group.
- We aim to work with 'Síolta' The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education by following its 12 principles of quality and the 16 standards within its framework, to be validated at Level 4.
- To adhere and comply with the *Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2016* and all national good practice standards.
- To contract to funding schemes such as ECCE, CCSP, NCS etc., to ensure continuation of funding to the service and parent/guardian.
- To support training and ongoing professional development of FDCL staff.

Our Ethos and Philosophy

At Frenchpark & Districts Childcare CLG we believe in providing an environment that is secure, caring, loving, nurturing and anti-bias. We create a homely environment that is welcoming and warm. We believe that all children should be treated with equality, and their cultural and linguistic diversity is embraced and acknowledged.

Families are encouraged to share their culture, language, and home experiences with the service. Our emphasis is on partnerships with families and the greater



community. Families are encouraged to participate in the service and share decision-making matters that impact their child and their education.

We provide a diverse programme that reflects both group and individual needs. Through ongoing observations and evaluations, we provide enriching experiences that encourage and promote learning and development. Our play-based curriculum covers the areas of language, cognitive, social/emotional, fine motor, and gross motor development, but also provides for the holistic child.

Children's self-help skills and independence are encouraged. Staff support and assist with mealtimes, dressing, sleeping, toileting, nappy changing. Children are offered a balance of active and quiet activities, with rest time provided each day. A balance of indoor and outdoor experiences is ensured.

Meals and menus are fresh, nutritious, varied, and well-balanced. Safe food handling and hygiene practices are observed at all times.

Positive encouragement and reinforcement are used to guide and promote appropriate behaviours. Through positive encouragement and experiences, we aim to build high self-esteem and self-worth.

Staff are committed to ongoing continuous professional development and have regular support and supervision with a view to providing the best outcomes for all children in our care. Staff are encouraged to raise any issues within the service, and management will follow up in line with the services policies and procedures. The service regularly observes, documents, and evaluates all practices, to continually update and improve the quality of service and standard of care we provide.



We strive to provide a loving, caring, nurturing environment that promotes each child's learning and development, self-esteem, and individuality, while ensuring each day is lots of fun!

Our Staff Team

At FDCL, we understand how important it is for parents and guardians to feel confident that their child is being cared for in a safe, nurturing, and professional environment.

We take great care in our recruitment procedures to ensure that each team member has the skills, values, and personal attributes necessary to work effectively with young children. All early years staff are qualified in Early Years Education and Care; we actively encourage and support ongoing professional development through training and upskilling opportunities.

Our team regularly takes part in up-to-date training to ensure high standards of care, safety, and practice are maintained across the service.

All staff members are Garda Vetted before beginning employment, and vetting is renewed every three years in line with best practice and legal requirements.

At FDCL, we are proud of the experience, dedication, and warmth our team brings to the children in our care.



Section 2: Practical Information

Opening Hours & Holidays



FDCL is open Monday to Friday, from 8:00am to 6:00pm.

Our service is closed on all Bank Holidays and Public Holidays, including Good Friday each year. FDCL also closes over the Christmas period, from the day before Christmas Eve until after the New Year. Exact dates are shared with families in advance each year.

In addition, we close two staff training days annually to support ongoing professional development. Notification of these days will be provided well in advance to allow families to make alternative arrangements if necessary.

Our Rooms & Daily Routine

At FDCL, each of our rooms is designed to meet the developmental needs of the children in our care. We provide nurturing, engaging, and stimulating environments where children feel secure and supported to grow, learn, and thrive at their own pace. Below is an overview of the rooms and age groupings in our service:

Wobbler Room

Number of children: 5

Age range: 0-2 years

Staff:child Ratio: 1:5

Our Wobbler Room provides a wide variety of experiences that support each child's holistic development. Activities include puzzles, music, books, messy play, and home play. Weekly themes based on the children's interests are introduced to further enhance learning and engagement. Children enjoy daily outdoor play, so please ensure they have season appropriate clothing. Rest and sleep times are based on individual routines, and we aim to mirror the child's home schedule to support smooth transitions into the service.

Toddler room



Number of children: 12

Age range: 2- 4 years

Staff:child ratio: 1:6

Our toddler room is designed for busy hands and curious minds. Children engage in a wide range of activities including construction play, arts and crafts, music, dance, puzzles, messy play, and early numeracy and literacy concepts through play. Outdoor play is offered daily, please provide seasonal appropriate clothing. Children are encouraged and supported with toilet training, and rest time is scheduled after dinner.

Full Daycare 1 and 2

Number of children: 44 across two rooms

Age range: 2 – 6 years

Staff:child ratio: 1:6 & 1:8

Our Full Daycare room offers a wide variety of learning opportunities tailored to meet individual needs. The curriculum supports holistic development while also helping children build school-readiness skills. Children are supported in becoming more independent at mealtimes, with toileting and self-care. Activities are based on children's interests and guided by the Aistear framework. We also offer the ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education) Programme as part of our full daycare service. Children attending the ECCE participate in the same high-quality preschool programme, with the added flexibility of longer hours. This allows for extended learning opportunities while maintaining consistency and structure throughout the day.



Sessional

Number of children: 22

Age range: 2 – 6 years

Staff:child ratio: 1:11

The Sessional Preschool Room offers rich learning opportunities to promote well-being, communication, identity, and thinking skills. The play-based curriculum nurtures each child's development and supports school readiness. Children are encouraged to be independent and are given the tools to explore their world with confidence and creativity. This room runs as part of the ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education) Programme, providing children with two free preschool years before they begin primary school. Our experienced staff deliver a high-quality curriculum aligned with the national Aistear and Siolta frameworks, ensuring every child is supported in reaching their full potential in a caring, child-led environment.

Afterschool

Number of children – 48

Age range – 4-12 years

Staff:child ratio – 1:12

Our afterschool group provides a relaxed and supportive environment where children can unwind after their school day. Activities include outdoor play, arts and crafts, games, and imaginative play. Children are offered support to complete homework if they choose, though it is not mandatory. The emphasis is on social engagement, fun, and downtime.

Other facilities

In addition to our main rooms, FDCL is equipped with several purpose-built facilities designed to support children's comfort, safety, and overall development:



- Sensory Room – A calming space supporting sensory regulation
- Sleep Rooms – A restful environment for younger children
- Fully Furnished Kitchen – Where all meals are freshly prepared in-house
- Nappy Changing Facilities – Clean, hygienic, and age-appropriate
- Child-Size Toilets – Promoting independence and confidence
- Accessible Lift – Ensuring access for all
- All-Weather Outdoor Canopies – Attached to each room to allow outdoor play in all seasons
- Secure Entrance System – For the safety and security of all children and staff
- Community Room – A shared space where community-led programmes take place

Our Services

At FDCL, we offer a range of high-quality childcare services to support families in our community. All services are eligible for support through relevant funding schemes



including the National Childcare Scheme (NCS), Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE) and Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCSP) (where applicable).

Care Provided	Age Range	Hours	Meals Provided	Funding	Other Info
Full-Time Day Care (5.01+ hours)	0 – 6	Flexible between 8:00am – 6:00pm	Breakfast, morning snack, hot dinner, evening snack	NCS/CCSP	Includes ECCE programme where eligible
Part-Time Day Care (3.31 - 5 hours)	0 – 6 years	Based on agreed schedule within core hours	Breakfast, morning snack, hot dinner, evening snack	NCS/CCSP	Includes ECCE programme where eligible
Preschool (ECCE)	2 years 8 months – 6 years	9:00am – 12:00pm or 8:45am – 11:45am	Morning snack	ECCE	
Breakfast Club	4 – 12 years	8:00am – 9:15am	Breakfast	NCS/CCSP	
Afterschool Club	4 – 12 years	1:30pm – 6:00pm	Hot evening meal	NCS/CCSP	Out-of-term care and summer camps available

Meals & Nutrition



At FDCL we are committed to promoting healthy eating habits from an early age. We believe that good nutrition plays a vital role in children's overall development and well-being.

Meals Provided

Children in our care enjoy nutritious, well-balanced meals and snacks each day. All food is prepared fresh daily by our on-site chefs in line with HSE guidelines and the Healthy Ireland Nutrition Standards for School Meals. Children attending the service on a full-time basis are provided with a morning snack, a hot meal, and an evening snack. Breakfast is available for children between 8:00am – 8:30am each morning and consists of cereal/porridge and toast. Snacks and drinks are available throughout the day as needed (toast, fruit etc.);. These are offered on request.

We operate a four-week rotating menu, updated seasonally. Menus are displayed at the kitchen and main entrance and are shared with parents via email. Copies are available upon request.

Health and Nutrition Policy

Policy Statement:

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991) states:

"Children have the right to be as healthy as possible, live and play in a safe, healthy, unpolluted environment and benefit from preventive health care and education." **Frenchpark & Districts Childcare CLG** promotes healthy nutritional choices for our children. We feel it is important at this early age to introduce and educate our children about good nutrition and the health benefits of eating well.

All food is prepared under HSE guidelines and Healthy Ireland Nutrition Standards for Schools.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/health/health-docs/nutritional-standards-for-school-meals-2017.pdf>

Health <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/b01555-healthy-ireland-food-plans-and->



guides/

**The following meals and snacks are served at Frenchpark & Districts
Childcare CLG:**

- All children attending full day care will be provided with a healthy breakfast, hot meal at lunch and snack in the afternoon as well as drinks throughout the course of the day.
- Sessional children receive a snack and drink during their session.
- A hot meal is provided for all children attending our After School service.
- FDCL operate a 4-week rotating menu which is displayed for parents at the kitchen and on the notice board at the outside front door. (See appendix 1)
- Portion sizes adjusted according to the age and individual appetite of each child. Food will be pureed, mashed, chopped as appropriate to each child's needs. (See appendix 2)
- Finger food is served to young children to encourage self-feeding and independence.
- While there are set mealtimes in FDCL there will be snacks and drinks (e.g. Toast, fruit,) available through the day for any child who is hungry or requests food.

Procedure

- We implement the "Food & Nutrition Guidelines for Pre-School" by the Department of Health & Children.
- We provide healthy snacks & meals for all children within the center.
- Children are supervised at all times when eating, staff eat meals with the children.
- Snack/mealtimes will be enjoyed and conversation and interaction



encouraged.

- Children with allergies and special diets will be carefully supervised.
- We do not provide fizzy drinks, sweets, chocolate, crisps, popcorn, nuts, or nut spreads.
- Refrigerators are maintained in a safe hygienic condition and fridge temperature monitored and recorded.
- Children will be encouraged to help tidy up after snack/mealtimes.
- Healthy eating is promoted through an arrangement of activities for the children including play, stories, music, outings, cookery etc.

Special Diets

We are aware that not everyone is able to eat all foods safely. If a child has a medically diagnosed allergy or intolerance or health condition, we work with parents/guardians and health professionals to develop an individual menu for that child.

- Special therapeutic dietary needs are catered for e.g. diabetes, autism, coeliac. Parents are requested to give *FDCL* staff a copy of the diet sheet provided by their dietician.
- For children under 12 months' parents will be asked to supply any special milk e.g. goats' milk, soy milk etc.
- Parents/Guardians/Carers of children with specific dietary needs or allergies are asked to supply alternative items for their child/children i.e. butter, milk, yoghurts
- Cultural dietary requirements are respected. Parents/guardians are requested to provide details of foods eaten (and not eaten) by the child.
- Religious dietary requirements are respected. Parents/guardians are requested to provide details of foods
- Cultural dietary needs are respected. Parents or carers are requested to



provide details of foods eaten (and not eaten) by the child.

