



Sunshine

Creche & Montessori *Ltd.*

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION
NATIONAL INCLUSION POLICY

Mission statement of Sunshine Crèche & Montessori

Our mission is to value the ability, individuality and cultural background of all children by providing each child with the opportunities they need to reach their full potential as active learners within an inclusive ethos/culture.

At Sunshine Crèche & Montessori, we achieve care and inclusion in education by continually reviewing an anti-bias approach that is implemented by the early childhood service, and by working in partnership with families, children and the early childhood team, both individually through reflective practice, and in consultation with children and their families, so as to ensure that the education and care provided is fully inclusive of all children, families and agencies that attend and use our service.

Ethos of the service

Sunshine crèche & Montessori will ensure an inclusive culture, recognising that every child is an individual and has their own learning style. Sunshine Crèche & Montessori believes that all children are unique, but share many similarities, thus promoting equality and diversity throughout the early childhood service. Sunshine Crèche & Montessori will promote and nurture the identity of each child attending the service and ensure that their emotional and physical well-being is of paramount importance at all times.

Policy Statement

This policy represents the agreed principles and commitments for inclusion, in line with the Early Childhood Care and Education National Inclusion Charter. Sunshine Crèche & Montessori service will implement this policy to support and develop an inclusive environment for children and adults within our early childhood service.

‘Inclusion’ refers to:

A process involving a programme, curriculum or education environment where each child is welcomed and included on equal terms, can feel they belong, and can progress to his/her full potential in all areas of development (National Childcare Strategy 2006–2010).

The review date for all policies in this document is July 2023. However, some policies contained in the document may be subject to legislative or best practice changes earlier than the review date.

Reference: Inclusion and Diversity Charter and guidelines for Early Childhood Care and Education (DCYA 2016); AIM, access and Inclusion Model (2018)

Role of Inclusion Coordinator (INCO):

The Inclusion Coordinator within our service is Joanna Zmyslona.

Core principles of Inclusion Coordinator:

Actively seeks to support learning and participation that does not hinder or exclude individual children or groups of children. This means that equality of opportunity must be a reality for all children attending the service. This is achieved by using a child-centred equality and diversity approach to create an inclusive learning environment.

Core principles of this strategy are:

- Work in partnership with parents.
- Support children's ability, identity, cultural background and sense of belonging.
- Support children to become respectful of difference.
- Foster each child's critical thinking in order to confront bias and discrimination.
- Implement a curriculum that meets the individual needs and emerging interests of the child under Síolta: The National Quality Framework (2006) and Aistear: The National Curriculum Framework (2009).
- Respond to children's diverse and individual learning needs and styles through an emerging curriculum.
- Support continual development for all early childhood practitioners, so as to ensure that they are trained in an equality and diversity approach to providing care and education to all.

AIM

AIM is a child-centred model, involving seven levels of progressive support, moving from the universal to the targeted, based on the needs of the child and the pre-school service. For many children, the universal supports offered under the model will be sufficient. For others, one particular discrete support may be required to enable participation in the ECCE Programme, such as access to a piece of specialised equipment. For a small number, a suite of different services and supports may be necessary. In other words,

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the model is designed to be responsive to the needs of each individual child in the context of their pre-school setting. It offers tailored, practical supports based on need and **does not require a formal diagnosis of disability** (AIM, Access and Inclusion Model 2016)

Sunshine Crèche & Montessori is the service that provides inclusive practice; therefore first four levels of AIM are followed and introduced on the daily basis.

By introducing and promoting inclusive practice; providing relevant information and trainings for the parents; building up collaboration between all stakeholders – parents, educators and outside agencies; obtaining relevant staff qualification; promoting CPD trainings, we continuously meet the goals outlined in the first four levels.

Levels 5 – 7 build the bridge between the service and outside agencies. AIM helps to contact relevant institution (e.g. speech therapist; occupational therapist; physiotherapist) and provide the additional care that would fulfil the child’s needs.



