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Aim

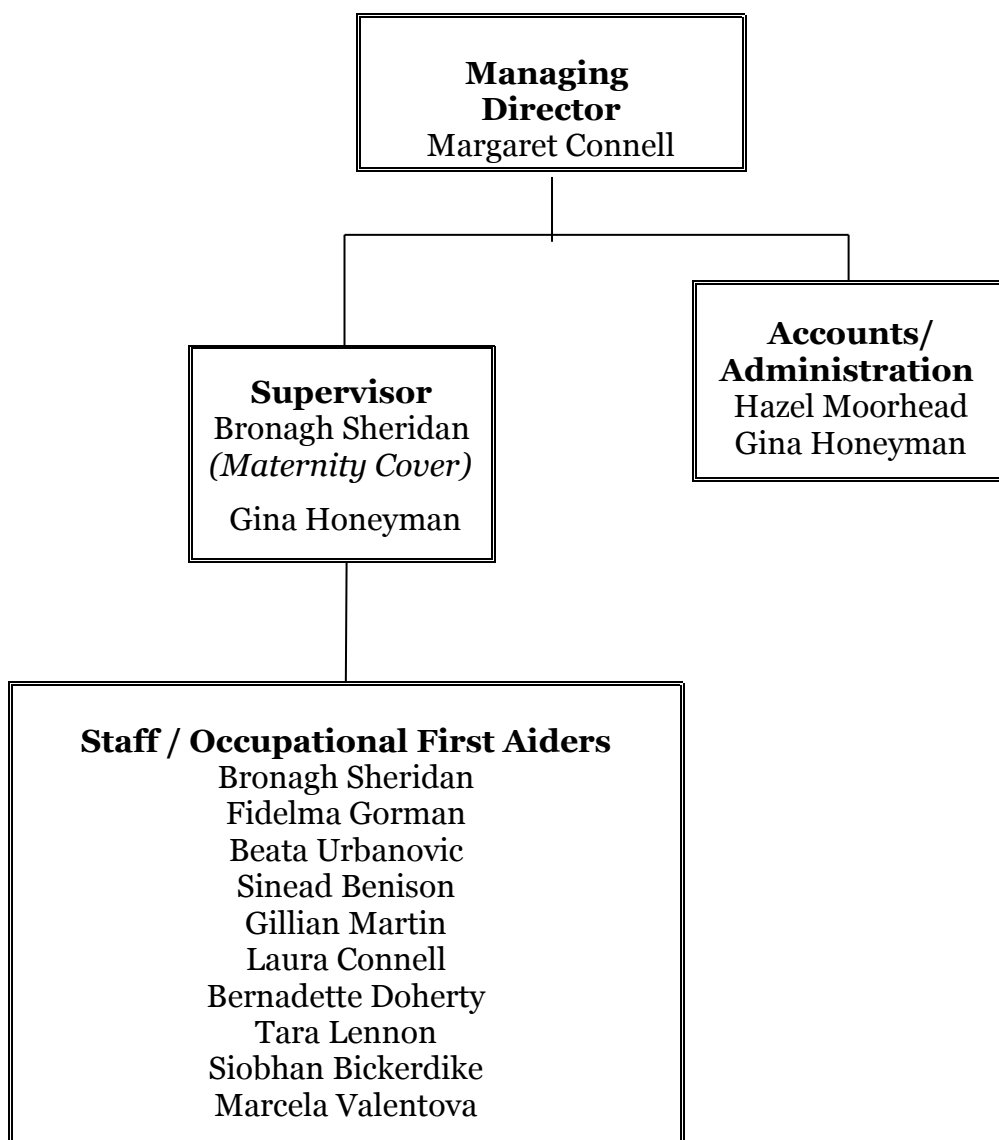
The aim of Teach Leanbh is to provide a high quality, comprehensive childcare facility for the local community. Respecting every child as an individual.

This aim will be achieved through:

- Provision of a play based, quality-learning environment for all children.
- Partnership with parents and other agencies.
- Support for families and other agencies.
- Enabling the children to grow personally, socially, intellectually and emotionally through play.
- High quality, ongoing training for all staff.
- Provision of a safe and secure environment.