- Vegetarian diets will be catered for.

Details of special dietary requirements are kept on the child's file and displayed discreetly together with the child's picture in the

- Kitchen
- Dining Room
- Relevant care room

Cooks and kitchen staff are trained in the provision of special diets and the associated precautions needed in the preparation and serving of meals for children on special diets.

Meals

- Mealtimes are used as an opportunity to encourage good social habits.
 - Children and adults eat together.
 - Good table manners will be encouraged
 - Children will also be engaged in conversation if they wish
 - Children that are slow eaters will be given time to eat and will not be rushed
- Children will be encouraged to sit down when eating and/or drinking.
- Children are encouraged to make choices, drink, and feed themselves in order to develop independence and life skills.
- Mealtime will be engaged with in a positive way with the children. Staff must not use any negative association with food at any time with the children.
- Meals are well balanced and provide for a wide variety of food from the four main food groups each day:



- Carbohydrates (rice, cereal, bread, pasta)
- Fruit and Vegetables
- Dairy products (Milk, yoghurt, cheese)
- Meat/Fish /Vegetarian alternatives
- Processed meats such as chicken nuggets, burgers and sausages are served no more than once a week. If provided, a healthier cooking method such as baking or grilling is used.
- Fizzy drinks are not served in the centre.
- Full fat milk or water is served with all meals and snacks. Desert is offered after dinner each day and is fruit or milk based.
- Children are allowed to have dessert regardless of finishing their dinner.

Snacks and Drinks

- Snacks and Drinks are available throughout the day.
- Snacks such as fruit, vegetable, cheese, crackers, yogurt, and sandwiches are offered as part of our healthy eating policy.
- Fruit is washed, chopped, and sliced appropriate to the age/ability of the child
- Grapes are seedless and halved lengthwise.
- Parents are encouraged to promote healthy eating by providing healthy snacks for their children at home.
- Suggestion for healthy snacks are made available for parents at the beginning of each year.
- Sweets, fizzy drinks, squashes, sugary snacks, cereals, crisps etc. are not allowed in the centre.
- Whole milk, (full fat unless requested otherwise by parents/guardians), and water is provided for children as a drink with and between meals.
- Fruit juices and fruit squash is not offered in the centre.



Activities

Early childhood educators use food and nutrition to support children's learning daily, talking about food offers lots of reciprocal learning opportunities. Healthy eating is promoted through an arrangement of activities for the children including play, stories, music, outings, cookery etc. *FDCL* participates in special campaigns and initiatives where appropriate

The implementation of this Healthy Eating Policy will not only relate to the provision of healthy foods and drinks in the service, in order to promote the nutritional and general wellbeing of the children, but it will also address food related activities involving the children which should encourage and enable them to make healthy choices in the future.

Aistear Principle: How children learn & develop. Theme: Wellbeing Aim 2
Learning Goal 6 Siolta Standard 9: Health & Welfare Component: 9.4.

What to Bring

To help your child settle in comfortably at FDCL, please ensure the following items are brought on their first day. All items must be clearly labelled with your child's full name to avoid any confusion or mix-ups.

Essential Items:

- At least two full changes of clothes (including tops, pants, socks, and underwear). Clothing should be appropriate for the season and weather conditions.
- Additional changes of clothing for children who are toilet training (extra socks, bottoms, and underwear).
- A coat and hat suitable for the season (sun hat for summer, wool hat for winter).
- Suncream (must be in-date, unopened and replaced every 12 months).
- Nappies, wipes, creams, and powders – if applicable (a one-month supply is requested).



- Soothers – if used, will be offered at nap time or during periods of distress only.
- Age-appropriate water bottle.

Please Note:

We kindly ask that toys and personal items from home are not brought into the centre, as they can easily become lost or broken, and may cause difficulty when sharing with others. We provide a wide range of engaging and age-appropriate toys and activities each day.

Settling In & Transitions

Starting in a new environment can be a big step for children and parents/guardians. Whether your child is joining FDCL for the first time, moving to a new room, or preparing to transition to primary school, we are here to support you every step of the way.

Our Settling in Policy (included below) outlines our flexible and individualised approach. We understand that every child is different – some may settle quickly, while others need more time and reassurance. We'll work with you to create a plan that suits your child's pace and comfort.

Transitions within the service – such as moving up to a new room – are carefully managed with plenty of communication between staff and families. When it is time for your child to move on to school, we support this important milestone by sharing relevant development information and observations through ChildPaths, ensuring a smooth handover to your child's new teacher, or setting.

Above all, our aim is to ensure that your child feels secure, confident, and ready for each new stage in their early years journey. If you have any worries or questions, we are always happy to chat and guide you through the process.

Settling In Policy**Policy Statement:**

FDCL is committed to supporting a smooth and positive transition for children



and their parents/guardians into our service. We recognise that a successful settling-in process promotes children's self-confidence, social skills, and lays the foundation for future learning. Our approach respects each child's individuality and ensures they feel safe and secure in the absence of their parent/guardian.

Procedure:

Pre-Admission

- Information about the settling-in process is provided to parents/guardians at enquiry.
- Staff gather details about the child's routines (feeding, sleeping, preferences) from parents/guardians to support continuity from home. Familiar items and photos are encouraged.
- Enrolment and agreement forms are completed with all relevant details, including contact and collection information, as per *Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations, 2006*.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to visit the service with their child before starting, at various times, to familiarise themselves with the environment, routines, and staff.
- Information sessions can be arranged to discuss settling-in stages, including common reactions such as clinging or crying.
- Parents/guardians are advised to arrange their schedules to support gradual settling.
- Staggered starting times/days for new children are arranged to ease integration.

First Day

- The child and parent/guardian are warmly welcomed by the child's key



worker.

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to stay during the child's first session to provide reassurance.
- Some children may not be ready for a full session initially; the key worker will advise parents/guardians accordingly.
- Positive interactions between parents/guardians, the child, and staff are important to reassure the child of the service's safety.
- Children may observe activities without pressure to participate during this period.
- When appropriate, parents/guardians may be supported to spend short periods in another room to foster independence.
- Children must be collected promptly at the end of the session.

Following Stages

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to gradually extend separation times at the child's own pace.
- Goodbyes should be brief and positive to minimise distress; staff will support parents/guardians through this process.
- Settling-in has no fixed time limit and may be revisited after prolonged absences (e.g., illness or family bereavement).
- As children settle, they are supported to explore and participate at their own comfort level without pressure.
- Staff and parents/guardians will exchange information regularly on the child's progress during settling-in.
- If a child remains clearly distressed despite these supports, a deferred attendance trial period may be considered.

Saying Goodbye



Some children may cry, become clingy, or appear shy at drop-off, and we know how hard that can be for parents/guardians. It is quite common for parents/guardians to carry that moment with them for the rest of the morning, while their child is soon happily settled into fun, play and exploration! A wide range of emotional responses is completely normal; these transitions are momentous changes for little people.

Our staff are experienced in supporting children through separation anxiety. We respond gently, respectfully, and consistently, and we know how to comfort and guide each child through this stage. These challenges can arise not just at the beginning of care, but also after holidays, moving rooms, changes at home, or meeting unfamiliar staff. We are here for those moments, too.

Here are some suggestions that can help make drop-offs a little easier:

- Keep positive and focus on your child and your goal
- Greet your child's key worker together
- Reassure your child you will be back at "X" time to collect them
- Suggest a favourite toy or activity in the room to help them settle.

We recommend that once you have said goodbye, even if your child is upset, it is best to follow through and keep going. Prolonging the goodbye can often make things harder for them. We take responsibility for your child's emotional comfort seriously and will do our best to help them transition into a happy and calm state as quickly as possible.

If separation continues to be difficult, we will work closely with you to develop a consistent, supportive routine that works for your child.

Dropping Off & Collecting

We understand that drop-off and collection are important moments in your child's day – and yours too. Whether it is a quick goodbye in the morning or a warm reunion in the evening, we aim to make these transitions smooth, safe, and consistent. To support this, we have clear procedures in place that prioritise the safety and well-being of all children,



in line with the Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2016. These procedures include secure entry, clear handover routines, and safeguarding measures around authorised collections. We encourage open communication during these times and appreciate your cooperation in helping us maintain a safe and calm environment for all children. You will find the full policy outlined below.

Arrivals and Collections Policy

Policy Statement:

The safety and welfare of children attending FDCL is of paramount importance. FDCL has clear procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children, ensuring security, smooth transitions, and full compliance with the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

Procedure:

Arrivals:

- The main entrance door remains locked at all times for safety.
- Only employees are permitted to open the door to parents and visitors.
- Children must not be left unattended in the foyer or outside the service before opening hours.
- On arrival, parents/guardians should share any relevant information with their child's key worker.
- Parents/guardians and children are encouraged to say goodbye before leaving.
- Parents/guardians are asked to please ensure external doors are securely closed on exit.

Collections:

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to speak with their child's key worker at collection for daily updates.



- Children must be collected by the agreed collection time.
- Parents/guardians must provide the names of at least two authorised collectors on enrolment.
- All authorised collectors must be aged 16 years or older.
- Any person collecting a child must be named on the enrolment form. If not, the service requires written or verbal permission from the parent/guardian in advance.
- On first occasion, identification (e.g., driver's licence) must be provided. Staff may request ID at any time if needed.
- The service will not release a child to any unauthorised person without prior parental consent.
- Responsibility for the child's safety transfers to the parent/guardian or authorised person once the child leaves the service.

Late Collection of Children:

- All children must be collected by their designated time to maintain health and safety practices.
- Parents/guardians who anticipate being late must contact the service as early as possible to make alternative arrangements.
- A late fee of **€1 per minute** applies for unnotified or repeat late collections.
- If a child is not collected on time, the service will attempt to contact the parents/guardians and emergency contacts.

Non-Collection of Children

- If a child has not been collected within 30 minutes of closing time and parents/guardians cannot be contacted, the following will apply:
 - The child will remain in the service with two fully vetted staff members until closing or until no staff are available to care for them.
 - Staff will follow procedures in the Child Protection Policy and Child Safeguarding



Statement.

- A full written incident report will be completed.

Attempted Collection by a Parent/Guardian with Denied Access (Court Order)

- Parents/guardians denied access by court order will not be allowed on the premises. A copy of the current court order must be provided and kept on file.
- If such a parent/guardian becomes threatening or insists on removing the child, staff will immediately call An Garda Síochána.

Attempted Collection by a Person under the Influence of Alcohol or Drugs

- The service will not release a child to any person who appears unfit to care for them due to drugs or alcohol.
- Staff will explain their concerns and offer to contact another authorised person or emergency contact.
- If the person refuses assistance and insists on taking the child, and staff believe the child is at risk, An Garda Síochána will be called immediately.
- Under no circumstances should staff place themselves in danger.
- A written incident report will be completed in such cases.

