

Quality assurance programmes

The following organisations offer a Quality Assurance Programme:

- Border Counties Childcare Network
- FÁS / Barnardos
- Highscope
- IPPA – The Early Childhood Organisation
- National Children's Nursery Association
- Saint Nicolas Montessori Society of Ireland



For further information or contact details of the above programmes please contact your local County Childcare Committee.

Useful contact details

Monaghan ☎ 047 72896
 County Childcare Committee ✉ monaghanccc@eircom.net

Cavan ☎ 049 9529882
 County Childcare Committee ✉ cavanccc@oceanfree.net
 🌐 www.cavanccc.ie

Meath ☎ 046 9073010
 County Childcare Committee ✉ meathchildcare@eircom.net
 🌐 www.mccc.ie

Louth ☎ 041 6859912
 County Childcare Committee ✉ info@louthchildcare.ie
 🌐 www.louthchildcare.ie

Check list

When choosing a childcare service ask yourself the following questions?

- Does the service feel **welcoming** to you and the child?
- Are they notified to the **Health Service Executive**?
- Do they comply with the **Pre-school Regulations**?
- Is the daily routine **flexible & suitable** for your child's individual needs?
- Is there a **parent's handbook** available?
- Is there a high **staff** ratio?
- Is there a **menu** displayed?
- Is the service fully **insured**?
- Is there a **curriculum/ daily plan**?
- Is there an opportunity for **outdoor play**?
- Is the service **clean, bright and airy**?
- Is there a good selection of suitable **equipment** and **toys**?
- Is there a facility for your child to **take a rest**?



UNDERSTANDING QUALITY IN CHILDCARE

The development of a co-ordinated approach to quality childcare at local levels

The development of a CO-ORDINATED APPROACH TO QUALITY CHILDCARE

Key role As part of the National Development Plan 2000-2006 County Childcare Committees have been given the key role in the development of a co-ordinated approach to quality childcare at local levels. Since their establishment, the County Childcare Committees have been working towards providing information, advice, training and support to childcare providers so that childcare provided is delivered in the best interest of children parents and staff.

EOCP funding The Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme is contributing to raising quality standards in childcare services through capital and staffing grants. As a result of EOCP funding some services have introduced a reduced fee structure to make childcare more accessible to those on lower incomes.

Pre-school inspection team

The pre-school inspection teams role is to visit the childcare services on a regular basis to ensure that they comply with the Childcare Act 1991 Pre School Service Regulations 1996. This act covers topics such as notification, records, premises and facilities, medical assistance, insurance, safety, age appropriate materials, and child adult ratios.

What is quality? A Quality Childcare Service meets the families needs and the individual needs of the child such as physical, intellectual, emotional, social and language skills.



Indicators of a quality childcare service

The Environment

- Is it bright, airy?
- Is there an opportunity for outdoor play?
- Are the toys and equipment suitable for the age group?
- Is it child centred?

Staff

- Do they make you and the child feel welcome?
- Do they show good interaction with the children?
- What qualifications & experience do they have?
- Is there opportunities for further training available to the staff/?
- Are the correct child-staff ratios in place?

The Curriculum/Daily Plan

- Is there a curriculum/daily plan for each individual age group suitable for their development level?
- How is the curriculum/daily plan monitored?
- Is this information available to the parents?
- Is this information in the parents hand book?
- Can the children choose their own activities?

Nutrition

- Are well balanced meals provided for the children?
- Can the service cater for special dietary requirements?
- Is there a daily menu on display?

Quality

- Is the service working towards a Quality Assurance Programme?

The importance of quality

- A good childcare service will be one where your child is happy, treated as an individual and the families needs and views are valued.
- When choosing a childcare Service it is important to look at how various facilities will meet you and your child's individual needs.
- When looking at the cost of a child services it is essential to look at the indicators listed.
- When considering the cost of childcare it is essential to remember that there are high costs associated with running a high quality service.



Parental Involvement

- Is there opportunities to meet with staff and discuss the child's progress, make suggestions or complaints?
- Is a key-worker system in place?
- Are there opportunities for communication between staff, children and family?

Respect for Diversity

- Does the service welcome all children, irrespective of cultural, religious and ethnic background?
- Family diversity must be recognised and respected at all times.