Reference: Siolta Standard - Organisation

ORGANISATIONAL CHART



Management Structure

- Owner/Manager – Margaret Connell
- Person in charge in absence of owner – Bronagh Sheridan
- Baby Area
1 Full time Childcare worker.
- Toddler
1 Full time Childcare worker. (2 Floats)
- Pre-Montessori
1 Full time Childcare worker.
- Montessori
1 Full time Montessori.
1 Part time Montessori.
1 Childcare worker.
- After school
1 Adult to 10 children.

Age Groupings

- 0 – 1 Baby area
- 1 – 2 Toddler area
- 2 – 3 Pre-Montessori
- 3 – 6 Montessori
- After School care

Staff Ratio

Full Day Care

- 1 adult to 3 babies under 1yrs.
- 1 adult to 5 toddlers under 2 yrs.
- 1 adult to 6 pre-Montessori 2-3yrs.
- 1 adult to 8 Montessori 3-6yrs.

Sessional Care

- 1 adult to 10 children 2½-6yrs.

ECCE

- 1 adult to 11 children

Teach Leanbh is a privately owned Montessori School/Day care facility.

Responsibilities of the Owner/Manager

Teach Leanbh is in operation since 2001, it is a privately owned centre and it is owned and managed by Margaret Connell. She both works in and co-ordinates the centre. She holds qualifications in Montessori Advanced Supervision in Childcare with a special emphasis in Special Needs. In the years since 2001, Teach Leanbh has went from strength to strength having expanded our premises in 2007, worked for and achieved an "All Ireland Centre of Excellence" award, an Enterprise Award, an Outstanding Award for our Montessori Centre and constructing a Sensory Garden.

Responsibilities of the Leader

Responsible for the facility in the absence of the owner/manager. This position is held by an experienced member of staff, who has a wide knowledge and practical experience in the day to day running of the centre. She holds qualifications in Communications and Management, along with First Aid, Manual Handling, Child Protection, Fire Safety and is Garda Vetted. She is responsible for Fire Safety and Child Protection within the centre.

Policy No.1 **Admissions**
Policy Statement

Teach Leanbh is committed to offering access to all children, inclusive of special needs, cultural, religions or financial backgrounds.

Teach Leanbh operates an “open door” policy, that parents are welcome at all times.

Teach Leanbh operates a first come first served basis.

Part 1. Admission Procedure

A fully completed enrolment form must be submitted prior to the child starting in the nursery.

The nursery keeps an advance booking register.

Admission will be at the discretion of the management.

Part 2. Fees and Payments

- Full Day Care is available from 8.30am to 6pm from Monday to Friday.
- Sessional care is available from 9.00am to 12.30pm from Monday to Friday and 1.45pm to 5.15pm from Monday to Friday. The nursery is closed weekends, Bank Holidays, the Christmas period and for two week Summer period.
- Charges are posted in the nursery.
- Fees are payable in advance, monthly or weekly as convenient.
- Once child is registered, fees are payable when children are absent/sick or when facility is closed due to holidays/festivals.
- Reduced charges for second child, special circumstances etc., may be available at the discretion of the management.
- Children in Day Care for up to 3.5hrs per session (e.g. Sessional)
We provide one meal and one snack.
- Children in Day Care for up to 5hrs (Part-Time care).
We provide two meals and one snack.
- Children in Day Care for more than 5hrs (Full Day Care)
We provide two meals and two snacks.
- If children stay for full evening we provide an evening meal.
Fresh drinking water available at all times.
- Children are allowed to bring snacks from home.
- All food must be provided and clearly labelled, for children with special dietary requirements.
- Parents must provide all formulas, in bottles clearly labelled with child's name.
- Nappies, wipes and creams must be provided and clearly labelled with child's name.
- Children are allowed to bring one comfort toy from home.
- Sessional Montessori children pay one week of the holiday period, one week at Christmas and one week at Easter. Full Day Care children pay one week at Christmas and one week in summer.
- A fee of €7 per hour will be charged for late collections. This may be waived in exceptional circumstances.
- Two weeks notice must be given when cancelling your contract with Teach Leanbh.
- A deposit of 1 week's fee applies to your child.

