

### 37. Inclusion Policy

#### Policy Statement

Links Childcare recognises and respects the rights of all adults and children in our service. We value the ability, individuality and cultural background of all children by providing each child with the opportunities they need to reach their full potential as active learners within an inclusive ethos.

We aim to actively promote equality of access and participation and eliminate discrimination on grounds of, gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Travelling Community. This policy represents the agreed principles and commitment for inclusion, in line with Early Childhood Care and Education National Inclusion Charter.

#### Principle

This policy is underwritten by the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016, the Employment Equality Acts 1998 to 2011, the Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2012, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Articles 29 & 30), the Disability Act 2005 and the Special Needs Legislation – EPSEN Act 2004.

#### Purpose of Policy

To provide guidelines for the successful inclusion of children with additional needs in each Crèche  
To provide guidelines for the successful celebration of diversity in the Crèche

#### Guiding principles for the inclusion of Children with Special Needs

- **Consistent:** The provision of supports and services for children with a disability should be consistent across our service
- **Effective:** supports should make a difference and genuinely enhance inclusion.
- **Equitable:** All children should have equality of opportunity to access and participate
- **Evidence-informed:** supports and services for children with a disability should be evidence-informed.
- **High quality:** supports and services for children with a disability should be of high quality.
- **Integrated:** Our approach is to work in partnership with families and other stakeholders/agencies
- **Needs-driven:** supports will be needs driven
- **A Sense of Identity**



## Links Childcare Policies & Procedures

### **The management of this service takes responsibility of:**

- Ensuring the physical environment is suitable where possible and within available resources
- Providing clearly defined enrolment procedures set out in our enrolment/admissions policies, which endeavour to facilitate access for all children within the resources and expertise available.
- Identifying children with additional needs during the application process.
- Regularly reviewing with staff, the planning and resources provided for children with additional needs attending the service.
- Linking with other groups that support the child, HSE, Early Intervention Team, TUSLA, Voluntary Services etc.
- Linking in with AIM for advice and support from the Early Years Specialist Service (Access and Inclusion) which can be accessed by phone (01-511 7222), e-mail (onlinesupport@pobal.ie) or via the AIM online application form at [www.pobal.ie](http://www.pobal.ie). **This applies to the ECCE funded two year free preschool programme only.**
- Working with staff and families to identify and apply for additional resources/support for children with additional needs.
- Providing appropriate physical and staffing resources within the budget constraints of the service.
- Supporting staff to gain the appropriate knowledge and skills for the implementation of this policy and additional roles as they are created and developed.
- Appointing a keyworker to the child with an additional need
- Ensuring that Medical Emergency Care plans are set up for children requiring life-saving medication
- Ensuring there is purposeful learning for the child with additional needs within the setting
- Being an advocate for children with additional needs within the setting

### **Each Educarer, working in conjunction with Management, is responsible for**

- Being a support for children with additional needs
- Ensuring that the parents/guardians are fully informed about the curriculum planned and provided for their child and have given written consent for any action, support or intervention for their child.
- Planning and implementing a programme which incorporates the individual goals for the child with additional needs.
- Ensuring the programme provides opportunities for participation and interaction with other children.
- Responding to parents/guardians needs and providing support and guidance, where appropriate.
- Encouraging a collaborative family approach.



## Links Childcare Policies & Procedures

### **Equality & Diversity**

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

“It is the States obligation to protect children from any form of discrimination and to take positive action to promote their rights”. We provide equal opportunities by ensuring that:

- We are aware that everyone’s tastes vary and each of us has a different way of doing things. We all have different interests and ways of expressing ourselves.
- All staff have a responsibility to show clearly, through their work, that they respect all children and their families regardless of ability, culture, beliefs and traditions.
- Staff are non-discriminatory, and we believe in equal attention and care for all children without regard to race, gender, national origin, ancestry etc.
- Staff will not develop favouritism or become over involved with any one child. The children should be comfortable in the care of any of our staff as there may be different staff working each day with groups or individual children.
- We will convene meetings at a time and venue that enable most parents/guardians to attend and to ensure equal access to information and involvement in the service.
- Everyone in the community regardless of religious affiliation, political background, race, culture, linguistic needs, disability, sexual orientation or age, has access to the service.

### **The Curriculum:**

- All children are to be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured.
- Activities and the use of play equipment will offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination.
- Through the proactive use of planning and curriculum development opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.
- As part of our Medium Term plan each month, we ask families to share their own cultures, religions and traditions with our staff so that all values are respected and celebrated in the crèche
- It is our objective to support and encourage each child in their experience and guide them to embrace their own values and the values of others. These experiences help set the child’s foundations and potentially shape the people they will become.

### **Resources**

All materials positively and accurately reflect cultural and racial diversity. These materials will help children to develop their self-respect and respect other people by avoiding stereotypes. We use a range of books, images, music and songs and experiences that reflect diversity. Boys and girls are to have equal opportunity and be actively encouraged to use all activities.

### **Discriminatory Behaviour/Remarks:**

Any discrimination (language, behaviour or remarks) by children, parents/guardians or staff/volunteers is unacceptable in the crèche. Discrimination will be positively challenged by supporting the victim and helping those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices.



## Links Childcare Policies & Procedures

### **Festivals:**

We aim to show respect for and awareness of all major events in the lives of the children and families and wider society. Without indoctrination, we aim to acknowledge festivals celebrated by all families in our community and wider society through stories, activities, special food and clothing which reflect diversity of life. We have a sensitive approach to Father's/Mother's Day etc. and welcome parents/guardian's contributions.

### **Language:**

It is important that all children and their parents/guardians feel welcome and encouraged to be involved. To help children with little or no English we will:

- Ensure inclusion in the group and staff will talk to the child, speaking slowly and simply, demonstrating what is meant by the words.
- Support child and parents by staff member who will try and learn some key phrases in the child's language, e.g. 'hello' 'goodbye' 'hungry' 'thirsty' 'do you need help?'
- We encourage children to use their home language whenever they are so inclined.
- Make it easy for the child to settle into the setting, we encourage other children to talk to non-English speaking children in the same way as usual.
- Parents are invited to help with key words and phrases in home language.
- Staff will ensure that they correctly pronounce and spell children's names.

### **Cultural, Social and Moral Values:**

Growth in social ,cultural and moral values is encouraged by:

- Providing an environment where children feel safe and secure.
- The constant implementation of the crèche rules.
- Learning to share and respect the property of others.
- Learning to accept the rules of play and the rights of others.
- The celebration of festivals from a variety of cultures.