Absenteeism and Holidays

Routine is an important part of a child's day and helps create a sense of security and predictability. It also allows our staff to plan activities, meals, and ratios effectively. Therefore, it is essential that parents/guardians inform us as soon as possible if their child will be absent, arriving late, or going on holiday. This supports the smooth running of the service and ensures we can provide the best care for all children.

Parents/guardians can log their child's absence directly on ChildPaths, selecting the appropriate reason (sickness, holiday, appointment/other). This enables us to receive information promptly and reduces the need for follow-up.

Full fees remain payable in the event of any absence – whether due to illness, holidays,



or personal reasons.

If your child is unwell, please provide relevant details of the illness, especially if it may be contagious. This helps us take the necessary precautions to protect other children and staff. In some cases, an exclusion period may be required before your child can return, in line with our Infection Control Policy.

For children attending the ECCE programme, consistent and unexplained absenteeism may result in the loss of their ECCE place, as per scheme guidelines. Similarly, children registered for a specific number of hours under the NCS scheme who are not attending regularly may have their subsidy reviewed and possibly reduced.

If your family has a planned holiday, please let us know in advance (ideally by logging it onto ChildPaths), so we can support your child's transition both before and after their time away.

We are always happy to support children returning after an absence and will do our best to help them settle back into the routine smoothly.



Section 3:

Communication &

Involvement

Parental/Guardian Involvement

At FDCL we deeply value the role of parents/guardians as the first and most important educators in their children's lives. We believe that active parental involvement enriches our service and enhances children's learning, development, and well-being. We are committed to fostering welcoming, open, and supportive environment where parents/guardians feel



confident and encouraged to participate in their child's early education journey. We encourage parental/guardian involvement by:

- **Information sharing:** Parents/Guardians receive this handbook prior to their child starting, providing essential details about our service, policies, and routines to ensure a smooth introduction.
- **Daily Communication:** Our Staff engage in informal daily chats with parents/guardians at drop-off and collection times. These conversations offer opportunities to share observations, discuss children's progress, and address any questions or concerns.
- **Regular Updates:** We keep parents/guardians informed and involved through regular emails, newsletters and notices about upcoming events, activities, and any changes within the service.
- **Open Door Policy:** Parents/guardians are always welcome to visit the service during operating hours. We encourage parents/guardians to be a part of our community, whether by attending special events, volunteering, or simply spending time observing their child's environment.
- **Partnership approach:** We actively invite parents/guardians for feedback and suggestions to help us continually improve our service. Together, we build strong partnerships that support each child's unique needs and family culture.

By working closely with families, FDCL aims to create a collaborative and trusting relationship, ensuring every child feels supported both at home and in our care.

Partnership with Parents/Guardians

We believe that working closely with parents and guardians is key to providing the best care and education for your children. At FDCL, we value your role as the primary educator and want to build a strong partnership based on trust, communication, and respect. This partnership allows us to support your child's development and wellbeing together, ensuring they have a positive and enriching experience in our care. Below is our full Partnership with Families policy which explains how we encourage and support your involvement.



Partnership with Families Policy

Policy Statement:

At FDCL we regard the role of parents/guardians as the most important in the life, culture and education of a child. We also appreciate the fact that every family, as much as every child, is different and might have particular needs or requests from us. We also understand and value the desire of every parent/guardian/carer to be involved in their children's daily routine as the children spend some of their day with us and to be involved in decisions and discussions about their child's education and wellbeing.

At FDCL we promote the active participation of parents/guardians in the planning and development of our service. We encourage a close working relationship between staff and the parents/guardians of the children attending the centre. We strive to create an environment that encourages parents/guardians to be actively involved. We recognise that it is in the best interest of the child too that parents/guardians and childcare services work together in partnership to support children in early years care and education.

Procedure:

The Childcare Setting

- A parent/guardian's area is provided where possible, so that parents can discuss matters confidentially.
- A parent/guardian noticeboard is provided and updated regularly by staff.
- Ensure parents/guardians' views and needs are heard, valued and incorporated; parents/guardians' rights are respected in regard to all cultural and religious differences.
- Ensure we always adhere to and respect confidentiality
- We welcome comments, complaints, and feedback. Parents/guardians are encouraged to follow our comments/complaints procedure in relation to



any issues they may have regarding the services provided

- We will facilitate appointments/meetings with parents/guardians
- If parents/guardians are separated, we may contact both parents/guardians to discuss a child's progress

We aim to make all families welcome and feel a sense of belonging. Images and posters will be used to reflect the diversity of children and families in our service.

Communicating with Parents/Guardians

- Employees have daily informal contact at the beginning and end of each day to discuss with parents/guardians their child's care and progress.
- Every child has their own file on our Child Paths application, which is updated daily by their child's key worker, informing parents/guardians of children's care and activities during the day. The information is available to any parent that signs up to use the application. Parents/Guardians are asked to update staff on their child's care at home to facilitate shared communication between the parent/guardian and the key worker on a child's individual care.
- Parents/guardians are invited to discuss their children's needs, care, progress, interests, achievements and difficulties – both informally on a daily basis and formally at arranged meetings.
- Parents/guardians receive updated information about the pre-school service and events, via email, Child Paths, Facebook, and parents/guardians notice board located in reception.
- Parents/guardians are provided with a handbook giving details of the service in advance of the child entering the service.
- Where English is not the first language of the parents/guardians;
 - Staff will make every effort to communicate with the parent/guardian using verbal/non-verbal methods of



communication

- o Staff will undertake to learn key phrases in the parents/guardians language
- o Parents/guardians will be invited to become involved in the service and share with staff and children the culture/history of the country of origin

Parents/Guardians as Partners

- In the event of a child having specific learning needs, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be planned and developed in consultation with parents/guardians.
- Parents/Guardians are given regular information on key policies and procedures of the service to ensure they are aware of the services systems and policies in place.
- Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the centre at any time and see it in operation.
- Parents/Guardians are invited to become involved in any decision-making policy or aspect of the service that affects their child's education or experience.
- Parents/Guardians are given opportunities to contribute their own skills, knowledge, and interests to the activities of the centre.
- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to work as volunteers in the centre (if appropriate and in line with our garda vetting policy). This provides parents/guardians with experience of the day-to-day activities of the centre. All volunteers will be given an induction and will undergo Garda Vetting procedures, in order to comply with the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 20176.
- Parents/Guardians are invited to contribute in other appropriate ways to the successful development of the centre e.g., becoming a member of the



management committee or a fundraising sub-committee.

Open Door Policy

It is our policy to offer a bright, warm, welcoming environment. We understand the importance of consultation and building relationships with our children, parents/guardians and staff.

- All parents/guardians are welcome to visit the service at any time. However, parents/guardians should be aware that we might not be able to give them our full attention, as the supervision and needs of children in our care come first. Therefore, it may be more helpful to the parent/guardian to arrange a meeting in advance; if they need to discuss issues.
- We would welcome that parents/guardians advise staff each morning of any significant happenings at home that we should know of e.g., Child had a poor nights sleep and they may be tired
- We work together when difficult issues arise.

Babysitting

FDCL accepts no responsibility for staff babysitting children that attend the service.

Daily Communication (via ChildPaths)

At FDCL, we prioritise open, clear, and consistent communication between parents/guardians and educators. To support this, we use the Child Paths app as our primary tool for daily communication. This platform allows for real-time updates multiple times a day, helping you stay connected with your child's routine, care, and experiences.

Through ChildPaths, you will receive detailed logs of your child's:

- Attendance
- Activities and play experiences
- Meals and snacks provided



- Nappy changes and sleep times (where applicable)
- Any incidents or accidents that may occur

The app also offers a secure and direct messaging feature, allowing you to contact your child's room educators quickly and conveniently. All data is password protected, with automatic session time-outs to ensure your child's information is kept private. Parents/guardians have their own individual logins, and only the educators assigned to your child's room have access to their records.

ChildPaths provides a more efficient and reliable way of sharing information than traditional methods, offering peace of mind and building stronger home-service partnerships. Support is available to help you get started—there are easy-to-follow tutorials online, or a member of our team will be happy to guide you through the setup in person.

Comments, Complaints & Feedback

At FDCL, we value feedback from parents and guardians as a vital part of continuously improving our service. Whether you have a compliment, comment, suggestion, or concern, we welcome open communication and are committed to responding promptly and professionally. Our full Compliments and Complaints Policy outlines how we handle all feedback, including informal concerns and formal complaints, and is available in the following section.

Compliments and Complaints Policy

Policy Statement:

FDCL values the views of children and parents/guardians in developing our service. We welcome all suggestions, comments, and complaints and commit to giving each careful attention, with prompt and courteous responses. Our aim is to ensure continual improvement and to meet the needs of all children and families.

Every effort will be made to resolve issues informally before initiating a formal complaint procedure. Under normal circumstances, the Manager is responsible



for handling formal complaints.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made by a parent, member of the public or partner agency/organisation. Complaints can be made directly by the person affected, in writing, by phone, face-to-face, or by a third party acting on their behalf.

Procedure:

How a complaint can be made

Complaints can be raised by phone, in person, letter or email. They may come from the person affected or someone acting on their behalf.

Stage One - Informal Resolution

Many complaints can be resolved by discussing the issue directly with the staff member involved or the Childcare/Centre Business Manager. Some concerns may be due to differences of opinion and can often be resolved through open discussion and compromise.

Those wishing to make a complaint are encouraged initially to speak with the relevant staff member. If they prefer not to do so, they can speak with the Childcare/Centre Business Manager, who will attempt to resolve the matter. Details of the complaint and any response will be recorded.

If the complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, the process will move to Stage Two.

Stage Two – Formal Complaint

If informal resolution is unsuccessful, the complainant should submit their complaint in writing to the Manager.

- The Manager will acknowledge receipt within three working days.



- A full investigation will be carried out, with a response sent within 15 working days.

The investigation may include:

- Interviews with all relevant parties.
- Taking minutes of meetings.
- Informing individuals involved that they may have an appropriate person present during the investigation.

The Centre Business Manager will also notify the Chairperson/Committee that an investigation is underway.

If the complaint raises child protection concerns, the Manager will follow the Child Protection Policy by contacting the local TUSLA Duty Social Worker. If a criminal offence is suspected, An Garda Síochána will be contacted.

Outcome and Follow-up

The Manager will provide a formal written response to the complainant, copying relevant staff as appropriate. This response will include any recommendations and details of any changes to policies or procedures resulting from the investigation.

The Centre Business Manager will arrange a meeting with the complainant and relevant parties to discuss the outcome. The Centre Business Manager will decide whether a joint meeting or separate meetings are most suitable.

If the Complainant Remains Dissatisfied

If the complainant is not satisfied with the Centre Business Manager's response, the original complaint and response will be forwarded to the Chairperson/Committee.

The Chairperson/Committee will provide a detailed written response to both the Manager and the complainant within 15 working days, including any actions to



be taken.

If the matter remains unresolved, the complainant will be informed of their right to make a formal complaint to TUSLA.



Section 4: Policies & Procedures

Fees & Payments Policy

Policy Statement:

FDCL is committed to transparent, fair, and sustainable fee management to ensure the ongoing delivery of affordable, high-quality early years services for families in our community.

General Fee Payment Information:

- Clear and current fees lists are readily available to parents/guardians.
- Parents/guardians must sign a Parent/Guardian Agreement outlining fees and payments before a child starts.