ECCE – Full Time Day Care

- Children who opt for Full Time Day Care, all weeks are inclusive as per our policy. There is no option for 38 weeks for Full Time Care. Fees are payable at the normal rate outside the weeks covered by the capitation as per our policy.
- Children participating in the ECCE Free Pre School Scheme, who attend full day care, outside the hours covered by the ECCE Scheme, are liable to pay the holiday fees set out above.

Teach Leanbh is committed to the smooth transition of the parents and children in the Pre-School service.

Settling in should be a positive experience as it will influence children's self-confidence, attitude to relationships and socialising and will lay the foundations for future learning.

Pre – Admission

1. The Centre must have written information for the parents on initial inquiry.
2. Parents should be encouraged to drop-in at various times during opening hours with their children to familiarise the children and themselves with the routine, the setting and staff.
3. An information day must be held to discuss the fears and concerns around the process of settling in (e.g. clinging, crying, not talking security blanket, child not ready).
4. Staggering starting days and times are essential to facilitate the easy integration of the child into the group.

First Day (Arrivals & Departures)

- The key worker should greet the child and the parent together.
- The parent must be assured of the value of their presence to the child in the process.
- Some children may not be ready for a full session and the key worker will advise the parents on this matter.
- Children must be promptly collected, by a competent person named on the registration form.

Following Stages

- Parents must never leave the premises without saying goodbye.
- Pre-school staff may need to assist the parents through the separation process, as an extended goodbye can distress children.
- The settling in process has no time limits and may need to be repeated if the child becomes unsettled.
- When children are beginning to settle they should be supported in observing, experimenting and discovering for themselves, without any attempt to make them participate in activities.
- Opportunities must be made available for parents and staff to exchange information on the child's progress at this stage.
- Children who are still clearly distressed having followed the above procedures, may need to have their attendance at the service deferred for a trial period.

These guidelines aim to help children and parents settle in happily to the service, enabling the children to gain maximum benefit from their experience.

Policy No.3 Parents as Partners

Policy Statement

Teach Leanbh acknowledges the crucial role of parents as primary educators of their children. The management of Teach Leanbh is committed to being open, inclusive, welcoming, accepting and respectful of all parents using the service.

Teach Leanbh recognise the importance of:

- Making copies of the services written policies available to all parents.
- Holding open days, including evenings and weekends.
- Facilitating regular meetings at mutually agreed times and venues.
- Ensuring a brief daily exchange of information with parents.
- Providing a notice board of current information, leaflets, Health Board information, contact numbers, relevant statutory documents of childcare (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006 and regular photographic evidence of children at play.
- Valuing parents individually and ensuring opportunities for them to contribute to the group's activities, whatever form this takes, (e.g. special skills & special activities).
- Facilitating opportunities for observation of play to enable the understanding of child development.
- Providing opportunities for engaging in shared play with the children.
- Providing opportunities and time for parents to talk individually with staff/management on:
 1. Child's progress and observation records.
 2. A joint strategy for behaviour management.
 3. Setting realistic goals for their children.
 4. Changes in the family home.
 5. Difficulties or concerns.
 6. Suggestions for the service.
 7. For joint evaluation of the pre-school services.
 8. Wishes of parents in relation to religious participation and practice.

Introduction Policy

Enquiries to enrol at Teach Leanbh are initially welcome by telephone or in person where the manager answers client enquiry questions and then offers to introduce both parents/guardians and the child to the service at a convenient time for both.

A pre arranged initial introductory visit will then take place where the parent/guardian is shown the layout of the service, given access to the outdoor play area and introduced to staff.

All nursery systems are explained to the parent/guardian at this visit and a copy of the Teach Leanbh Parent Handbook is given to the parent/guardian.

