Guidance for Policy on Staff Training in Pre-school Services

Contents

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this guidance document is to provide pre-school services with the regulatory requirements for the specific policy on Staff Training, as set out by the Child Care Act (1991) Early Years Service Regulations (2016). This document sets out the core requirements that should be addressed in this policy, as well as prompts and considerations that will support registered providers to ensure that their policy and procedures are fully developed and are reflected in the practices in their service.

The information in this document should be applied to the specific policy on Staff Training and the accompanying procedures of the service. This document should be read in conjunction with Tusla's Practical Guide to Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Years Services, and the Quality and Regulatory Framework

This document is for reference only. It should not be assumed that the guidance provided is comprehensive or that it provides a definitive answer in every situation.

Further resources are available in Appendix 1.

Regulatory Requirements of this Policy

> **Child Care Act (1991) Years Service Regulations (2016), Schedule 5. 1 (t)**
>
> A staff training policy, in relation to a pre-school service, means a policy specifying the manner in which the registered provider shall identify and address the training needs of employees and unpaid workers.

2.0 Core policy requirements

A Policy Statement is recommended in this policy alongside the core requirements as set out further in this document. The policy statement should include a commitment to support and foster a culture of continuous professional development, learning and up-skilling of staff in the service.

Requirement 1

The policy sets out how staff training needs are identified and addressed.

Prompts and considerations (not an exhaustive list)

The policy specifies:

(a) The procedures (methods, frequency, analysis tools) for identifying and analysing training and professional development needs.
(b) How the service will respond to training and professional development needs, once identified.
(c) The specific staff training needs of the person in charge- for example the manager.
(d) That where there is training required in response to practice issues that occur from time to time within the service (for example, management of a particular illness or understanding and responding to a behaviour such as biting) that this is provided for within the existing training needs process set out.

Requirement 2

The Policy sets what resources are provided for training.

Prompts and considerations (not an exhaustive list)

The policy specifies:

(a) The provisions for internal and external training and professional development, including budgets, resources, time allocation and study leave.
(b) The expectations for employees on training fees and paid time off for training.
(c) The training materials, subscriptions, software or other tools that are available to employees and unpaid workers.
(d) The process for identifying training needs for staff when practices observed or identified in the service are at variance to this or another policy.

Requirement 3

The Policy describes Induction Training.

Prompts and considerations (not an exhaustive list)

The policy specifies:

(a) The procedures for Induction Training for all new staff member, students and volunteers. This includes but is not limited to:
- Training on the legislative requirements and guidance documentation applicable to the service
- Introduction to the service's policies, procedures, statements, health and safety protocols and procedures
- Introduction to the premises and facilities
- Familiarisation with the service's routines and approach to quality.
- Introduction to the curriculum/programme approach used in the service and how play and learning experiences are planned, implemented and evaluated.
- Clarification of the role and responsibilities of the new staff member, student or volunteer (including reporting relationships) and of the service's organisational structure.
- Introduction to colleagues, line managers, children attending the service and their parents/guardian.
- Information on terms and conditions if required.
- Information on supervision, mentoring, shadowing, professional development and other supports offered to the new starter, including who has responsibility for delivery.
- The timeframe, location and duration of Induction Training.

(b) That induction processes are 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.

Requirement 4

The Policy sets out the availability of ongoing training and professional development.

Prompts and considerations (not an exhaustive list)

The policy specifies:

(a) The training calendar/schedule if available and/or makes clear how employees and unpaid workers will be informed about upcoming training.
(b) All mandatory training and specifies the grade of employee that is required to complete any mandatory training.
(c) That there are procedures in place to ensure training is up to date, and that staff are notified in advance of any training that is due to expire.
(d) The eligibility criteria for accessing training as appropriate.
(e) How staff can apply for training, the approval process and how any training fees are managed.
(f) The service's commitment to equal access to training for employees.

Requirement 5

The Policy details the staff training records kept in the service.

Prompts and considerations (not an exhaustive list)

The policy specifies:

(a) The training records to be maintained and provides for the appropriate documenting of training records for employees and unpaid workers in the service.
(b) That there are procedures in place for the appropriate documenting and retention of copies of attendance records, certificates, results, receipts, evaluation records, and qualifications on the premises.
(c) The purpose of maintaining training records, and information on how these records assist with learning and development activities and strategies.

3.0   Best Practice in developing and implementing a Staff Training policy

In addition to the regulatory requirements for this policy as set out in this document, service providers can enhance the quality of practice in the implementation of the staff training policy in the service. In this section, best practice in this policy area is outlined and further information is signposted where available.

- Implementation of this policy should reflect Síolta Standards, in particular Standard 11 Professional Practice.

- Staff training is a standing item at team meetings.

- Staff who have attended training are facilitated to share key learnings with other staff in the service.

- 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.

- Training priorities should 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 early years sector related to legislation and quality practice.

- The existing qualifications, skills and competencies of the staff members and planned developments at the service should also be considered when prioritising training needs.

4.0 Appendix

4.1 Supporting Information

- Aistear Siolta: [Practice Guide](#)
- Aistear: [Blogs](#)
- Barnardos: [Training](#)
- Barnardos: [Library and Information Service](#)
- Better Start: [Learning and Development](#)
- [City and County Childcare Committees](#)
- Early Childhood Ireland: [Learning Hub](#)
- Government of Ireland: [Nurturing Skills Learning Hub](#)
- National Childcare Scheme: [Introduction to accessing Continuing Professional Development](#)
- National Childcare Network: [Events](#)
- Tusla: [Quality and Regulatory Framework eLearning modules](#)
- Tusla: [Children First eLearning programme](#)
- Tusla: [E-learning, webinars and resources](#)