

Managing Children's Behaviour Policy

Introduction

The Behaviour Management Policy for Crèche Cois Laoi is based on The Needs of Children (1979) Mia Kellmer-Pringle and The White Paper on Early Childhood Education.

“Children’s physical, emotional, social and intellectual needs must all be met if they are to enjoy life, develop their full potential and grow into participating, contributing adults.”

Mia Kellmer-Pringle (1979, p15)

In Crèche Cois Laoi we consider the Needs of Children to be:

- The need for love and security
- The need for new experiences
- The need for praise and recognition
- The need for responsibility

“Parents bring with them a vast quantity of experience and different perspectives on the needs of their children”

(The White Paper on Early Childhood Education “Ready to Learn”, 1999, S. 9.1)

In this policy a child’s Key Worker is a staff member who is assigned to a small group of children. The Key Worker’s main role is to ensure the overall development of each child in their group is catered for.

Child Development

Crèche Cois Laoi endeavours to make our curriculum child centred. In order to do this all staff members are trained in Child Development. We feel it is an essential requirement for all adults working with children to know how children develop so that they can help children learn.

The growth of children from babies through childhood is usually referred to as Child Development. To grow means to get bigger and to develop are the changes that happen as a child grows. Children grow and develop from the moment they are conceived until they reach adulthood.

This growth and development is continuous and there is no time when growth or development stops. Crèche Cois Laoi recognise that growth and development does not happen at the same time in each child, and at certain times of the child’s life they will grow and develop faster than at other times.

Children with Additional Needs

Crèche Cois Laoi is committed to the integration of children with special educational needs if we deem the crèche setting to be appropriate for your child’s needs. We believe that the development of young children with disabilities or special educational needs is more likely to be enhanced through attending services for all children.

We ensure that:

- The physical environment for children with additional needs is appropriate.
- The staff working with children with additional needs are trained accordingly.
- Two-way communication between staff and parents is encouraged.
- Children with additional needs are given opportunities and supported to participate in curriculum activities on an equitable basis.

Equal Opportunity and Social Justice

Crèche Cois Laoi recognises every child as a unique individual with the right to be respected as such. Children, like adults come from differing socio-economic, cultural and religious backgrounds and are characterised by differences in appearance and learning ability. Children have different tastes in clothes, different ideas about how to do things, different interests and different ways of expressing themselves. Around the world, children and adults experience discrimination because of prejudice. Children under six learn attitudes in much the same way that they learn how to count or to tie shoe laces.

They listen, watch and copy. All staff at Crèche Cois Laoi has a responsibility to show clearly, through their work, that they respect all cultures, beliefs and traditions. It is essential that children feel welcomed and valued and accepted for who they are in any service, without fear of being ridiculed, undermined or excluded.

Behavior Management Policy - General

The approach of Crèche Cois Laoi to behaviour management is consistent with the Child Care Act 1991 and the guidance on codes of practice.

The code of practice states that

“Children become self-disciplined principally by having their needs readily met, by observing self-discipline and consistency in those who care for them, and above all, by receiving love and approval and respect from those around them. Time should be made to allow for quality communication between parents and pre-school providers.”

This is constant with the policy of Crèche Cois Laoi.

The Behaviour Policy of Crèche Cois Laoi is based on

- providing support and encouragement to deal with conflict constructively, taking account of the individual child’s level of development and understanding;
- promoting respect amongst the children for themselves, others in the environment and the property of the facility;
- promoting positive and consistent interaction between staff and children;

- promoting each child's development and self-esteem by providing an explanation on unacceptable behaviour and an alternative where appropriate;
- promoting independence through allowing and encouraging children to make choices;
- working in partnership with parents to keep the lines of communication open and ensure consistency in the child's home and crèche environment;
- by praising children and acknowledging their positive actions and attitudes we hope to ensure that children see that we value and respect them.

Minor incidents regarding Behaviour Management are dealt with within the service by staff on a daily basis. These minor incidents are forgotten about once the child has said sorry for what they have done.

Major incidents or reoccurring behavioural problems are written into our accident/incident book and parents are informed and asked to sign the incident the day it has happened.

