

Staff Training Policy

Askea Community Childcare Centre is committed to the on-going training and development of staff. Continuous professional learning is important for both the quality of care for children in Askea Community Childcare Centre and staff job satisfaction.

Principle of Staff Training

This policy is underpinned by the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016, Regulations 9 & 10; Child Care Act 1991 (Registration of School Age Services) Regulations 2018; The Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services)(Amendment) Regulations 2016.

Rationale:

Research has shown that professional education for staff is a major factor in achieving quality in the provision of early childhood care and education services. The Staff Training Policy must identify and address the training needs of employees and unpaid workers.

It is important for all early years' providers to avail of opportunities to enhance knowledge and understanding within the staff team on an ongoing basis. This applies in particular to areas of practice relating to children's wellbeing, their exploring and thinking, their communicating and their sense of identity and belonging and includes awareness of the significance for young children of their physical, social and cultural environment. It also applies to other important areas of practice such as governance, planning and teamwork as well as health and safety and child protection.

A good induction programme provides a solid foundation on which the new staff member and employer can build a strong and trusting relationship. It informs the new staff member about the way the setting operates and it ensures that they are welcomed into the service and integrated into the staff team.

The aims of this policy are:

- To ensure that staff feel part of a well-functioning team and have the appropriate knowledge, skills and competencies to provide the children they care for with a quality curriculum/programme which meets their wellbeing, learning and development needs safely, responsibly and according to the highest quality standards.
- To provide re-assurance for parents/guardians that those to whom they entrust the wellbeing, learning and development of their children are appropriately inducted, trained and supported to carry out this task competently.
- To make parents/guardians aware of the need and the purpose of staff training and development and the service's approach to facilitating such training and development for their staff members, both individually and as a team.
- To clarify for staff members what the service management expects of them in relation to welcoming new members to their team and participation in training and development opportunities.
- To outline the service's commitment to full induction for new managers and staff members and ongoing staff development and training thereafter.
- To ensure that staff development and training needs to guarantee a quality service are identified and are well-planned for, well-resourced and organised efficiently and effectively with appropriate staff ratios maintained at all times.

- To ensure that all staff members are aware of the service's procedures for applying for training, that all requirements are met and that all staff members have equal access to appropriate training and development opportunities.
- To link the performance and staff development to the achievement of the service's operational and strategic goals and objectives and its commitment to continuous improvement and quality service provision.

Definitions/Glossary:

Staff development	Includes what is commonly called 'continuing professional development' or CPD and is the broad term used to include all activities that are undertaken by and for staff members in order to maintain, update and enhance their work-related knowledge, skills and competencies. (See Appendix A for essential competencies of early years' staff.)
Induction	The process by which new staff members are introduced to their colleagues and working environment as well as supported and helped to familiarise themselves with the service's policies, procedures, practices, ethos and culture. The term induction is also used in this policy for the process of familiarisation with the service that is provided for new management committee members.
Study leave	Leave required for a training/learning event that will prevent the individual member of staff from undertaking their normal duties. Study leave includes leave for training courses, conferences, seminars, workshops and any specific learning opportunities arranged either internally or with other organisations.
Training events	These are generally activities that have an educational or developmental purpose and which lead to the acquisition of skills or knowledge relevant to an employee's current or future role at Askea Community Childcare Centre. Training events, as referred to in this policy, are primarily short training sessions/days/courses for skills and/or knowledge development, but may also include attendance at conferences, seminars or some designated meetings.

Policy Statement

Askea Community Childcare Centre aims to provide a learning environment which supports both individual and team development. Access to quality induction and ongoing training and development opportunities prepares staff members for both existing and future roles and responsibilities. It helps them to reach their full potential thereby enhancing the quality of their practice.

A structured approach is taken to induction for new staff team members to ensure consistent and accurate communication about the service's policies, procedures, statements and regulatory requirements. Students and volunteers are also inducted to the service's policies, procedures, statements and operations. Students who work with the children will be under the supervision of appropriately qualified and experienced staff members at all times.

All staff members regardless of age, grade, gender, ability/disability or ethnic background or the nature of their contract of employment are expected to undertake staff development and training. This is viewed as a continuous process throughout their time in the service and staff will be encouraged to take advantage of such development and training.

Askea Community Childcare Centre is committed to the development of staff members' awareness, knowledge and competencies through allowing time off for, and/or meeting the expenses of, relevant training courses, conferences, external meetings, participation in the local provider network or other such relevant educational events.

Financial assistance with the cost of training or time off to facilitate participation (with or without pay) may be offered at the discretion of the service taking into account both service needs and budgetary commitments. All applications for funding /study leave shall be submitted for consideration by the Managers and referred to the Committee of Management.