- Fees are payable weekly, in full, each Monday via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT).
- The National Childcare Scheme (NCS) is available to help parents/guardians reduce childcare costs.
- Children who are in receipt of the National Childcare Scheme and who attend Full Day Care/Afterschool are automatically booked in for their usual days on their out of term (apart from Summer) contracts to secure their place.
- Changes to NCS contracts cannot be made mid-year.
- Requests for additional hours outside of your normal contracted schedule must be made in advance. We will do our best to accommodate these requests based on availability.
- As a community-based service, FDCL relies on the timely payment of fees to meet staff wages and overheads, ensuring continued provision of essential childcare services.

Reviewing Fees:

- Fees are reviewed annually by management and the board.
- Parents/Guardians will receive at least two weeks' notice of any changes to fees.

Payments in relation to Holidays or Illness of the Child:

- Fees remain payable during periods of illness or family holidays to secure your child's place.
- There are 52 payable weeks in the year.
- This policy supports staff wages and the continuity of high-quality care.
- Bank/Public Holidays are included in the fees and cannot be swapped for other days. No fee reductions apply for these closures.
- Registration/enrolment forms will not be processed if there are any outstanding fees.

Withdrawal of Children:



- Parents/guardians must give four weeks' written notice if withdrawing a child from the service. Fees remain payable during the notice period.
- Management reserves the right, in consultation with parents/guardians, to end a child's place if it is agreed the child is not settling or adjusting well to the service environment, despite best efforts to support the transition. In such cases, four weeks' notice will be given to allow families to make alternative arrangements.

Non-Payment of Fees:

- Failure to pay fees may result in the suspension or withdrawal of your child's place.
- Any delays in payment must be discussed and agreed with management in advance.
- Repeated failure to pay fees on time may result in loss of your child's placement.

National Childcare Scheme (NCS) Subsidies:

- Parents/guardians using the NCS must ensure their CHICK code remains valid and renewed on time.
- If a CHICK expires and is not renewed before the expiry date, full fees apply.
- It is important to attend the booked hours to maintain your NCS subsidy.
- Please see our Admissions and Enrolment Policy for further details on NCS, ECCE, and funding schemes.

Illness, Medication & Exclusion Policy**Policy Statement:**

It is the policy at FDCL that our children's welfare is the first and most important consideration. In the event of sudden illness, we will contact the parents/guardians immediately about our concerns regarding their child's health and well-being.

**Procedure:**

- Parents/guardians will be informed of our concerns and the procedures we are taking.
- If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the next name on the emergency list will be contacted.
- The child's temperature will be monitored and recorded.
- If staff feel that a child needs medical attention, the parents/guardians will be notified and with their permission, we will contact the doctor on call. Parents/guardians will be responsible for the doctors' fees.
- Parents/guardians will be required to take their child home immediately in case of vomiting or diarrhoea.
- We request that parents/guardians inform management if their child is unable to attend due to illness, stating details.
- We advise that sick children be kept at home (see exclusions list).
- In the event of an outbreak of any infectious disease, all parents/guardians will be informed.
- We advise all persons who enter FDCL to inform the manager if they have come in contact with an infectious or contagious disease.
- The HSE recommends that all children receive the appropriate vaccinations. This acts as a safeguard for your child as well as protecting other children in attendance.

Exclusion

To ensure the safety and health of all our children and staff, those who have any of the following conditions will be excluded from the service:

- Acute symptoms of food poisoning/gastroenteritis.
- A temperature over 38 degrees.
- A deep, hacking cough.
- Severe congestion.



- Difficulty breathing or untreated wheezing.
- An unexplained rash (see exclusion list also).
- Vomiting (48 hours from last episode).
- Diarrhoea (48 hours from last episode).
- An infectious/contagious condition.
- A child who is on an antibiotic for less than 48 hours.
- A child that complains of a stiff neck and headache with one or more of the above symptoms.
- Headlice must be treated before returning.

Fresh air and exercise significantly enhances the health and growth of a child. Parents who feel their child is too ill to participate in outdoor activities are advised to keep the child home for an extra day to ensure a complete recovery.

Infectious Disease Control

- Children/adults with infectious diseases should not attend FDCL.
- Employees suffering from a contagious illness should not work with children (e.g., gastro-enteritis) and must inform the Management immediately.
- Should there be an outbreak of any infectious disease or incident, a dated notice clearly stating the situation must be posted on the doors of the three entrances. Parents/guardians should also be informed verbally and in writing. This notice should be updated when relevant.
- Any children of staff who are ill should not accompany their parents/guardians to work.
- Headlice are a contagious condition and if a case is noticed it should be brought to the attention of parents/guardians immediately. Parents/guardians should notify management if noticed at home.



- Observation of children following immunization is essential; parents/guardians should inform staff of immunization. It is good practice to encourage two-way communication on all health issues.

Headlice Policy

Head lice can be a common problem in children. Headlice crawl and require head-to-head contact for transmission. It is our policy to be proactive and manage the treatment. Parents/guardians have a responsibility to adhere to all our recommendations, working together to address this common health concern.

- Parents/guardians have the primary responsibility for the detection and treatment of headlice.
- Parents/guardians must check their child's head regularly, even if they don't suspect their child has head lice.
- All cases must be reported to the person in charge. Parents/guardians must state when appropriate treatment was commenced.
- Parents/guardians will be informed and advised on the correct procedures to take.
- Notification will be displayed for the parent's and information given if required.
- Confidentiality will be adhered to in every case reported.
- Children will not be accepted into the service with untreated headlice.
- We suggest children with long hair should have it tied back.
- There are a variety of effective preparations, shampoos, and lotions available for treatment.

It is vital that parents/guardians follow instructions accurately. It is important to remember that anyone can get head lice, however infestation is more likely among small children due to the nature of how they play. Headlice do not reflect standards of hygiene either in the home or preschool environment.



Meningitis and Meningococcal

Both these diseases are common in children; there are over 150 cases reported per year in this age group in Ireland (Meningitis Trust). Although relatively rare, the speed at which children become ill, and the dramatic and sometimes devastating course of events make it a terrifying disease. Having a good knowledge and understanding of meningitis and being able to recognise the signs and symptoms early as well as getting medical attention quickly, may save lives. Although cases can occur throughout the year, the majority of cases occur during the winter months. Meningitis is an inflammation of the membranes that surround and protect the brain and spinal cord.

The most common germs that cause meningitis are viruses and bacteria.

Viral Meningitis - is rarely life threatening, although it can make people very unwell. Most people make a full recovery, but sufferers can be left with aftereffects such as headaches, tiredness and memory loss.

Bacterial Meningitis - can be life threatening and needs urgent medical attention. Most people who suffer from bacterial meningitis recover but many can be left with a variety of after effects and one in ten will die.

Signs and Symptoms

- Meningitis and septicemia (blood poisoning) are not always easy to recognize, and symptoms can appear in any order. Some may not appear at all. In the early stages, the signs and symptoms can be similar to many other more common illnesses e.g., flu.
- Trust your instincts. If you suspect meningitis or septicemia, get medical help immediately. Early symptoms can include fever, headache, nausea (feeling sick), vomiting (being sick), and muscle pain, with cold hands and

feet.

- A rash that does not fade under pressure (see 'The Glass(tumbler) Test' below) is a sign of meningococcal septicemia. The rash may begin as a few small spots anywhere on the body and can spread quickly to look like fresh bruises.
- The spots or rash are caused by blood leaking into the tissues under the skin. They are more difficult to see on darker skin, so look on paler areas of the skin and under the eyelids. The spots or rash may fade at first, so keep checking.
- However, if someone is ill or obviously getting worse, do not wait for spots or a rash to appear. They may appear late or may not appear at all.



Procedure for Managing a Suspected Case of Meningitis

- If a member of staff suspects that a child is displaying the signs and symptoms of meningitis the child's doctor/our doctor on call will be contacted immediately, and the child's parents/guardians called.
- If a GP is not available, the child will be taken straight to the nearest A&E department. A member of staff will escort the child to hospital if the parent



is unavailable.

Procedure when a case of Meningococcal Disease (Meningitis and/or Septicemia) Occurs within an Early Years' service

- The public health team will usually issue a letter to other parents/guardians to inform them of the situation. The aim of this letter is to give information about, reduce anxiety and prevent uninformed rumors.
- Meningitis literature (outlining signs and symptoms) will be provided for parents/guardians by the public health team. The Meningitis Trust can provide further information and support free of charge.
- Antibiotics will be offered to persons considered to be 'close contacts'/ These are usually immediate family members or 'household' contacts. Antibiotics are given to kill of the bacteria that may be carried in the back of the nose and throat: this reduces the risk of passing the bacteria on to others. In certain situations, a vaccine may also be offered. These actions are coordinated by the public health team.
- There is no reason for the service to close.
- There is no need to disinfect or destroy any equipment or toys that the child has touched.

The likelihood of a second case of meningococcal disease is extremely small. However, if two or more suspected cases occur within four weeks in the same childcare facility, then antibiotics may be offered to all children and staff, on the advice from the public health doctor. During this time staff and parent's should remain vigilant. Parents/guardians are advised to contact their GP if they are concerned or worried that their child is unwell.

Hand, Foot, and Mouth

Hand, Foot, and Mouth (HFMD) is a viral illness that causes fever, painful blisters in the throat and mouth, and sometimes on the hands, feet, and bottom. The viruses that cause it are called Coxsackie viruses that live in the human digestive



tract. Several types of this family of viruses can cause Hand, Foot and Mouth so unfortunately you can get it more than once. These viruses are usually passed from person to person through unwashed hands and via surfaces which have viruses on them. They can also be spread by coughing. It is more common to catch them from someone when they are in the early stages of their illness. Although anyone is at risk of becoming infected, children are generally more susceptible.

Symptoms

- The disease usually begins with a fever, poor appetite, malaise (feeling vaguely unwell) and often with a sore throat.
- One or two days after fever onset, painful sores usually develop in the mouth. They begin as small red spots that blister and then often become ulcers. The sores are usually located on the tongue, gums and inside of the cheeks.
- A non-itchy skin rash develops over 1-2 days. The rash has flat or raised red spots, sometimes with blisters. The rash is usually located on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet, it may also appear on the buttocks and/or genitalia.
- A person with HFMD may have only the rash or only the mouth sores.

How Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease is Spread

- Infection is spread from person to person by direct contact with infectious virus. Infectious virus is found in the nose and throat secretions, saliva, blister fluid and stool of infected persons. The virus is most often spread by persons with unwashed, virus-contaminated hands and by contact with virus-contaminated surfaces.
- Infected persons are most contagious during the first week of the illness.



- The viruses that cause HFMD can remain in the body for weeks after a patient's symptoms have gone away. This means that the infected person can still pass the infection to other people even though they appear well. Also, some persons who are infected and excreting the virus, including most adults, may have no symptoms.

Treatment of HFMD

There is no specific treatment and antibiotics are not effective as it is a viral infection. Most children with HFMD recover completely after a few days resting at home. Plenty of fluids help. Any fever or discomfort can be helped with a children's pain relief such as Calpol.

Prevention of HFMD

A specific preventive for HFMD is not available, but the risk of infection can be lowered by following good hygiene practices.

