



LINKS CHILDCARE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Policy on Employee Support and Supervision

Last Review Date: June 2023

Policy No.46

Issued: August 2021

Policy Statement

At Links Childcare our aim is to provide the very best service for the children who are entrusted to our care and to provide a satisfying work environment for our staff. These two aspirations are inextricably linked and it is for this reason that this Employee Support and Supervision Policy emphasises the integral nature of structured professional supervision.

This policy is available to all on www.linkschildcare.ie (<https://linkschildcare.ie/about-us/our-policies/>) or contact us at info@linkschildcare.ie

Rationale and Policy Considerations

The Employee Supervision Policy in relation to Links Childcare, means a policy specifying the way Educarers, SLE's, Assistant Managers, Deputy Managers and Managers are supervised and supported in their work practices.

Staff development provides chances for greater knowledge, improved skill and better understanding, not as an end in itself but as a means to develop and improve the level of service to children and their families. Good supervision can increase reflective practice and research has shown that good supervision is associated with job satisfaction, commitment and staff retention.

Supervision and appraisals are core elements of the staff development process for all team members. Team meetings and mentoring also form part of a quality support and supervision structure for the full staff.

Appraisals provide an opportunity to acknowledge an individual staff member's strengths and a context for setting new professional development goals. Appraisals also contribute to identifying training and development needs of staff members.

Legislation and regulatory requirements

1. Under Regulation 9 of the [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016](#) the registered provider must ensure that staff are appropriately supervised in relation to all of the regulatory requirements for the service.
2. Having a clear, written policy and procedure on Employee Supervision is a requirement under Regulation 10 of the [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016](#).



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Children's needs

Children need:

- to be cared for and educated by adults who are well supported in their role and whose practice is monitored to ensure that the care and education they receive while attending the service is of good quality.
- the adults, whose role is to work alongside their parents/guardians, in supporting their wellbeing, learning and development, to be encouraged and supported to be reflective practitioners and to feel valued in this very important and significant role.

Parents'/Families' needs

Parents/guardians need to know that the:

- service provided for their child's learning and development is of a high quality.
- staff to whom they entrust their young child's care and education, while at Links Childcare, are adequately and appropriately informed, motivated, supported, guided and monitored in their role.

Staff needs

Staff members need this policy

- to ensure that they will be appropriately supported in their very important role.
- to be able to discuss the day-to-day issues, challenges and opportunities that inevitably come with providing quality care and education to young children and interacting with their parents/guardians.
- a safe space in which to be able to address any potential challenges associated with interacting positively at all times with their colleagues.
- to be accountable for the quality of their practice.
- to be given information that relates to their position in the service, in an appropriate context and be able to rely on having specific time dedicated to their particular support needs, by their manager.

Management needs

Management needs

- to ensure that they meet the requirements of the Early Years Regulations in relation to how support and supervision of employees in relation to their professional role are provided.
- to ensure that the service's Supervision Policy is known and understood by all staff members.
- to ensure that the expectations of Links Childcare in relation to supervision, and the purpose of supervision, are clear to all staff members.



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Important Definitions

Supervision	A key managerial activity. It is communication between two or more staff members, one of whom is a line manager, to support and develop the knowledge, skills and values of the staff member/s to help improve outcomes for the children and families who use Links Childcare and the staff member/s themselves – it is a formal reflective process about professional thinking, actions and decisions.
Appraisals	A staff appraisal is a formal process by which the work and professional development of an individual staff member are reviewed. The process acknowledges the worker’s strengths and contributes to future planning and goal setting. Appraisals are about a person’s previous performance as well as future development. The appraisal considers the staff member’s achievements, their expectations, and their training and development needs.

Policy Statement

At Links Childcare all staff members will have a regular, consistent and uninterrupted supervision meeting with their Manager or Regional Manager as appropriate, the rationale for which is to

- support them in their work.
- ensure that they are clear about their role and responsibilities.
- ensure competent and accountable performance.
- ensure that, in their respective roles, they meet Links Childcare standards and objectives.
- ensure a positive atmosphere for practice.
- support their professional development.
- help keep stress to a minimum.
- increase awareness of new areas of professional knowledge.
- ensure that they are given the resources to do their job.
- provide an opportunity to voice their ideas and concerns.