This policy applies to all staff and has been developed to ensure that there is equality of access and opportunity to attend learning and development events for all staff.

Where specific policies are updated or amended, or a new policy is added, all staff members will be provided with training to ensure familiarity with the most up to date service policies.

The service closes on Good Friday each year so that all staff can train together as a team.

All staff members also have regular supervision meetings and an annual appraisal within which to formally review their practice and training needs (see Staff Supervision Policy).

Records are kept on each staff member's personnel file of all training events attended and courses completed while employed in this service.

All new Committee of Management members are provided with an appropriate induction on joining the Committee. See Appendix 2.

Supplemental Policy on Staff Training related to Covid-19

Askea community childcare Centre is committed to the on-going training and development of all staff. Continued professional learning is important for both the quality of the service and staff job satisfaction. It is recognised that good communication/training will be essential to minimise the risks of covid-19 in our service.

Principle

This policy is underpinned by the Childcare Act 1991 [Early Years Services] Regulations 2016, Regulations 10, 23, 31, Child Care Act 1991 (Registration of School Age Services) Regulations 2018, Our Duty to Care 2002, Children First National Guidelines for the Protection & Welfare of Children, The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. Children's Services Regulations Guidance Document for Early Years Services: COVID-19 2020; HPSC Infection Prevention and Control guidance for settings providing childcare during the COVID-19 Pandemic 2020.

Rationale

Supporting our staff as they return to work upon reopening will help them to understand the changes to policy and procedures that have taken place. It is through such training and support that Covid-19

can be managed in the service. Staff will be made aware of, and trained in, the control measures put in place to minimise the risk of them and others being exposed to COVID-19.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the main policy on staff training, [the HSPC Infection Prevention and Control guidance for services providing childcare during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) and the [Return to Work Safely Protocol](#)

Procedure

- Every staff member (including unpaid workers) will receive information and training for managing COVID-19 upon their return to the service, including:
 - Re-familiarisation with all policies of the service, including infection control policy, risk management policy, incident plan and all other policies which have been changed and updated upon re-opening
 - Correct procedures for handwashing
 - Revised drop off and collection procedures
 - Revised procedures for service up a play environment
 - Revised procedures for cleaning
 - Health and Safety Authority return to work protocol
 - The role of the Lead Worker Representative. The appointed Lead Worker Representative will also receive specific training in relation to their role.
- A signed record of all this training will be maintained together with other training records.
- In line with the service's supervision policy all staff and unpaid workers will have regular meetings with their supervisor to identify and address their training needs in relation to management of Covid-19 in the service.
- The management team will undertake a training needs analysis to identify gaps that need to be filled in respect of training related to Covid-19. This analysis will be reviewed on a regular basis, to establish what type of training is required.
- Both managers and staff will have regular support and supervision meetings where any issues relating to the management of Covid-19 arising in the workplace can be addressed in a timely and supportive manner. Staff will be encouraged to put forward new ideas, make suggestions for changes or to request additional training to assist them in managing the risks of Covid-19 in Askea Community Childcare Centre.
- Staff are also encouraged to discuss any concerns in relation to training for Covid-19 with their Lead Worker Representative.

Procedure for Staff Training

Induction of new staff members

The main purposes of the induction process for new staff members are:

- To introduce them to children, families and colleagues prior to commencing work.
- To clarify Askea Community Childcare Centre's Statement of Purpose and Function.
- To outline the legislative requirements and guidance documentation applicable to the service, including:

- Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013).
- The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.
- Child welfare and protection legislation and national policies, including Children First Act (2015) and Our Duty to Care (2002).
- To familiarise them with the service's Safety Statement.
- To familiarise them with the service's Child Safeguarding Statement and Child Protection Policy.
- To familiarise them with the service's handbook, essential policies, procedures, routines and approach to quality and to the service's organisational structure.
- To explain the curriculum/programme used in the service and how play and learning experiences at Askea Community Childcare Centre are planned, implemented and evaluated.
- To make them aware of any specific needs of any child who will be in their care.
- To clarify their roles and responsibilities (including record management) and those of others in the service.

The induction process is tailored to the needs of each individual new staff member, student or volunteer and the length of an induction period will depend on the experience, qualifications and role of the new staff member.

Each new employee will be provided with a mentor/colleague, a Team Leader where possible, who will provide on-site support with implementing the services policies and procedures and general queries, for the induction period. The Assistant Childcare Manager will be available to assist in this process.