- Handwashing is the mainstay of prevention of transmission and control of outbreaks. Children and carers should wash their hands before eating or preparing food, after using the toilet or especially after changing nappies, after contact with an ill child, after contact with animals and whenever hands are visibly soiled (see handwashing and infection control policies).
- Cleaning dirty surfaces and soiled items, including toys, first with soap and water and then disinfecting them by cleansing with a solution of chloring bleach (made by adding 1 part bleach to 4 parts water).
- Avoid close contact (kissing, hugging, sharing eating utensils or cups, etc.) with persons with HFMD.
- Children should be kept away from FDCL whilst unwell.

Note: HFMD is communicable immediately before and during the acute stage of the illness, and perhaps longer as the virus may be present in the feces for weeks. The incubation period is 3 to 6 days, and the condition may last from 7



to 10 days.

Exclusions

Antibiotics Prescribed:	First 48 hours at home.
Chickenpox:	Until scabs are dry; this is usually 5-7 days after the appearance of the rash.
Conjunctivitis:	Exclusion of affected children until they are recovered.
Diarrhoea:	48 hours from last episode.
Diphtheria:	Very specific exclusion criteria apply and will be advised on by the Department of Public Health.
Food Poisoning:	Until authorised by GP.
Glandular Fever:	Exclusion is not necessary.
Hemophilus Influenzae Type B (Hib):	Children with the disease will be too ill to attend the service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.
Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease:	While the child is unwell, they should be kept away from the service.
Headlice:	Headlice must be treated before



	returning to the service.
Hepatitis A (yellow jaundice, infectious hepatitis):	Recommended to stay home while the child feels unwell, or until 7 days after onset of jaundice, whichever is later.
Hepatitis B (serum hepatitis):	Children will be too ill to attend the service and families will be given specific advice about when their child is well enough to return.
Impetigo:	Until lesions are crusted and healed, or 48hours after commencing antibiotics.
Influenza and influenza-like illness:	Remain at home for 7 days from when their symptoms began. Children should not return to the service until they are feeling better and their temperature has returned to normal.
Living with HIV/AIDS:	Exclusion is not necessary.
Measles:	Exclude the child while infectious i.e., up to 4 days after the rash appears.
Meningitis:	Children with the disease will be too ill to attend the service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.
Meningococcal Disease:	Children with the disease will be too ill to attend the service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.
Molluscum Contagiosum:	Exclusion is not necessary.
MRSA (Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus)	Children/infants known to carry staphylococcus aureus (including



	MRSA) on the skin or in the nose do not need to be excluded from the childcare setting. Children who have draining wounds or skin sores producing pus will only need to be excluded from the childcare setting if the wounds cannot be covered or contained by a dressing and/or the dressing cannot be kept dry and intact.	
Mumps:	The child should be excluded for 5 days after the onset of swelling.	
Pediculosis (lice):	Until appropriate treatment has been given.	
Pharyngitis/Tonsilitis:	IF the disease is known to be caused by a streptococcal (bacterial) infection the child or member of staff should be kept away from the service until 48 hours after the start of treatment. Otherwise a child or member of staff should stay at home while they feel unwell.	
Polio:	Very specific exclusion criteria apply and will be advised on by the Department of Public Health.	
Poliomyelitis:	Until declared free from infection by GP.	
Pneumococcus:	Children with the disease will be too ill	



	to attend the service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.	
Respiratory Syncytial Virus:	Children with RSV should be excluded until they have no symptoms and their temperature has returned to normal. Contacts do not need to be excluded.	
Ringworm:	Children need to be excluded from the service once they commence treatment.	
Rubella (German measles):	For 7 days after onset of the rash, and whilst unwell.	
Scabies:	Not necessary to exclude once treatment has commenced.	
Scarlet Fever:	Once a patient has been on antibiotic treatment for 48 hours they can return to the service, provided they feel well enough.	
Shingles:	Until scabs are dry.	
Slapped Cheek Syndrome:	An affected child may need not be excluded because they are no longer infectious by the time the rash occurs.	
Temperature:	Over 38°C.	
Tetanus (lockjaw):	Children with the disease will be too ill to attend the service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.	
Tuberculosis (TB):	Recommendations on exclusions depend on the particulars of each case, e.g., whether the case is	



	infectious or not. The Department of Public Health will advise on each individual case.	
Typhoid and Paratyphoid:	Very specific exclusion criteria apply; your local Department of Public Health will advise.	
Viral Meningitis:	Children with the disease will usually be too ill to attend the service. Contacts do not need to be excluded.	
Vomiting:	48 hours from last episode of vomiting.	
Whooping Cough (Pertussis):	The child is likely to be too ill to attend the service and should stay at home until they have had 5 days of antibiotic treatment or for 21 days from onset of illness if no antibiotic treatment.	
Worms:	Exclusion not necessary.	
Verrucae:	Exclusion not necessary.	

Accidents & Incidents

Policy Statement:

At FDCL the health and safety of the children in our care, the parents using our service and our staff is of paramount importance. We are committed to having proper systems in place for accident prevention and for the recording of all accidents and incidents. As prevention and a prompt and adequate response to emergency can make the difference in the outcome of an emergency, we at FDCL commit to implement the following procedure at all times.



Procedure:

How do we prevent accidents?

At FDCL we prevent accidents by doing the following:

- We follow our Health and Safety Policies and Procedures and our Fire Evacuation Policy and periodically update them to make sure our premises are safe and properly equipped for an emergency (for more details please see our Health and Safety policy, which can be found on our website and within the Parents Handbook).
- At enrolment of their child, parents are asked to sign an emergency consent form to enable us to act in the best interest of the child in a situation of emergency and in absence of the child's parents. At the same time the parents are also required to provide us with all relevant information on the health of their child (such as medical condition, allergies, special dietary requirements) and with the name, address and telephone number of the family doctor, should we need to contact them in case of an emergency.
- At FDCL at least 50% of our staff have First Aid Responder training and one staff with valid (obtained not longer than longer than three years ago) First Aid Training is always present in the premises.
- All employees are informed of who is trained in first aid.
- Moreover, two members of staff are always present in our facility at all times, so that one of those can concentrate on the injured/sick child and if necessary promptly bring him to the hospital as the second staff can attend the rest of the children present in our facility at the time of the emergency.
- Each room has its own First Aid Box. We keep the contents of each of them updated according to the HAS Guidelines of First Aid Places of Work, 2008 and the content of each box is checked and replenished monthly by



staff.

- A list of emergency numbers is displayed in each room, beside the phone.
- Children's records and telephone numbers for the parents are kept in each room easily accessible in case of an emergency.
- Our local registered doctor is Dr Michael Henry, Kelly Henry Medical Centre, Castlerea, County Roscommon, and is contacted in case of accidents or sudden illness.

How do we respond to an emergency?

In case of a child/adult being injured or becoming seriously ill while in our care the following actions are taken:

- The staff witnessing the accident/illness immediately seeks help from the staff trained in first aid.
- Assess the situation to the best of their ability looking for immediate dangers for the casualty and themselves.
- Make the area safe protecting the casualty from further danger.
- Immediately seek help from the first aid staff.
- Promptly make sure that all other children in the facility are safe from harm and properly supervised.
- The first aid staff will deal appropriately with the emergency and depending on the circumstances might ask another staff to call 999 or 112.
- The staff calling 999 or 112 will provide them with all information on the location of our premises.
- If necessary, the injured/sick child/adult will be promptly brought to the hospital via the fastest mean of transport.
- As soon as the casualty is being dealt with appropriately, the emergency contact for the casualty will be contacted and told of the accident.
- In case of an accident, an accident record form is filled up with all relevant



information and kept until the child is 21 years of age. This report is completed by the staff member via our Child Paths app. This is then sent directly to the parent where they are asked to read and electronically sign the form.

Fire Drills & Emergency Evacuation Procedures

FDCL has a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire drill or evacuation posted on the wall in all areas. All staff members should be familiar with their responsibilities with regard to fire drills and the procedures in case of the fire alarm going off. The fire alarm procedure must be shown to all students and relief employees commencing work in the service.

Fire drills will be practiced on a regular basis, at least once a month. All persons on the premises at the time are required to participate. All children and staff members must be signed in and out accordingly onto the attendance record. This record will be used for fire drills (ChildPaths). The main thing to remember is to stay calm and not to panic. The children should be filed out and brought to the fire assembly point where roll call will take place.

A record of the fire drill will be kept on file – how long it took, equipment needed, how you dealt with it, how the children dealt with it etc. If a child in your group was upset this should be noted in their individual file.

Fire Drill Procedure

If you discover a fire or one is reported to you, **sound the alarm and shout FIRE!**

On sounding or hearing the alarm, stop whatever you are doing and leave the building with the children by your designated fire exit route and using the



following routine:

- When the fire alarm sounds, the children are asked in a calm manner to form a line without delay.
- The children are led by one of the staff members to leave the building via the shortest route.
- Any sleeping children should be given a high priority in the evacuation procedure.
- The staff member will take the tablet which has access to the attendance on ChildPaths, check the room to ensure all children have exited or lined up and close the door behind them when exiting the building.
- Once outside, stay outside.
- The staff member will take a roll call immediately.
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings or to put on coats.
- If possible, close doors and windows enroute.
- Meet at the assembly point.
- Do not re-enter the building until the management of the fire brigade/fire safety officer informs you it is safe to do so.
- Management will check the premises to ensure everyone is out and will check toilets/cloakrooms and will be the last out.
- A roll call will be carried out by management at the assembly point to ensure all persons are accounted for.

Child Safeguarding & Protection Policy

Name of Service: - Frenchpark & Districts Childcare CLG (FDCL), Corskeagh Park, Frenchpark, Co. Roscommon F45 Y860. Ph: 0949870111

Services provided: At FDCL we provide Full Day care to children aged 12 months to 12 years, part time and sessional care.

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Frenchpark and Districts Childcare is a registered Childcare and School Aged Childcare Facility providing the above services to children aged 12 months to 12 years.

Our commitment to safeguard children from harm:

- FDCL are committed to safeguarding the children in our care and to providing a safe environment in which they can learn, play, and develop.
- The welfare of all children in our service is paramount. We are committed to child-centered practice in all our work with children
- We are committed to upholding the rights of each child and young person who attends our service, including the right to be kept safe and protected from harm, and the right to be listened to and heard.
- Our policy and procedures to safeguard children and young people reflect national policy and are underpinned by Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Tusla Children First – Child Safeguarding Guide 2017 and the Children First Act 2015.
- Our policy declaration applies to all paid staff, volunteers, committee/board members and students on work placement within our organisation. All committee board members, staff, volunteers, and students must abide by the policies, procedures and guidance encompassed by this policy declaration and our child safeguarding policy and accompanying procedures.
- Our appointed Designated Liaison Person is Grainne Gibbons .
- The Deputy Designated Liaison persons is June Murphy and Nadine Carrig.