For September enrolments, for pre-school children, introductory visits are welcome in advance.

For all other enrolments, depending on the age and needs of the child, the child is welcome to visit the service with a parent/guardian at appropriate time pre-arranged with the manager. Usually 4/5 visits are sufficient for the introductory process depending on the child. Any questions or concerns regarding the Teach Leanbh Parents Handbook can be discussed at these visits or by telephone in the meantime.

Teach Leanbh open day takes place annually. During the open day parents/guardians are introduced to staff, copies of all policies and relevant documentation are available to visitors to review and a tour of the nursery is provided. Both staff and manager are available to discuss the service.

Meet and Greet Policy

Each morning a child is presented at Teach Leanbh, an individual staff member is responsible for meeting the parent/guardian, where the child is greeted by name, as is the parent/guardian. The staff member will ask how the child is to both parent/guardian and child, converse with both accordingly and proceed to the room with the child. This is an opportune time for parent/guardian to request time to speak to the manager or room leader, which will be then accommodated by Teach Leanbh. Teach Leanbh is happy to set aside time from the regular daily routine for parents/carers and staff to meet as requested.

At the earliest opportunity possible, the staff member will record any discussion noted with the parent or child at the initial morning meet and greet.

Departure meet and greet will address both child and parent/guardian by name and update parent/guardian on the days activities which will also be reflected in the “A Record of My Day” personalised book for each child.

Where English is not the first language of the parent, staff will greet the parent/guardian in their chosen language if possible.

Settling in Policy

Following on from the introductory policy from the initial start date of a child attending Teach Leanbh, a settling in period of approximately 4 weeks takes place.

All parents/guardians are advised to avail of the introductory policy, which will give both child and parent/guardian a sense of the new routine that they both face. Depending on the child, settling in policy allows for a child to attend for shorter days/weeks for the first while. Parents/guardians are welcome to spend time with the child in Teach Leanbh to support child, parent and staff in the transition phase.

The manager will work with each child on an individual basis to ensure the settling in phase is relaxed and reassuring to all concerned.

Progress Report Meetings

Following the completion of a child's settling in phase, at Teach Leanbh, regular progress report meetings will take place twice a year in October and March/April and at the request of the parent/guardian with the staff/manager and parent/carer. These meetings consist of a written report, which is drafted during the meeting while discussing the child's development at Teach Leanbh.

Parent/guardian is notified of these meetings in their child's “A Record of My Day” book and verbally by the manager.

Written Contract

Prior to admission to Teach Leanbh, a written contract is requested to be signed by parent/guardian and returned to the nursery. Details of the contract are available on request, which outlines the parents/guardians commitment to the ethos and arrangements of the nursery.

Open Door Policy

Teach Leanbh welcomes parents/guardians to drop in to the nursery during opening hours without prior arrangement. All parents/carers who avail of the open door policy are requested to sign in with the manager when arriving and departing so that Teach Leanbh is aware of all individuals in the nursery at all times.

Communication and Sensitivity Policy

Teach Leanbh believes that parents/guardians are the primary educators of each child who attends the nursery.

Staff are committed to supporting and advising parents when appropriate on an individual's child's development. We believe confidential information sharing between parent/guardian and staff member is conducive to the child's well being.

In the best interest of the child Teach Leanbh appreciates open communication with parent/guardian if there is a sensitive issue that may affect the child's life while in our care.

Where a staff member is concerned about any changes in a child's physical or emotional state, the staff member will engage with the parent/guardian on this matter.

Daily observations are recorded on the “A Record of My Day” book, which is returned to parent/guardian daily.

Partnership with Parents Policy

Teach Leanbh work closely with parent/guardian to ensure the child's contentment at all times.

The family unit is multi dimensional at Teach Leanbh therefore staff are committed to reflecting all family units for acceptance and learning through play activities and child led discussion.

As we believe that parent/guardian are the first educators of the child, family preferences are considered and implemented where possible in the best interest of the child at Teach Leanbh.

Family preferences can be communicated on an ad-hoc basis or formally through Parent Meetings.

