

Linking with the Community Policy

Askea Community Childcare Centre recognises that each child is part of a larger community which is an integral part of their lives. A community is more than a location or set of people. Askea Community Childcare Centre believes in strong sense of community and will work together with those around them to support and help children and families to be involved in the wider community.

Principle of the Policy

This policy is underwritten by the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016; The Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services)(Amendment) Regulations 2016; (Registration of School-Age Services) Regulations 2018;

Rationale

Promoting community involvement requires the establishment of networks and connections evidenced by policies, procedures and actions which extend and support all adults' and children's engagement with the wider community

The essence of the relationship between Early Childhood Care and Education and community involvement lies in the provision of opportunities to children to become familiar with the wider community (beyond the home and setting), which will later become an integral part of their lives. Furthermore, it broadens their range of experiences in terms of learning and development, expanding the curriculum beyond the walls of the setting. (Siolta, Standard 16).

As learning and development takes place in a social context, children's ever-evolving learning occurs not just in the family but also in community and society.

Policy Statement

At Askea Community Childcare Centre we recognise that, for many families, the service may be their first contact with the wider community beyond their home. It is, therefore, often a resource for families to learn more about their community and make other connections.

A sense of community plays an important role in the development of children's awareness of their identity and feelings of belonging. Demonstrating clear connections with the community in a meaningful way can promote a child's sense of belonging to that community, help shape their responsibility to it and ultimately become active citizens within it.

Procedures for Linking with the Community

- A range of information is displayed on the Family Notice Board and in the Reception Area which outlines the available local, regional and national resources to families. This will be kept up to date and families will be individually informed if there is a particular event happening which will suit them. Examples are: professional supports available, health services, parent supports, parent and toddler groups or similar, cultural or social events etc.

- Askea Community Childcare Centre produces a newsletter to help inform parents and the local community of events happening within the service and how these can support children's learning and development.
- It is important all children feel a part of the local community and begin to understand the sense of community. Children and families will be asked to join in local events in which the service participates e.g. local parades, summer festival etc.
- Throughout the year several local community representatives visit the service and talk to the children about what they do and when the children might visit them e.g. doctor, dentist, Garda, lollipop person etc.
- As an important setting for the children and families, we are dedicated to keeping in touch with all those who may have an involvement with the child and family. This will be done only with the families' permission and knowledge and with the best interests of the child at the core of all correspondence.

Communication Plan For staff & families

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.

Parents may receive a copy of the policy at any time upon request.

Parents and the staff team will receive written notification of any updates.

Related Policies, Procedures and Forms

- Partnership with Parents Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Key Worker Policy
- Siolta, the National Framework for Quality in Early Childhood Care and Education

Who Must Observe This Policy:

This policy must be observed by:

- Managers
- All staff members
- Parents/Guardians