

## **Parents should expect the following from an Early Years' service:**

- Quality of Service.
- Management & Staffing
- Safety
- Quality of Care
- Premises
- Equipment

### **Quality of Service**

- The service is notified to the Child and Family Agency. (except where exemptions apply)
- The last inspection report is available.
- An Information booklet /leaflet available detailing the type of service provided is available.
- The service should feel welcoming to both you and your child.
- The environment is caring, safe and friendly.

### **Management & Staffing**

- There is a named person in charge at all times.
- All staff have been vetted e.g. Garda Vetting, references, Police vetting (if lived abroad)
- Staff have an appropriate level of experience, training and Qualifications.
- An adequate number of adults are available to supervise and care for the children.
- Children are supervised at all times
- There are enough adults to provide individual attention to your child if they need it.
- Staff have a good understanding about child development and working with children.
- Staff are observed to play with the children.
- Staff turnover rates are low i.e. Enquire as to how long have staff have been working in the setting.

### **Safety**

- The service must have a policy on child protection
- Staff, have training on Child Protection?
- There is a policy on collecting children from the service.

- There are appropriate fire safety and child safety measures in place.

**Policies and Procedures should be available and implemented in the service. These are some of the Policies and Procedures you would expect to find in the service:**

- Policy on the administration of medications
- Police on the safe conduct on outings.
- Accident/incident policy/procedure
- Complaints policy
- Policy on encouraging and promoting positive behaviour
- Illness policy
- Policy on infectious diseases in the service
- Safe Sleep for children
- Health & Safety Policy
- Nappy changing/Toileting
- Confidentiality Policy

### **Quality of Care**

- High quality interactions between staff and children are observed.
- The service can cater for a child with special or additional needs.
- The children are properly supervised, but also have opportunities to experience activities which are challenging and exciting.
- There are written programmes outlining the children's activities.
- The Programme of Care and Education is flexible to meet the varying needs of the children in the setting.
- A system is in place to discuss with parents and guardians in relation to the processes, if a child becomes ill, distressed or angry.
- There should be a clear policy on how challenging behaviour is managed in the Early Years setting.
- Children are observed interacting well with other children.
- A system is in place to replace staff who, are out of work on sick leave or on holidays.
- There is a respectful approach towards diversity, where each child's individuality and sense of identity is valued.

- Food is suitable, nutritious and a varied menu is available where the service provides food.
- Special dietary needs can be catered for.
- The arrangements in place for feeding your child are to your satisfaction.
- Safe sleeping/resting arrangements are in place for children.
- Staff, are familiar with the guidelines around safe sleep and prevention of sudden infant death.
- Sibling interaction is facilitated and managed in the service. Siblings/friends are facilitated to spend time together.

### **Premises**

- The premises should be well maintained, clean and hygienic, bright and well ventilated.
- The premises must be safe and secure. A system is in place to prevent unauthorised access to the service and to prohibit a child leaving the premises unsupervised.
- There must be adequate space to ensure comfort in rest and play.
- A quiet area is available if your child wants to relax.
- There is space for children to play inside and outside.
- The outdoor play area is secure and hazard free.
- All play areas are bright and cheerful.
- Adequate facilities provided for the safe and hygienic preparation and storage of food.
- The kitchen facilities are clean, hygienic with suitable wash-up, hand-washing and sterilising facilities.
- The pre-school should not be too hot or too cold.

### **Equipment**

- The equipment and furniture must be safe, appropriate and well maintained and clean.
- Sufficient suitable toys play materials and resources are available to provide stimulating activities and play opportunities for the children.
- The Equipment, toys, materials available must be appropriate for the ages of the children attending and their developmental needs.
- Activities and resources should promote cultural awareness and equal opportunities.