An annual questionnaire also allows parent/guardian to provide feedback.

Teach Leanbh organise a Parent Meeting annually to elect a parents representative on behalf of all parents who avail of the nursery service. Written notification is given to parent/guardian and meeting is held at convenient time for parent/carer.

At a parents meeting the following are discuss

- Update of Childcare Regulations & other legislation pertaining to the nursery
- Developments in the service
- Review of Policies and Procedures
- Parent's feedback and report on annual questionnaire
- The following documentation is available for review
- Copy of Annual HSE Pre-School Inspection Report, Health & Safety Statement, Policies and Procedures of Teach Leanbh and items of topical interest both local and national.

Teach Leanbh Events

Parent/guardian are always welcome to participate in events that are organised by the nursery, these include the Annual Christmas Party, Childline Breakfast Morning, Connemara Pony Show float parade, Pyjama Day and birthdays.

Parent/guardian is notified in advance of these events to help accommodate their attendance and is welcome to get involved in the day and contribute their expertise or skills if appropriate to the event or activity.

Daily Feedback

Teach Leanbh provides each child with "A Record of My Day" book. This written system was established to inform families about the day-to-day happenings that affect their child.

Information Policy

At enrolment each parent/guardian is given a copy of Teach Leanbh Policies and Procedures. If any policies or procedures are amended, changed or new policies added, parent/guardian will be notified of this in the next parent newsletter.

Teach Leanbh produce a Parent Newsletter 4 times a year, which is circulated, to each parent/carer.

Feedback on newsletter is welcome at any time to the manager.

Admission Criteria

Teach Leanbh operates an equal opportunity access to the nursery.

Children are registered with Teach Leanbh on a first come first serve basis.

Based on the ethos of the service siblings are prioritised where possible.

There is no minimum age for babies to attend the service, as Teach Leanbh is aware that families have different needs and circumstances and demands for baby care. There is no toilet training requirement's for the pre-school rooms.

It is the policy of Teach Leanbh to keep information about health and family circumstances of children, families and staff confidential. Knowledge or observation of children's development or behaviour will be treated in a strictly confidential manner except in terms of legal obligation, (e.g. child protection).

- Parents must be made aware of the necessity of keeping records in relation to the children in order to comply with the Childcare (Pre-School Service) Regulations 2006.
- Parents will have access to the records kept in the service, only in relation to their own child. These records will be kept in a locked file.
- In child protection issues, observation/records in relation to children may have to be made available to the Health Board (see policy 13).
- The principals of confidentiality should be raised by the service provider with all staff, volunteers and trainees and it should be impressed upon them that it is not acceptable to discuss matters relating to the children or staff or the service outside the setting.
- Breaches of confidentiality can be dealt with under the complaints procedure or under the terms of employment as appropriate (see policy 9).

Data Protection Policy

“Privacy is our right to control information about ourselves- including the collection, use and disclosure of that information. Confidentiality is your obligation to protect someone else's personal information in your care”. (Canadian Federal Privacy Commissioner)

Teach Leanbh adheres to Data Protection Acts. When we receive your registration, we create a computer/manual record in your name that contains much of the personal information you have supplied. Such information held on computer/file is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Act, 1988 & 2003. All details are kept in accordance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003. (The “Acts”). You are entitled to a copy of any information held by us about you in accordance with the Acts.

As data controller Teach Leanbh are bound by the data protection requirements and registered with the Data Protection Commissioner.

The following requirements are adhered to in Teach Leanbh (Data Protection Rules).

1. Far obtaining and processing of information.
2. To fairly obtain data, the data subject is, at the time the personal data is being collected, made aware of:
 - The identity of the data controller.
 - The purpose in collecting the data.
 - The persons or categories of persons to whom the data may be disclosed and that the data subject must have given consent to the processing.
3. Data kept at Teach Leanbh is specific, lawful and clearly stated.
4. Any use or disclosure of information must be necessary for the purpose/s or compatible with the propose/s for which Teach Leanbh collect and keep the data.
5. Appropriate security measures are taken against unauthorised access to or alteration, disclosure or destruction of the data and against their accidental loss or destruction.
6. The data is kept accurate and up to date.
7. The data collected by Teach Leanbh is adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose for which it is collected.
8. Teach Leanbh will not store data for longer than is necessary for the purpose for which it is collected.
9. Any individual about whom Teach Leanbh keep personal data is entitled to a copy of the data we keep about him/her under **Section 4 of the Data Protection Acts** on making an access request, except for child protection issues.