Central to the above is the establishment of a caring, warm environment where respect is inherent in all interactions: adult/adult and adult/child.

All childcare workers, either paid or voluntary will be made aware of the policy prior to working with children.

Crèche Cois Laoi will ensure that no corporal punishment is inflicted on any child while attending the Crèche

Practices that are disrespectful, degrading, intimidating, neglectful, emotional or physically harmful are not tolerated in Crèche Cois Laoi.

Procedure for dealing with day-to-day incidents

If a child/ren displays inappropriate behaviour within the crèche setting, staff will carry out the "Six Step Approach Procedure" outlined below. This procedure will be enforced consistently.

The Six Step Approach:

1. The staff member will approach the situation calmly and stop any hurtful behaviour
2. The staff member may temporarily separate or remove the child/ren to the 'quiet place' as part of this step – for a cooling-off period that leads to relaxation, not as a punishment. If a child has to be removed from the room after attempts to calm the situation within the room have failed, they will be accompanied by an adult at all times.
3. The staff member will acknowledge all the children's feelings i.e. "I can see Jane is upset and that Michael is also upset."
4. The staff member will gather information from the children on what happened and with the younger children she helps them to put words on what happened.
5. The staff member will then restate the problem back to the children
6. The staff member then asks for ideas for solutions to the problem and then encourages the child/ren to choose one together (in some

cases the staff member may have to suggest the solution). Often, before a solution is implemented, the teacher has a guidance talk with the children, reviewing what has happened, talking about alternatives for next time, and discussing ways to make amends.

The staff member will follow up by encouraging, monitoring and if necessary guiding the children as they try to implement the solution.

N.B.

The six steps are used differently depending on the age and developmental levels of the children. For example the pre school children will be able to verbalise more what the problem is. A staff member may help toddler children put the problem into words.

Staff at Crèche Cois Laoi do their utmost to deal with day to day incidents in the Crèche, however, if the situation is not calming down after the six steps and the child/children are distressed the child's parent will be contacted to come to the crèche, but only when if staff feel it is absolutely necessary.

If the situation is causing disruption to other children in the group, the child will be brought out of the room to a quiet place accompanied by a staff member until he/she has settled. When the child's parent(s) arrive at the crèche, information will be sought on any insights they may offer into the situation. Parents are required to stay with their child until he/she has settled.

It is important that the Crèche's healthy eating policy be adhered to, as excessive amounts of sugar, fizzy drinks and sweets may affect the behaviour of children.

Procedure for dealing with minor mis-behaviour

If for example a child has hit another child or is grabbing, pushing or displaying types of behaviour that can cause harm to a child or hurt other children's feelings, then the following procedures are followed:

- The child is removed from the situation and if they are upset, they can go to an area in the room for e.g. the library to take time out to reflect on what they have done and also in some cases to calm themselves.
- When they are ready to talk about what the problem is then the staff member will get down to the child's level and reason with them and explain what action they did not like.
- If the child gets very upset when the staff member tries to talk to them, the staff member will come back to the child again when they are ready to listen. This may take a few attempts.
- The child will also be encouraged to say sorry for what they have done and the incident is forgotten about. The child can go and interact with their friends again.

Parents are not informed of these little incidents as it has already been dealt with in the Crèche and from experience the children start getting really upset again if it is brought up at the end of the day. However if the behaviour

becomes a daily event and reasoning with a child is not working then parents will be informed and a solution will be sought collectively.

Procedure for dealing with continuing challenging behaviour

When a child in Crèche Cois Laoi displays challenging behaviour on a re-occurring basis, a behaviour management programme will be implemented over a three month period. This programme will be devised based on the individual needs of each child. A behaviour management programme will usually commence with the following steps:

A formal discussion will be carried out with the child's parents to gain information regarding the child's behaviour and to discuss ways of dealing positively and consistently with the challenging behaviour. Parents will be required to implement similar strategies from the programme at home to reinforce positive behaviour.