Risk assessment:

In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, our crèche has carried out an assessment of any potential harm to a child while attending FDCL or participating in crèche activities. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the service

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procedures for managing those risks is summarised below:

Risks Identified	Policies and/or procedures in place to manage risk
New staff members	Recruitment and induction policy
Vetting staff	Garda vetting policy
Visitors to the service	Visitors policy
Students who attend work experience	Student policy
Outings	Outings policy



Child Safeguarding Statement Updated June 2025

Child safeguarding policies and procedures:

As required by the Children First Act, 2015, Children First National Guidance for Protection and Welfare of Children 2017 and the Guidance for Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement for Early Years Services 2018 the following policies/procedures/measures are in place:

- A designated liaison person and a deputy designated liaison person has been appointed
- We have a child protection and welfare reporting policy in place (see our **Child Protection Policy** – see below), which includes:
 - our policy for dealing with allegations of abuse or neglect

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against employees.

- our procedure for managing child protection records.
- our confidentiality policy with respect to the safeguarding of children.
- relevant aspects of our recruitment policy with respect to child protection.

- We have a **Recruitment policy** and **Garda Vetting policy** in place.
- We have a Code of Behavior in place.
- All staff have completed the Tusla eLearning module – *Introduction to Children First* and relevant staff have attended Always Children First Child Protection Training.
- As part of our induction policy, staff are required to review, understand, and agree to all policies included in this booklet, including this safeguarding statement.
- All staff have the relevant qualifications for working in the setting
- All staff are Garda Vetted before commencing work in the setting and this is updated every 3 years
- We have the following other relevant policies in place:

- **Complaints policy**
- **Accidents and Incidents Policy**
- **Supporting positive behaviour policy**
- **Health and nutrition policy**
- **Accident/incident policy**
- **Safe sleep policy**
- **Infection control policy**
- **Equality and diversity policy**
- **Inclusion policy**

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— Social media management policy

Implementation and review

- We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. FDCL is committed to the implementation of this child safeguarding statement and the accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service.
- This statement will be reviewed every 2 years or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.
- This statement has been published and displayed within the service. It is readily available and accessible to parents/guardians on request. A copy of this statement will be made available to Tusla if requested.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

For further information on this statement please contact relevant persons @ info@fdcl.ie

Risk Assessment

Risk Identified	Who is Responsible	What is currently in place to manage the risk	What future actions are needed
Recruitment	June Murphy, Grainne Gibbons	Recruitment policy in place. New staff members have 2 written references and these are verified via phone call. All staff have relevant qualification. All	Continuing professional development and child protection training when available. We will



		staff must complete and update Children First.	ensure staff do not commence before Children First has been certified.
Induction	June Murphy, Grainne Gibbons, Nadine Carrig Senior Staff members (Room leaders)	All staff when commencing work in FDCL are mentored by a senior staff members. They are given our policies before start date. They are given one month induction, six month probation. As part of induction management go over policies and safeguarding statement to ensure they are understood	After one month's induction their understanding of child protection and performance are reviewed. The probationary will continue when required.
Vetting	June Murphy, Grainne Gibbons, Nadine Carrig	New staff are vetted by Garda and Police if lived abroad at any time. All staff must have vetting to commence in the setting.	Ongoing from guidance of Tusla policy but vetting is reviewed and renewed after three years.
Visitors to service	June Murphy, Grainne Gibbons, Nadine Carrig Admin Team	Any visitor (parents viewing, professional visiting a child or carrying out a service such as maintenance) must sign	Only allowing people who have made appointment and updating policy when required.

		the visitors book when they arrive and leave. They are at all time accompanied and not in the presence of children in our care.	
Outings	All staff	Recording children when out of service continually. Adhering to the outings policy.	Ensuring all parents are informed of outings, our policies and taking account of our duty of care when out of the building. The outings checklist to be completed in each outing
Students	All staff	Ensuring that students have permission, indemnity, references and vetting if required.	Students purely monitor our staff. They have no access to children alone and are not given any information regarding the children. They are always supervised by senior staff

Child Protection Policy

Overview of policy:

1. We ensure that all employees, students, and volunteers at our



crèche are aware of and familiar with our child protection policy. We share this policy with staff when they first join and require a statement of acknowledgment that they have read and understood the policy.

2. We have a Designated Liaison Person who acts as a liaison with outside agencies and a resource person to any employee, student or volunteer who has a child protection concern. The Designated Liaison Person is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions to the Child and Family Agency, Tusla or the Gardaí.
3. Our service has put in place a standard reporting procedure for dealing with disclosures, concerns or allegations of child abuse which is outlined below.

Designated liaison person and deputy liaison person:

Our appointed Designated Liaison Person is Grainne Gibbons.

The deputy Designated Liaison Person is June Murphy & Nadine Carrig.

Role of the Designated Liaison Person

The Designated Liaison Person ("DLP") in our service is responsible for ensuring that the child protection and welfare policy is promoted and implemented.

The duties and role of the DLP include:

- To be familiar with "Children First," National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children and our child protection policy. They are also responsible for the implementation and



- monitoring of the child protection and welfare policy.
- The DLP provides support to staff members who are dealing with/have dealt with a child protection concern or disclosure.
 - To receive reports of alleged/suspected or actual child abuse and act on these in accordance with the guidelines.
 - To build a working relationship with the Child and family Agency Tusla, An Garda Síochána and other agencies, as appropriate.
 - To keep up to date and undertake relevant training on child protection policy and practice, in order to ensure the relevance and appropriateness of the services' policy and procedures in this area.
 - To ensure that systems are in place for recording and retaining all relevant documentation in relation to child protection issues.

Reporting procedure for dealing with disclosures, concerns, or allegations of child abuse:

4. If an employee, student, or volunteer has concerns about a child or has received a disclosure of child abuse then the DLP should be informed immediately (refer to section "How to handle a report of abuse").
5. Where the DLP considers that the concern meets the reasonable grounds for criteria outline below then Tusla must be informed immediately.
6. If an employee, student, or volunteer feels that leaving the child in the situation would expose them to harm or risk of harm then the child should not be left in that situation pending an investigation by Tusla. If Tusla cannot be contacted and



the event is an emergency, then the Gardaí should be contacted immediately.

7. If the DLP is uncertain then they should contact Tusla for informal advice relating to the allegation, concern, or disclosure.
8. The DLP will arrange a meeting with the parents to inform them that a report has been made to Tusla unless to do so would be likely to endanger the child.
9. Should the service decide not to report a concern raised to Tusla or the Gardaí then the employee, student or volunteer should be given a clear written statement of the reasons why the childcare service is not reporting the concern. The employee, student, or volunteer, if they remain concerned about the situation, are free as individuals to consult with, or report to, Tusla or the Gardaí. The provisions of the Protections for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 (revised 1 October 2015) apply once they
10. communicate 'reasonably and in good faith.'

Reasonable grounds for a child protection or welfare concern (in line with www.tusla.ie) include:

- Evidence, for example an injury or behavior, that is consistent with abuse and is unlikely to have been caused in any other way.
- Any concern about possible sexual abuse.
- Consistent signs that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
- A child saying or indicating by other means that he or she has been abused; and



- Admission or indication by an adult or a child of an alleged abuse they committed.

Record Keeping

We will ensure that all data in relation to child protection records will be stored in a safe and confidential manner in a secure locked cabinet. For information on our processing of personal and sensitive data and the rights of the data subject please see our data protection statement.

Child protection and recruitment

In line with our recruitment policy above, we will not employ, contract, or involve as a volunteer, any person to work with children or young adults who has a criminal conviction for violent crime, sexual crime, drugs related offences, or any other offences deemed inappropriate in relation to work with children.

Garda Vetting will be undertaken for all staff.

Allegations Against an Employee/Volunteer

If an allegation is received with respect to an employee or volunteer, the DLP will notify the manager /owner immediately. If the allegation relates to the Manager/Owner, then the DLP will notify Tusla immediately. The safety of the child is priority at our service.

With respect to allegations against employees or volunteers the following process will be followed:

- The DLP and Manager/Owner will work with each other and Tusla and the Gardaí where required.
- If a formal report is made, then the employee will be notified that the



allegation has been made and the nature of the allegation is. At this stage, the employee has the right to respond, and any response should be documented and retained. "Natural justice" will apply whereby a person is considered innocent until proven otherwise.

- While the allegation is being investigated the employee will be suspended with pay (where appropriate) or asked to work with increased supervision (where possible and appropriate).

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Policy Statement:

FDCL is committed to promoting equality and diversity by ensuring that every child and family has equal access to our service. We respect and celebrate the unique backgrounds, cultures, abilities and perspectives that each child and family brings. Our service provides an environment free from discrimination and prejudice, where everyone is valued and treated with respect.

Procedure:

Principles and Values

We recognise that each child and family has unique interests, cultures, beliefs, and ways of expressing themselves. All staff have a responsibility to demonstrate respect for every child and family, regardless of ability, culture, race, gender, national origin, ancestry, beliefs, traditions, or additional needs.

Staff must be non-discriminatory and promote equal care and attention to all children.

Staff Responsibilities

- Model inclusive behaviour at all times.
- Challenge any discriminatory language, behaviour, or remarks immediately and sensitively.
- Support children, families, or colleagues affected by discrimination.



- Promote equality and respect in all interactions.
- Participate in ongoing equality and diversity training.

Favouritism

In line with Siolta National Standard 9.8, staff do not demonstrate favouritism towards any child. Staff avoid becoming over-involved with any one child to prevent feelings of resentment or isolation among other children. Over-indulgence or favouritism can affect children's future relationships and behaviour.

Access and Inclusion

Our service is open and accessible to everyone in the community, regardless of religious affiliation, political background, race, culture, linguistic needs, disability, sexual orientation, or age.

We make every effort to schedule meetings at times and locations that enable the majority of parents/guardians to participate, ensuring equal opportunities for involvement.

Curriculum and Resources

All children's individuality and potential are recognised, valued, and nurtured.

Activities and play equipment provide opportunities for children to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination.

Through thoughtful planning, children explore and appreciate similarities and differences among themselves and others.

We encourage families to share their cultures, religions, and traditions, allowing all values to be respected and celebrated within the service.

Resources, including books, images, music, and toys, positively reflect cultural and racial diversity and avoid stereotypes. Boys and girls are given equal opportunities and encouraged to participate in all activities.

Handling Discriminatory Behaviour



Any discriminatory language, behaviour, or remarks by children, parents/guardians, staff, students, or volunteers are unacceptable. Such behaviour is challenged constructively by:

- Supporting those affected.
- Educating those responsible to understand and overcome prejudice.

Celebrating Festivals

We respectfully acknowledge major festivals and events important to children and families in our service and wider community. Without indoctrination, we celebrate diversity through stories, activities, foods, and clothing reflecting diverse cultures.

We approach occasions like Father's Day and Mother's Day sensitively and welcome parents/guardians' contributions.

Recruitment

The service is an equal opportunities employer. Staff recruitment follows a fair, non-biased, and transparent process to ensure diversity and equality.

Language and Communication Support

We encourage all children and parents/guardians to feel welcome and included.

To support children with limited or no English:

- Staff use simple, slow speech and nonverbal cues.
- Staff may learn key phrases in the child's home language (e.g., "hello," "thank you," "do you need help?").
- Children are encouraged to use their native language freely.
- Other children are encouraged to include non-English-speaking peers as usual.



- Parents/guardians are invited to assist by sharing key words or phrases.

Confidentiality

Personal information about children's background, culture, and language is handled with sensitivity and confidentiality, in line with data protection and legislation.