The Induction Programme:

- The Childcare Manager will carry out the induction programme with the assistance of the Assistant Childcare Manager. Team Leaders will then take on the roles of mentoring, coaching or shadowing the new staff member.
- The induction will take place when the new employee starts. The first day of induction is facilitated by the Childcare Manager and Assistant Childcare Manager. The Ethos, health and safety measures, policies and procedures will be provided and explained to the new employee.
- On and from the second day, induction will take place while working with the children, with direct support from the Team Leader and assistive support from the Assistant Childcare Manager, who may at times mentor the new staff member away from the children.
- Each new employee will receive a copy of the staff Handbook. Disciplinary and Grievance Policies and Procedures form part of the Staff Handbook.
- The Childcare Manager is responsible for assessing each new staff member's learning outcomes from the induction process through observation, feedback and reflection.
- A signed record of the Induction Process will be maintained.

The induction programme will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it is still meeting the needs of new staff members and the service overall and will be amended if needed.

Ongoing training and professional development for staff members

On an ongoing basis all staff members, including Managers, are required to undertake certain training which is considered necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the service.

All staff members are also required to assume responsibility for their own development and training, which includes both participation in planned activities and making use of opportunities to learn when they are presented.

Staff development and training is the responsibility of Line Managers who are responsible for identifying individual training and development needs and supporting and encouraging the staff team members.

Formal processes – induction, supervision, appraisal and training needs analyses – are used at the individual level and planning for staff development and training is carried out by the Line Managers in consultation with staff members at both individual and team levels.

Overall accountability for staff development and training rests with Management *[at every level including the Committee of Management where relevant]*.

Staff development and training provision will be regularly reviewed and evaluated to ensure that it is of good quality, relevant, effective and provides value for money.

It is the responsibility of Line Managers to ensure that trainers are competent (have the knowledge, skills, abilities and relevant qualifications where required) to give the training required and that external trainers have the appropriate accreditation/certification to provide the required training.

Supervision of Students:

Students/Trainees who work with the children are at all times under the supervision of an appropriately qualified staff member. They are supported and supervised by appropriately experienced members of staff to assist them to carry out their duties to promote and protect the wellbeing, learning and development of the children (see Supervision Policy).

Access to training for staff members

Staff development and training priorities will be reviewed by the Line Managers who have responsibility for staff development and training policy and practice:

Childcare Staff	Veronica Doran, Childcare Manager
Office Staff	Denise Ryder, Business Manager

Training and development plans/requests will then be submitted for approval to the Committee of Management.

Training priorities will be decided on the basis of the current and evolving needs of the children and families who use the service, the agreed plans and aims of the service, and ongoing developments in the childcare sector related to legislation and quality practice.

Existing qualifications, skills and competencies of the staff members and planned developments at the service will also be considered when prioritising training needs.

Study leave

When regular, trained staff members are away during hours of operation, appropriately qualified staff will be available to cover their work.

- In all cases consideration will be given in advance to the identified training priorities, the time required, the cost and availability of relief staff, the available training budget and equal opportunities.
- Learning priorities will be discussed between the Line Manager and the staff member and specific learning objectives agreed. Priority will be given to learning activities (including courses) which are relevant to the objectives of the applicant's current role.
- All staff members requesting study leave to attend a training course should apply in writing using the Training Request Form (Appendix 1) Staff may not take study leave without obtaining written approval prior to the leave required.
- Where attendance at appropriate training events (short courses, conferences, etc.) has been approved in writing, staff members are entitled to be paid during normal working hours or after-hours should this be necessary.
- Where the request is for a long-term course (e.g. to gain a professional qualification), requests for time off will be negotiated on an individual basis. All requests for time off must be discussed with the Line Manager who will then refer the request to the Committee of Management. Managers must give due consideration to issues of equity and consistency when agreeing to release any member of staff.
- A post course evaluation form should be completed.
- Part-time staff, who take part in study leave that exceeds their daily contracted hours, will be paid for the extra hours or up to the full-time hours for that day.
- Application Forms should be submitted at least **8** weeks before the start of an external training course.

Finance for training and staff development

If the company requests the attendance of staff at training courses then the service will pay for the course and the time taken to attend. Examples of such courses include First Aid, Manual Handling, Child Protection, Equality and Diversity Training and any other training as identified by the Managers. Pay will be at normal rate for the duration of the training.

If an employee requests to attend a training course the company will pay for the course if it is deemed appropriate to their role and if the budget allows. The employee will not, however, be paid for the hours they attend the course.

A Staff Training Request form is available from the Line Managers and all requests must be submitted to the Committee of Management. All staff will be required to produce proof of attendance or a 'record sheet' from the Tutor.