When we receive your registration, we create a computer/manual record in your name that contains much of the personal information you have supplied. Such information held on computer/file is subject to the rights and obligations set out in the Data Protection Act 1988 & 2003. All details are kept in accordance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003 (the “Acts”). You are entitled to a copy of any information held by us about you in accordance with the Acts. For more information please see our privacy policy.

Privacy Policy

Statement of Intent

From time to time, you will be asked to submit personal information about you and your child. Whenever you supply such personal information we will treat that information in accordance with this policy. Our services are designed to give information that you want to receive. Teach Leanbh will act in accordance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 & 2003 and will aim to meet current Internet best practice.

Submitting personal information

When you supply any personal information to us we have legal obligations to you in the way we collect and use data. We must collect the information fairly, that is, we must explain how we will use it and if we want to pass the information on to anyone else.

In general, any information you provide to us will only be used within the service and will never be supplied to anyone outside the service without first obtaining your consent unless we are obliged by law to disclose it.

We will hold your personal information on our systems for as long as you use the services requested, and remove it in the event that the purpose has been met, or, in the case of a personalised service you no longer wish to continue your registration.

Access to your personal information

You have the right to request a copy of the personal information we hold in relation to you and the right to have any inaccuracies corrected. In this regard, please contact the Manager.

Security

We have put in place appropriate procedures to safeguard and help prevent unauthorised access, improper use, alteration or unlawful or accidental damage and accidental loss, and to maintain the security of information we collect for filing.

Garda Clearance

1. All staff working in Teach Leanbh either voluntary or otherwise or applying for a job will be vetted for Garda clearance.
2. All information supplied to Teach Leanbh for Garda Vetting is held in strictest confidence.
3. In the event of disclosures/voluntary or otherwise Management will be guided by the relevance of an offence in relation to the job offered.
4. In the event of a disclosure impacting on the candidate suitability to care for children they will not be offered a post.
5. Teach Leanbh is not in a position to pass judgement but to recruit the best staff possible.

Policy No.5 Equal Opportunities & Community Links

Policy Statement

The equal opportunities of the management is to recognise and respect the right of all parents and children associated with the service to develop an effective program of action to promote equal opportunities and eliminate discrimination on grounds of culture, race, gender, disability and social background in all of its procedures and practices.

Admissions:

- Teach Leanbh is open to all families in the community.
- The waiting list is operated as per guidelines for admission procedures.

Families:

- Teach Leanbh recognise that all families should be encouraged to be involved in their children's early education, in whatever way possible for them.
- The inputs of all families into decision making etc., in the pre-school service is valued, equally there are different types of families, children can be loved and cared for in a different family setting.

Meetings/Information:

- Information, spoken and written will be communicated in as many methods as possible.

Curriculum:

- Children are valued and supported in all their needs.
- The individuality of each child is respected and nurtured.
- A wide range of activities and play equipment is provided in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. These should present positive images of children and adults in society.
- Children are encouraged at all times to appreciate similarities and value differences. A range of materials should be chosen to reflect culture, gender and ability.
- Observation and reports are documented on all children.

Special Needs:

- Teach Leanbh recognise that all children have special needs but some have more needs than others.
- The special needs of children are acknowledged.
- Every effort will be made to meet the special needs of children and families using our service.
- Where appropriate every endeavour will be made to meet the medical needs of children.
- Teach Leanbh is committed to working with health care professionals to develop each child's individual needs.