Staff members are encouraged to reflect on the quality of their practice, continually update their knowledge base and raise any safeguarding concerns.

Staff members will be supported appropriately in the case of Child Protection concerns and outside support will be sought if it is needed.

The supervision programme will be reviewed annually to ensure its efficacy.

Staff appraisals will be carried out for each staff member within the first six months of appointment and annually thereafter.



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Procedures and Practices

Supervision

A Supervision Meeting will be scheduled at 12 week intervals. For Educarers and other staff, e.g. Chefs, these meetings will be conducted by the Crèche Manager. For Managers and Deputy Managers, the meetings will be conducted by a Regional Manager. Regional Manager review is carried out by a member or member of the Senior Management Team. The general areas for discussion will be as follows, though the list is not exhaustive or prescriptive: -

- *Room Management.*
- *Care and welfare of individual children.*
- *Curriculum*
- *Contact and work with parents/guardians*
- *Role as Key Educarer, if applicable*
- *Any new ideas/reflections on quality practice.*
- *Any concerns including, but not limited to, child safeguarding concerns.*
- *Training needs.*
- *Staff welfare and support.*
- *Health and safety issues.*

Records and record keeping

Brief notes of the meeting will be taken by the Manager and signed by both the Manager and the Staff Member, when content is agreed. These notes will be scanned to HO where they will be stored electronically.

Supervision of students

Students/Trainees who work with the children are at all times under the direct supervision of an SLE and under the general supervision of the Manager and Deputy Manager. They are supported to carry out their duties and to promote and protect the wellbeing, learning and development of the children in their care.

Staff Team Meetings

Regular and consistent team meetings are an integral part of team, individual and service development at Links Childcare, as well as being core to communication within the Company. Team meetings can have a number of different functions including:

- An opportunity for CPD
- Information sharing
- Decision making
- Developing the team/teamwork
- Review, reflection, evaluation and planning
- Debriefing and support
- Skills development/sharing knowledge from training attended.



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Mentoring and the Role of the Key Colleague

At Links Childcare, the role of the Key Colleague is essential to the Induction process and to the provision of quality care to children from the first day of an Educarer’s employment with us. This mentoring system does not involve line management responsibility but provides support of people and practice. The role of the Key Colleague is to provide an opportunity for reflection on work and learning that arises from it. The Key Colleague shares his/her experience and provides encouragement and support.

Appraisals

All staff members have:

- a **New Employee One Month Check-in**, based on the standard Links Childcare Form
- a **Supervision Meeting** at 12 week intervals (See above)
- a **Probationary Review** carried out before the end of their probationary period (6months), based on the standard Links Childcare Form

All staff members will have an Appraisal Meeting annually beginning one year after their Probationary Review. The format of Staff appraisals is common to all staff and is based on the Links Childcare Standard Appraisal Form. Appraisals relate to the individual’s job description and focus on areas of performance relevant to their role. Notes of all appraisals are recorded, signed by both parties and scanned to HO, where they are stored electronically in each staff member’s own personnel file, in accordance with good practice

Where there is disagreement between the parties, they must, in the first instance, try to resolve issues between them in a respectful manner with each listening to the other’s point of view. Should this fail and agreement not be reached, the issue will be referred to the HR Department for advice.

Overview of Employee Support and Supervision Meetings/Reviews

Name	Timeframe	Document Ref
New Employee One Month Check-in	At the end of the employee’s 1 st month of employment	Doc 16.11
Employee 12-week Supervision Meeting	12-week intervals	Doc 16.14
Employee Probationary Review	At the end of the employee’s 6 th month of employment	Doc 16.5
Employee Annual Appraisal	Annually (beginning one year after their probationary review)	Doc 16.12



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Conclusion

Staff members are informed of the policy and procedures regarding Staff Support and Supervision on commencing at Links Childcare. Familiarity with this policy will be included in staff induction and staff training.

Review:

Management and staff will monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy annually.

Review Dates:	June 2023		
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