1. Examples of strategies used in the programme will be:

- a. praising good behaviour,
- b. listening to the child,
- c. setting limits by choosing a few simple rules, explaining the rules to them and repeating them periodically.
- d. giving the child a star when they display good behaviour.
- e. withdrawing a favourite activity from the child for inappropriate behaviour
- f. incorporating activities into the curriculum to reinforce good behaviour for example through role play, art and craft, reading favourite stories at story time etc.

Parents may be advised by Crèche Management to refer their child to another childcare professional or to engage in the Assessment of Need Process co-ordinated by the HSE. A referral may be advised through your GP to attend the Child and Family Clinic – The Early Intervention Service or CAMHS – Child and Adolescence Mental Health Service in Mahon. The telephone number to make an appointment is 021 4357447. This childcare organisation has been recommended to Crèche Cois Laoi by a Public Health Nurse working as part of the South Lee Pre-School HSE Inspection Team. These services can assist parents identify if all their child needs are being met and if they require any additional support.

** The importance of early co-operation in a behaviour management programme by parents is imperative in order to complete a successful behaviour management programme.*

2. The crèche manager will see that every effort is made to ensure that each child's individual needs are met while the programme is being implemented. Staff will be supported, when appropriate, in the room where the challenging behaviour is being displayed.
3. The Crèche Manager will assess the child's progress each week and discuss developments with the child's key worker.

4. All minor and major incidents will be recorded and shared with the child's parents. Confidentiality will be respected and information will only be shared with the parties concerned.
5. Parents whose child is displaying challenging behaviour will be required to meet the Crèche Manager and the child's key worker every week to discuss your child's progress and to review the current programme.
6. At the end of an eight week period if there is no improvement in the child's behaviour; staff will continue with the programme for another four weeks to observe improvements. Parents will be reminded by the crèche manager that four weeks are remaining in the programme and that they may need to start seeking alternative childcare arrangements if there has been no improvement.
7. At the end of ten weeks into the programme parents will be informed by the crèche manager if Crèche Cois Laoi can cater for their child's needs for the future, parents will have two weeks to find alternative childcare arrangements. The programme will be continued for the remainder of the child's time in the crèche.
8. If at the end of a three month period, there is no improvement in the child's behaviour and adaptability to the crèche environment then Crèche Management reserve the right to ask parents to vacate their crèche place.
9. A child will only be considered for re-admission by the Crèche Management Board. Independent medical/professional evidence may be sought providing evidence that the behaviour has been adequately treated. If the crèche management board deems that the child may be allowed back into the crèche it will be subject to space availability.

As the safety and welfare of every child within the Crèche is paramount, Crèche Management reserves the right to ask parents to vacate their place if a child is deemed to pose a danger to him/herself or to other children in the Crèche. This may arise at any stage during the three month behaviour management strategy.

Recommendations to Staff and Parents

- Give children some responsibilities. Even toddlers can help put toys away, and this helps promote the development of independence.
- Give specific praise (and state what the praise is for), e.g. "That was great (say child's name), the way you helped Shane tidy up his work", rather than just saying "Well done". Such specific praise enables children to understand which behaviour is considered good.
- Follow through on promises and consequences.
- Value the child regardless of their behaviour, e.g. "I can see you are having a hard time taking turns, but you are doing a good job trying.
- Allow children to express their feelings and opinions through play, art, dance, music as well as words.
- Include children in the problem-solving team. They are part of the solution too.

Inappropriate Language

Crèche Cois Laoi has devised the following policy on the use of inappropriate language or behaviour whilst working or visiting the centre.

Crèche Cois Laoi strives to create an environment where each child's confidence and self-esteem is promoted in a secure and consistent setting. Children model their behaviour and language on that of the adults around them.

Children and their families will be respected and spoken to politely and respectfully by all staff members in Crèche Cois Laoi. Therefore, Management will not accept inappropriate or disrespectful words or actions towards the children, parents or staff of the centre.

Conclusion

The Management Board and Staff of Crèche Cois Laoi wish to create a caring and orderly environment in which all children of the Crèche will feel valued and secure. The support of the children's' parents is critical to the establishment and maintenance of such an environment, especially when behavioural issues arise. All at Crèche Cois Laoi appreciate the role that parents play in resolving the issues addressed by this policy for the benefit of the children attending the Crèche.