Staff and Training

- Teach Leanbh will deal with all job applications in a fair manner.
- On going training will be made available for staff.
- All staff are Garda vetted.
- All staff working in Teach Leanbh are trained in Childcare/First Aid

Policy No. 6 Manual Handling

Policy Statement

It is our policy that all staff on commencement of employment are trained in Manual Handling and updated as required.

1. Cost of Manual Handling First Aid will be borne by Teach Leanbh.
2. A fund of €200 is available for training for staff after one year's service and thereafter every year.

Professional Links

Teach Leanbh work closely with the HSE personnel and local schools whereby the Public Health Nurse will visit the nursery and talk to the children. And other professionals will give talks and demonstrations. The manager of the nursery links with local school principals and junior infant teachers occasionally. Visitors to Teach Leanbh include the following:

- Local Garda who visit annually and the ambulance service that visited this summer as one of the parents who avail of the nursery offered the visit through consultation with the nursery manager.

One of the children at Teach Leanbh has relations who live in Holland. Teach Leanbh is happy that these relations will visit the nursery and talk to the children about where they come from as part of a learning and interaction event.

Policy NO. 7 **Visitors**

Policy Statement

It is the policy of Teach Leanbh to guarantee the safety of children by ensuring that all visitors to the centre are monitored and do not have unauthorized access to the children. Only parents and staff who have passed the record check required by law will be permitted in to class rooms, be in contact with a child/children or be directly responsible for child care.

- We will monitor all visitors who have not undergone a formal record check process. This will include parents/guardians, volunteers, maintenance people, observers, prospective clients and any person(s) required by law to carry out inspections.
- All visitors will be required to wait at the front door until a manager or supervisor can attend to them.
- On arrival all visitors must disclose the nature of their visit before admission to the centre is permitted.
- Visitors must show identification before admission is granted and complete an admissions form.
- All visitors must sign the Visitor's Log, located in the office, which is monitored by the receptionist and the Director.
- A member of staff will be assigned to visually and physically supervise the visitor the entire time the visitor is near children. The staff member will not be allowed to supervise or monitor a visitor who is a blood relative, related by marriage, or a personal friend. These staff supervising requirements will not apply to a parent/guardian spending time with their own child.
- We will endeavour, when possible, to arrange for any maintenance work to the property to be carried out at weekends and during out of business hours.
- All visitors must notify the manager or supervisor that they are leaving and must detail their departure, in the visitors log, before leaving.

This policy was adopted by Margaret Connell

Date 31st July 2013

Policy On Carrying Out Inspections

It is the policy of Teach Leanbh that any visitor who is required by law to carry out an inspection, in the facility of Teach Leanbh, is to meet with the manager or supervisor before commencing their inspection.

- Inspectors will be required to wait at the front door until a manager or supervisor can attend to them.
- Upon arrival, an inspector must meet with the manager or supervisor to disclose the nature of their inspection before admission to the centre is permitted and the inspection can commence.
- All inspectors must show official identification before admission is granted and must sign the Visitor's Log, located in the office, which is monitored by the secretary and the Director.
- Inspectors will receive a brief regarding any changes that have occurred since their last visit, inclusive of any follow up visits or maintenance that has been carried out. The brief must be read before any inspection can be carried out.
- Inspectors will also receive a copy of this policy on "visitors carry out inspections" and a form, which must be read, completed and signed before any inspection can commence.
- Inspectors must not enter any classroom before seeking permission from the key worker in each classroom. This is to ensure that there is no disruption to the daily programme.
- If the sleep room is occupied, Inspectors must not enter the sleep room without a member of staff being present.
- If a member of staff is changing a child, in the sluice room or checking children in the sleep room an inspector must request permission, from the staff member, to observe them carrying out the tasks here above.
- When possible, permission will be granted to inspectors to observe class room activities but inspectors are not permitted to ask child care workers questions, while they are attending to the children as this could compromise observation and interfere with the safety and welfare of each child.
- If an inspector leaves the facility for any reason, including lunch, they must sign out on the visitors log and sign in again upon their return. Upon completion of their inspection, the inspector must notify the manager or supervisor that they are leaving and sign the visitor's log before departure.
- While on the premises, of Teach Leanbh, any person carrying out an inspection must adhere to all of the policies and procedures of Teach Leanbh and ensure minimal disruption to the daily running of the facility and classroom schedules.