Any single training paid for by the company at the personal request of staff will mean that the staff member must not leave the company within a period of time after completion of training as follows:

Training costing more than €100	Remain in employment for one year
Training costing more than €500	Remain in employment for 2 years
Training costing more than €800	Remain in employment for 3 years

If the staff member leaves within the period of time the cost of training paid for by Askea Community Childcare Centre will be deducted from their wages at the time of leaving. Should an employee not complete a training programme which has been funded by the service the employee is liable to re-pay the cost. This may not apply if the individual demonstrates that they have made every effort possible to complete the course but have been unable to do so.

Funding per staff member for M. A. in Leadership in Early years Education and Care is capped at €1000 and per staff member for Level 8 B.A. Degree in Early Years Education and Care at €800.

Types of training and development opportunities provided

- Induction Process
- Daily and Weekly Team Meetings (See Communications Policy)
- Support and Supervision (See Staff Support and Supervision Policy)
- Annual Appraisals (See Staff Support and Supervision Policy)
- Individual and Group Training Events/Continuing Professional Development (CPD) (Seminars, Workshops, Conferences, Tailor-made and Accredited Courses)
- Mentoring/Coaching

Follow up to training

Staff members may be requested to complete a short report on any training event which they have attended. The purpose of this is to highlight key benefits and knowledge gained and to provide any further useful information.

Staff members may be requested to share their learning with other staff members to develop and support quality provision within the service

The Line Managers *are* responsible for evaluating the impact of learning and development provided for staff members throughout the year, that is, to discuss the learning, assess improvements to performance as a result of the training and ensure that learning is shared with colleagues. This is to ensure that opportunities are being identified appropriately and the added value of the training in which staff have participated can be assessed.

Records and record keeping

Training records for all staff members will be maintained by the service subject to General Data Protection (GDPR) requirements.

Records of Certified/Accredited training are held on each staff member's file.

The Childcare and Business Managers of the service undertake ongoing professional development, which is recorded and retained in the service

Communication Plan For staff & families

All staff are informed of the policy and procedures regarding Staff Development and Training on commencement in the service. The Line Managers ensure staff members have read and understood the policy and provide any assistance needed.

A summary of this policy will be included in the Staff Handbook. This policy will be reviewed with staff members at induction and annual staff training.

Parents/guardians are informed that there is a Staff Training Policy and may see it and/or receive a copy of the policy at any time upon request.

A copy of all policies will be available during all hours of operation to staff members and parents in the Policy Folder located in Reception.

All members of the Staff Team will receive written notification of any updates to the policy.

Related Policies, Procedures and Forms

- Supervision Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Records and Record Keeping Policy
- Staff Training Request Form (Appendix 1)
- Induction Checklist for New Staff Members
- Induction Checklist for New Management Committee Members (Appendix 2)

References/Supporting Documents/Related Legislation

- Tusla: Quality and Regulatory Framework
- Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016
- Síolta: The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education
- Induction: A Basic Guide to the Principles of Good Induction, Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE)
- Induction: Checklist (6th edition), Torrington D, Hall L and Taylor S, Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE), 2005
- Human Resource Management Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd
- Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013).
- Children First Act 2015
- Our Duty to Care: Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People.

Who Must Observe This Policy:

This policy must be observed by the Committee of Management, Managers and all Staff members.

Contact Information

If you need further information regarding this policy, contact:

Name	Veronica Doran
Phone number or email	059 9152306 askeacm@gmail.com

Date this policy was created	September 2016
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Date this policy was updated	June 2020
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Date this policy will be reviewed	June 2022
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Appendix 1

Staff training request form

Name of staff member _____

Course title _____

Awarding body and level
of accreditation _____

Where course is held _____

Cost of course _____

Duration of course _____

Start date _____

Finish date _____

Signed _____

Date _____

Approved by _____

Signed _____

Date _____

Appendix 2

INDUCTION CHECKLIST FOR NEW MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- A brief history/overview of the service
- A copy of the Constitution/Memorandum and Articles of Association
- An introduction to the Curriculum/Programme
- Roles and Responsibilities of the Committee
- Names, qualifications and job descriptions of all staff members
- The Annual Report and accounts for previous three years
- The management and staff structure
- The legislative requirements and guidance documentation applicable to the service, including:
 - [Part 12 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 \(No. 40 of 2013\)](#).
 - The [Child Care Act 1991 \(Early Years Services\) Regulations 2016](#).
 - Child welfare and protection legislation and national policies, including [Children First Act](#) (2015) and [Our Duty to Care](#) (2002).
- The service Policies, Procedures and Statements.