Procedures of implementing AIM (Level 5-7)

1. With full co-operation with parents we'll plan the strategies that will promote the child in areas is needed.
2. We'll introduce the strategies in the class to promote the child's learning and development.
3. If the strategies are not effective, we'll (after parents' permission) introduce AIM level 5-7

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4. We'll do efforts possible to support the family and the child, however If the communication and co-operation between the service and the parents is unsuccessful and If the parents are continually denying to agree to support the child (despite the fact that support is necessary to promote development and wellbeing of their child), Sunshine Crèche & Montessori reserves the right to decline the place.

Early childhood practitioners work to ensure the following:

- Children feel secure and know that their contributions are valued.
- Children know they belong and are valued as unique individuals.
- All children's cultural backgrounds are respected and valued.
- Children feel strong and confident about their identity.
- Children are taught in groupings that allow them all to experience success.
- Children use materials that reflect a range of social and cultural backgrounds.
- Children have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles.
- Children are encouraged to participate fully, having particular regard for and being cognisant of children with a variety of abilities.
- If a child uses an aid or assistive technology to communicate, that the device is used solely for this purpose.

Responsibilities of management and early childhood practitioners at Sunshine Crèche & Montessori

All families and children are encouraged to participate, accessing learning experiences through the curriculum on offer. At Sunshine Crèche & Montessori, we promote children's individual learning according to their stage of development in line with the Child Care Act, 1991; Child Care (Pre-school Services) (No. 2) Regulations 2016; Disability Act 2005; Equal Status Acts 2000–2012; the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, with particular attention to Articles 29 and 30; and Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, 2011.

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Admissions Policy

Please see the Sunshine Crèche & Montessori Admissions Policy, included in your handbook for parents which contains all policies and procedures for the admissions to/enrolment in the service.

Working in partnership with parents

As children and families are the most knowledgeable about their background, culture, language, and physical and developmental needs, Sunshine Crèche & Montessori will ensure that families are consulted when developing and implementing policy. An effective diversity and equality approach will ensure that ability and diversity are recognised and celebrated, and that discrimination, inequality and exclusion are addressed.

Dealing with discriminatory incidents

- The first step in handling incidents involving discrimination is to recognise and acknowledge what is happening.
- All children need to know that name-calling or physically hurting someone is unacceptable.
- Discuss with the children in a democratic and sensitive manner that name-calling or physically hurting someone is unacceptable.
- When an incident occurs (hurtful remarks made by one child to another), both children learn from the incident. Refer back to the rules of the service where appropriate.
- Always determine the real reason for incidents involving exclusion or conflict. It may not be a discriminatory incident, so be careful not to make assumptions.
- Some issues may be brought into the early childhood service by the child, arising from comments made by adults outside the setting. Recognise when it is an adult issue, and identify appropriate actions for addressing the issue with the child's parents or guardians.
- An incident should be considered from the perspective of all individuals involved as well as those who witnessed it. Appropriate actions need to be taken, at circle time or in group discussion, in order to address incidents witnessed by children who were not involved. This does not mean singling out children in the group.

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- By showing empathy and expressing our feelings, we help children to express their feelings.
- It is important to be aware of how our own attitudes can shape how we respond to a given situation. Be mindful that early childhood practitioners are role models for the children and the early childhood service. Children will do as we do (see the éist manual – Murray and O’Doherty (2010)).

Actions to be followed if the policy is not implemented

If you, as a staff member or a parent, feel that this policy is not being implemented, you can follow the Sunshine crèche & Montessori Complaints Policy and Procedure to make a complaint.

Monitoring and reviewing the policy

The above policy will be re-evaluated at regular intervals throughout the year. We at Sunshine Crèche & Montessori service value your input. If you have any queries in relation to the policy, please contact the:

Inclusion Coordinator: Joanna Zmyslona

Management: Joanna Zmyslona (Manager); Rishet Alem (Manager Assistant); Carla Troy (Supervisor)