Positive Behaviour Policy

Policy Statement:

At FDCL we believe children are competent and confident learners. We believe that children should be supported to make choices and accept responsibility for their actions and behaviour. We acknowledge children are continually learning about their emotions and feelings, and are learning to manage same. Through positive and reciprocal relationships with employees, positive behaviour is encouraged from all children. Employees will ensure expectations on behaviour are fair and consistent to all children depending on their age and stage of development.

We ensure all children are treated with respect, by adults and other children alike to allow children to develop and sustain a positive sense of self. As a result, children will feel valued, respected, empowered, cared for, and included. In supporting positive behaviour, children's well-being is crucial. Any punishment which humiliates, has a negative impact on a child's sense of self, or makes them feel incompetent is damaging for that child, and other children to witness. This is NEVER permitted in an early year's service.

We will work with the children to ensure they receive positive guidance, support, and encouragement to finding positive solutions to manage their own behaviour. FDCL sets realistic expectations of behaviour in accordance to the age and stage



of development of the child. We apply rules and expectations fairly and consistently to all children. **We do not use any form of physical or corporal punishment.** We encourage children to respect themselves, others and the environment. We facilitate children to make positive decisions and choices about their own learning and development to develop a positive sense of self. We aim to facilitate a happy, caring environment with stimulating activities for all children. In the case of a particular incident, or persistent unacceptable behaviour, we will always discuss ways forward with the parent/guardian of the child.

Procedure:

General Procedures for Encouraging and Nurturing Positive Behaviour:

- Employees will adopt a reciprocal and positive relationship with the child.
- Employees will act as a role model and adopt a confident approach to encourage and support positive behaviour.
- Employees will work in a respectful manner and in partnership with other practitioners, children and parents.
- Employees are role models for the children and should treat one another with respect, use appropriate tone of voice and body language to one another and the children.
- Observation and recording will be used to inform and support staff to decide on appropriate methods and strategies of dealing with behaviour problems.
- The Childcare Manager is the person designated as the resource person for staff support on behaviour management issues.
- At an age appropriate level, children will be encouraged and supported in resolving their own disputes.
- Each child should be positively supported and recognised as an individual.
- Employees will practically engage children in resolving their conflicts using



age appropriate methods. In doing this, children can explore their feelings and conflicts in a safe and controlled way. Employees will positively support children in doing this.

- Training will be provided for employees where necessary.

Rewarding Positive Behaviour:

- Employees will acknowledge and praise positive behaviour as it occurs.
- Children are not rewarded with food, sweets or treats and all employees understand how to support positive behaviour, and how to encourage and facilitate it effectively.
- Positive language will be used rather than negative statements made. For example, rather than saying 'Don't stand on the chair', saying: 'I would like you to sit back down on the chair please John, because you will fall off and hurt yourself' or 'We are inside and we don't climb on furniture or equipment inside' or 'I would like you to sit back down on the chair please, do you remember we only climb on things when we are outside'.
- While encouraging positive behaviour, the child's self-esteem should not be negatively impacted. The child should not be labelled through the use of certain words, e.g., 'naughty.'

In anticipating occasional inappropriate behaviour we follow these guidelines:

- Employees will provide a calm, safe and stimulating environment which is age appropriate and of interest to all children present within the group.
- Children are involved where appropriate in the planning of activities and developing the curriculum.
- A routine and rhythm which is practical and beneficial to the age range of children should be developed and sustained.



- Educators will ensure rules are applied consistently to all children within the setting and are aware of expectations regarding the children's behaviour.
- Correct Child:Adult ratios will be implemented according to the Child Care (Pre-School) Services Regulations (2006) at all times.
- Children have regular daily access to the outdoor play area.
- Children are kept informed of what is happening and what is expected of them.
- We ensure there are enough suitable age appropriate activities and equipment for children.

Implementing Positive Steps to Supporting Positive Behaviour:

- Children should be made aware of the expectations and their responsibilities – no hurting bodies, no hurting feelings.
- Positive behaviour should be supported and encouraged from all children consistently throughout the day by all employees.
- Incidents should be dealt with immediately by the employees who witness it.
- Employees should not speak about the child, or their behaviour in front of other parents, children, or the child.
- Positive behaviour should be consistently encouraged to all children.
- Positive behaviour should be implemented within the curriculum throughout various themes. Age appropriate activities, prompts and materials should be provided to children to explore their feelings and emotions throughout the year.
- The employees where possible should have a quiet area where children can retreat if they are experiencing negative feelings for example a quiet corner.



- At an age and developmentally appropriate level, when the child is calm, the employee should explore the behaviour with the child using prompts for example I noticed you got [feeling] when you were at the [area].....what could you do next time you feel....Do you know what I do when I am [emotion].....

Procedure for Supporting Positive Behaviour

ABCD; Action Behaviour Choice Decision

Minor Behaviour Problems

In these type of situations the child may have caused no issue all day and suddenly their behaviour changes. Minor behaviour problems are behaviours in line with the child's age and stage of their development. Employees should positively support the child's well-being and identity throughout the process of supporting positive behaviour. The child should always feel valued, respected, empowered, cared for and included.

Employees will assess each situation and use their best judgement in dealing with the matter. Situations may arise where the staff may allow the children to 'resolve their own battles' or ignore minor incidents. A sensible approach is recommended in dealing with minor behaviour problems. It is not always evident to staff what the cause of an incident has been.

If a child has a temper tantrum, the age of the child is taken into consideration. A child **under** three years is more likely to have a tantrum out of frustration. A child **over** three years is more likely to have a tantrum linked to defiance. Staff will take a more gentle approach with the younger child and a firmer approach with the older child. Employees will explain to the older child in a calm clear way using



simple words why they cannot have what they want. If the tantrum continues and other children are getting upset or hit the child will be moved to another area in the room until they calm down. The staff member should act in a calm and fair manner and allow the child to re-join the activity when they have calmed down as if nothing has happened.

At this stage, boundaries should be highlighted to the child. The expectations must be clear and reasonable to the age of the child and their developmental level.

Where it is evident that a child is about to misbehave for example taking a toy from another child then the staff member should comment on the behavior: *'Mary, you know we take turns and share. Angela will let you have that toy to play with when she is finished. Will we ask Angela to let you have that toy when she is finished?'* This provides the child with an opportunity to change the behaviour and not take the toy from the other child. If the child continues a second reminder should be given and what the consequences will be if they continue.

Age of child	Approach	Examples of behaviour
Under 1 yr 1 – 1½ yr 1½ - 2yr	1. Approach calmly 2. Stop any hurtful actions. 3. Acknowledge children's feelings. 4. Gather information 5. Restate the problem. 6. Distract the child	• Frequent crying to seek attention • Temper tantrums • Will test limits/rules • Biting
2- 3yrs	1. Approach calmly 2. Stop any hurtful actions.	• Temper tantrums • Possessive of toys



3-5 years	3. Acknowledge children's feelings. 4. Gather information. 5. Restate the problem. 6. Ask for ideas for solutions and decide on an outcome the child	• Fussy feeder • Use of bad language • Whingy • Verbally hits out • May be bossy
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Managing Moderate Behaviour Problems

ABCD; Action, Behaviour, Choice, Decision

Moderate behaviour problems tend to happen more frequently than the 'once off' type behaviours and have a greater impact on the child themselves and other children in the room. Employees should positively support the child's well-being and identity throughout the process of supporting positive behaviour. The child should always feel valued, respected, empowered, cared for, and included.

Age of child	Approach
Under 1 yr 1 – 1½ yr 1½ - 2yr	1. Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions. 2. Acknowledge children's feelings. 3. Gather information. 4. Restate the problem. 5. Suggest solutions and choose one together. 6. Be prepared to give follow-up supports for supporting Positive Behaviour 7. Observe the child
	1. Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions.



2- 3yrs 3-5 years	2. Acknowledge children's feelings. 3. Gather information. 4. Restate the problem. 5. Ask for ideas for solutions and 6. Choose a decision together. 7. Be prepared to give follow-up supports for Supporting Positive Behaviour 8. Observe the child
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Staff will ask the child what is wrong or bothering them. Emotion picture cards may be used with younger children to support how they may be feeling.

Observations will be used to assist making an assessment as to what may cause the behaviour. Observations will be used to capture when the child's behaviour is more positive as when behaviour is more challenging children are regularly corrected. Constant correction can have a negative impact on the child's self-esteem. Staff will use the observation of 'positive' behaviours to give plenty of encouragement and praise which should help to develop self-esteem.

This approach can be shared with parents and used at home and in the service. Observations should be looking for;

- When the child is at their best behaviour and when they 'act out.'
- Consideration will be given to whether the child likes the activity or not, is there a particular child they don't get on with, are they tired, hungry, or perhaps ill?
- If the group of children are becoming disruptive, the staff will review activities to ensure children do not become bored or sit for too long.



Staff will consider changing the layout of the room regularly, and perhaps changing the daily routine to ensure that there is variety and children do not become bored.

Staff will consider liaising with the designated person responsible for behaviour management for support when they have used strategies that have not seen an improvement in behaviour.

Managing Severe and Challenging Behaviour

ABCD; Action, Behaviour, Choice, Decision

In relation to severe behaviour issues it is very important to work with the parents and seek assistance from professionals such as the Early Intervention Team. Observing the child is also very important.

Sever and challenging behaviours are frequent and repeated actions by a child that impact significantly on other children and the child themselves. The child may also find it difficult to engage in the activities being undertaken. In this type of situation the behaviour has not improved using the usual behaviour management strategies and may often require more intensive one-to-one support to the child. Employees will discuss the behaviour problem with the designated person who has overall responsibility for managing children's behaviour problems, to put an action plan together.

Key Points

- Engage in close observation of the child and record.
- Work with the parents.
- Seek professional help (i.e., Early Intervention Team).



Employees will ensure that instructions or corrections are given in simple words and kept short and that similar phrases are used by all staff and the child's parents so that the information been given to the child is consistent.

Where a child is receiving professional support we will work with the parents and the professionals to implement the programme or approaches recommended.

A behaviour management strategy plan will be drawn up based on observations and professional support guidance (PHN or others) where possible. All staff will adopt the same approach to what to do when the child shows signs that the challenging behaviour is about to be presented, how best to manage that behaviour when it happens, how to limit the negative impact on other children or activities and strategies that can be taught to the child to help them control their own behaviour.

Our service will engage and work with the parents/guardians to work towards the same approach at home and in the service to behaviour management.

	Approach	Examples of behaviour
At any age	1. Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions. 2. Make eye contact with the child 3. Acknowledge children's feelings. 4. Gather information. 5. Restate the problem and ensure the child understands	• kicking, • hitting, • bad language, • prolonged screaming, breath holding, • head banging, • ongoing biting,



	6. Suggest solutions and choose one together. 7. Be prepared to give follow-up supports for supporting Positive Behaviour 8. Observe the child	Other behaviours may present as the child refusing to engage, being over anxious, avoiding contact with others and unusual behaviours.
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Procedures which are Unacceptable for Supporting Positive Behaviour

- Physical punishment (corporal punishment).
- Sending children out of the room.
- Isolating children from the group e.g., time out.
- Shouting or raising of your voice.
- Physical restraint for example holding will not be used unless it is required to prevent injury to child, other children, adults or property. In cases where it is required to hold a child in such manner, it must be recorded in the accident and incident report. Parents must be informed of the incident.
- Speaking negatively about the child to other staff or in front of the child/other children.
- The child should not be labelled.
- Employees should not expect unrealistic behaviour from a child in accordance with their age and stage of development.
- Once the incident is over, the employees should not place emphasis or keep reminding the child of their behaviour.
- The child should not be humiliated.
- Withholding food or drinks is not allowed.
- Showing favouritism is not allowed.
- Staff must not fail to reassure or comfort a child.



Partnership with Parent(s)/Guardians

- It is our policy to work in close collaboration with parents. We recognise and value the role of the parent/guardian in their child's life. In supporting positive behaviour, working in partnership with parents/guardians is important. It is our policy to inform parent(s)/guardians at the enrolment stage, of the policies and procedures in relation to behaviour. The supporting positive behaviour policy will be explained, in doing this, a consistent approach can be adopted.
- The parent/guardian is encouraged to share any difficulties/concerns which they may be experiencing regarding the child's behaviour for example bereavement, illness, a new baby etc.
- Where a child's behaviour is causing concern, it is our policy to do this in a consultative manner, and staff will endeavor to work in partnership with the parent/guardian to develop a strategy for dealing with the situation.
- Discussing the child's behaviour in front of the child/other children/other parents will be avoided.
- Where a significant incident occurs regarding a child's behaviour, the following should be documented:
 1. The child's full name
 2. Time and location of the incident
 3. Events leading up to the incident
 4. What happened
 5. Others involved
 6. Witnesses
 7. How the situation was handled **(ABCD)**
 8. Follow up with the children

Anti-bullying

Children are afforded a right to their own time and space. Depending on the



child's age and stage of development, it may not be appropriate to expect the child to share. However, we feel it is important to acknowledge both children's feelings, and to support them in understanding how the other child may be feeling.

Diversity and equality are important for children to understand, and we endeavour to create a positive and supportive environment for all children. Employees will encourage all children to acknowledge and celebrate difference. Consequently, children will recognise from an early age, bullying, fighting, hurting and racial comments are not acceptable behaviour.

Bullying can take many forms. It can be physical, verbal, or emotional, but it is always repeated behaviour which makes other people feel uncomfortable or threatened. Any form of bullying is unacceptable and will be dealt with immediately. At FDCL, Employees follow these guidelines to ensure children do not experience bullying:

- Employees ensure all children feel safe, happy and secure within the setting.
- Employees develop positive relationships with all children, and encourage children to speak about their feelings.
- Employees are encouraged to recognise that active physical aggression in the early years is a part of children's development and recognise positive opportunities should be in place for children to channel this positively.
- Children are learning about their feelings, employees will support children in identifying their feelings and actions for example happy, sad, or angry.
- At an age and stage appropriate level, children will be encouraged to resolve their problems and take responsibility for their actions.
- Employees are aware when play becomes 'aggressive' and will initiate an appropriate activity with the children.
- Any instance of bullying will be discussed fully with the parents of all involved to



look for a consistent resolution to the behaviour.

- If a parent/guardian has a concern regarding their child's behaviour, the early years educator or manager will be available to speak to the parent. It is through partnership with parent(s)/guardians which we can ensure a child will feel confident and secure in their environment, at home and in the setting.

BULLYING AND PHYSICAL VIOLENCE IS NOT TOLERATED WITHIN THE SERVICE, WHETHER INFLICTED ON ADULTS OR CHILDREN.

What causes children to be aggressive?

Sometimes, aggression takes the form of instigating fights, sometimes the child may provoke other children to fight, or may antagonise or threaten other children. Other children do not like this behaviour, and will often feel intimidated and insecure in their environment. Children who display aggressive behaviours will often have low self-confidence, poor social skills and may have difficulties with their speech. However, any child, regardless of their age or stage of development may experience aggression at some stage. Aggression brings power, and often children who are aggressive will seek the control and position which comes with it among their peers.

How can we support positive behaviour?

- Aggressive behaviour should never be ignored.
- Employees should not get into a power struggle with the child.
- Be firm but gentle in your approach. The child should not be given mixed messages at this stage.
- The child should always feel valued, respected, cared for and included.
- One-to-one work should be initiated with the child, and a plan should be devised. For example when I get angry, I will go to the... (area).
- Provide opportunity for the child to display positive behaviour, acknowledge, and praise this behaviour.
- Provide the child with opportunities which demonstrates leadership and



communication in a positive manner.

- The **ABCD** model should be used with the child, where age and stage appropriate, the child should make the choice, and also take responsibility for their actions.
- The employees should be fair in their expectations, and should be consistent, patient and understand change will take time.

Rough and Tumble Play/Fantasy Aggression

Young children often engage in play which has aggressive themes – such as superhero and weapon play. This may take over some children's play. This is an interest of that particular child, and it is not a precursor for bullying. We will ensure the behaviour does not become inconsiderate or hurtful, and will address it if we feel necessary.

- We recognise rough and tumble play is part of children's development, and it is acceptable within limits. We view this type of play as role play, and not as problematic or aggressive.
- We will offer opportunities for children to explore this type of play in a safe and secure environment.
- Children will be aware of the boundaries with this form of play, and will be aware when this behaviour is not acceptable.
- We recognise fantasy play may contain violent dramatic strategies – blowing up, shooting etc. We will use these opportunities to explore lateral thinking and conflict resolution. These themes often refer to 'goodies and baddies', we will use such opportunities to explore concepts of right and wrong, and alternatives to the dramatic strategies.

Biting

Biting happens in almost all childcare settings where young children are together and dealing with biting can be challenging. Biting is a developmental stage which children may go through. All biting incidents are upsetting for children, and will



be dealt with in a calm and clear manner. The educator will use clear language and be consistent in their approach. We aim to support children in developing self-control; however, the safety of each child is our primary concern.

Why do children bite?

- Children may be teething, and it may feel good to bite and chew.
- Children experience many emotions (positive and negative) that are difficult to express and at times control.
- Biting sometimes occurs for no apparent reason.

Biting Prevention

- The correct Adult: Child ratios will be in place within the setting at all times.
- The layout of the room will be appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child, and employees can see all children at all times from all areas of the room.
- Employees are aware when children are teething, and offer materials/foods which may soothe.
- Age and stage appropriate materials are present within the room for children to access at all times.
- Employees are vigilant to the relationships between children, and are aware of possible conflicts.
- Employees are aware of the temperaments of the children.
- Employees should encourage children to use language to express feelings/emotions.

Where a child does bite, employees should follow these guidelines to try to distinguish a pattern:

- Are there particular times of the day when the child bites?
- Do toys seem to be causing biting incidents?
- Does the child focus on one particular child?
- Is the child teething?
- Can something be offered to soothe the child's biting? For example toys/food with



textures or coldness.

Procedures to follow when biting occurs

Usually the skin isn't broken and the wound isn't serious. However, the appropriate first aid should be administered.

If the skin is not broken:

- Wash the area with mild soap and water (do not rub) and pat dry.

If the skin is broken:

- The human mouth is full of bacteria, and there may be a risk of infection. Serious bites to the face, hands, or genitals can be especially dangerous.
- Wash the area – but don't scrub – with mild soap and running water for three to five minutes, then cover it with a clean dressing.
- If the wound is bleeding, apply pressure with a clean dressing and elevate the area if possible.
- The child is comforted, and reassured of their safety.
- The employees will explain to the child who has bitten using a firm but gentle approach that biting is not allowed.
- Management will be informed and details should be recorded in the accident and incident report form.
- The situation is dealt with professionally, and confidentiality is adhered to. Both parents are informed separately, and the accident and incident report is signed.
- The employees should explain the methods which will be adhered to so it does not occur again, and highlight the importance of partnership with parents.
- If the child bites again, the child could be observed for a period of time to try and develop a pattern of behaviour.
- In the event of a child repeatedly biting, the manager will speak to the parent/guardian. If all avenues have been exhausted, management may suggest seeking help/support outside the setting.



Observations, Learning & Inspections

Policy Statement:

In order to plan, prepare and organise for good quality care, educators need to observe children, review, and evaluate the curriculum regularly and maintain systematic records. FDCL recognises that observation is a useful tool and enables staff to plan the curriculum to meet the individual needs of children.

Procedure:

- We keep Daily Routine Records for each child, which is verbally communicated to parents/guardians at collection time.
- All observations will be treated with confidentiality.
- Children are informally observed daily, and educators may take notes on what they are playing with or how they interact with the room, this information aids educators in planning the curriculum.
- Children are formally observed every month. These observations are available on the Child Paths app.
- Observations are kept strictly confidential and are only shared with parents and relevant staff. Observations may be shared with third parties at the request of parents.
- Photographs may be taken of the children during the observations to supplement the notetaking, these photographs are kept confidential and are only shared with relevant parties.
- Children are never judged during an observations and FDCL recognises that all children are different and reach milestones at different times.
- Staff are trained to be impartial when carrying out an observation and to never make assumptions but to only base the observation on what they are currently seeing.

Frequently Asked Questions

**Can I leave a buggy or car seat in the crèche during the day?**

Unfortunately, no. We do not have the facilities to safely store buggies or car seats during the day.

If my child has a dietary requirement or allergy, can you cater for this?

Yes. Please inform the childcare manager of any dietary requirements or food preferences before your child's settling-in period. All allergies must be clearly outlined on the child's record card.

What happens if my child is sick while attending crèche?

If your child becomes unwell during the day, you will be contacted immediately. We will monitor your child closely, but depending on their symptoms or temperature, you may be asked to collect them. Please refer to our Illness and Exclusion Policy for full details.

Does my child need to be toilet trained before starting in the Preschool room?

Yes. All children must be fully toilet trained before transitioning to the Preschool Room, as we do not have appropriate changing facilities in that area. Our staff will provide support and encouragement throughout this stage. Please see our Toilet Training Policy for more guidance.

How do I get feedback on my child's day?

All daily updates are shared via the ChildPaths app. This includes details of your child's meals, naps, nappy changes, activities, photos, observations and any incidents or accidents. Parents can also send and receive messages directly through the app. You will be registered on ChildPaths when your child starts with us.

How often will my child go outside to play?

Outdoor play is an important part of our curriculum, and we aim to bring children outside every day, regardless of the weather. Our outdoor space includes all-weather canopies to support this, and we ask parents to provide weather-appropriate clothing year-round.

What happens if I am late to collect my child?

We ask that children are collected on time. However, we understand that occasional delays can happen. If you are running late, please call us as soon as possible so we can reassure your child. A late collection fee may apply in line with our policy.



Can I arrange a visit before my child starts?

Yes. We encourage prospective families to book a tour of the setting and meet the team before starting. This helps both you and your child become familiar with the environment.

**It's time to play, to laugh, to grow,
To make new friends and say hello!
From little tots to big kid crews,
There's fun and learning—all good news!**

**You've been their guide right from the start,
With loving hands and open heart.
Now we'll join in, a caring team,
To help them chase each little dream.**

**So wave goodbye but don't feel blue—
We'll take great care and learn lots too!**

**In our creche, all children belong.
With kindness, fun, and learning near,
We're glad your little one is here!**