- All persons carrying out inspections must have been Garda Vetted by the appropriate authorities and have the appropriate qualifications and training to carry out inspections.
- A safe system of inspection shall be agreed with the authorised signatory before any inspection can be carried out and may not be changed without their prior permission.
- Any person carrying out an inspection shall comply with all relevant Health and Safety Law and Teach Leanbh's Health and Safety Rules.

This policy was adopted by Margaret Connell
Date 31st July 2013

Carrying Out Authorised Visits

Any person carrying out an inspection must read our inspection policies and procedures and complete this form before a visit can commence.

Name _____

Position _____

Company Address _____

Nature of Inspection _____

Date _____

Teach Leanbh authorised signatory for permission to carry out inspection

_____ (Print Name) _____

Have you made yourself aware of all fire exits before visit commences? Yes _____ No _____

Have you visited a child care facility in the last 24 hours? Yes _____ No _____

Where any of the children sick during your visit? Fever, Virus, Cold, Infection? Yes _____ No _____

Details if any _____

Are you in good health or have you now or over the last 7 days suffered from diarrhoea and/or vomiting or been in contact with anyone with the symptoms above? Yes _____ No _____

Do you currently suffer from any infections, skin infections, rashes, skin legions (Boils, septic sores, eczema, dermatitis, discharge from eyes, nose, ears or mouth? Yes _____ No _____

Have you travelled outside the EC in the last 28 days? Yes _____ No _____

Are you bringing any recording equipment into this facility? This includes cameras, digital recorders and mobile phones. If you answer yes to this, you are required to leave this in the office before inspection can commence.
Yes _____ No _____

At all times, hygiene standards must be maintained in the facility.
Have you sterilised your hands when entering the building? Yes _____ No _____

Do you require a hair net? Yes _____ No _____ A hair net must be worn before an inspection of the kitchen can commence.
Hands must be sterilise before entering the kitchen.

I (Print Name) _____ acknowledge that I have read Teach Leanbh's policy on carrying out inspections and will adhere to the rules set out by Teach Leanbh. I have answered all questions on this form truthfully.

Signature _____ Date _____

Witnessed by _____ Date _____

It is the policy of Teach Leanbh to promote a healthy lifestyle through prevention of illness, encouraging take up and completion of immunisation program's and developmental checks, and establishing healthy eating patterns, with an emphasis on the social and enjoyable aspect of mealtime. Teach Leanbh will comply with current legislation regarding food hygiene, registration and training, including:

- The Childcare Act 1991.
- The Childcare (Amendment) Act 2007.
- The Childcare (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006.
- National Standards

An active lifestyle of all involved in Teach Leanbh will be encouraged by:

- Opportunities for energetic and outdoor play.
- Inviting health care and other professionals to visit the group in sessions, to talk to parents at meeting and for in-service training sessions for staff.

Medical Administration Policy

If your child is ill during the day, we will contact you and may ask you to collect your child if we feel they need one to one attention. We appreciate your co-operation in this matter, as we need to minimise spreading the infection or illness to other children and staff.

- The centre reserves the right to refuse to administer a medicine that they do not feel competent to give. You will be informed if this applies.
- The child must have received the medicine for a period of no less than 24 hours in the case of a course of medicine, or no less than on 3 previous occasions for once-off or ongoing medicines.
- Regular ongoing medications such as inhalers or medication creams that do not contain pharmacy printed instructions, must be accompanied with a written doctor's note containing the relevant instructions; including any special precautions or potential side effects. This should be updated every 6 months.
- Medication must be submitted in its original container, where it will be stored in accordance with the manufacturer's Instruction.
- Prescribed medication must be labelled by the pharmacy with the child's name appearing on it.
- Medicines in this service are stored in a fridge, out of the children's reach.
- Medication must be prescribed to the child by a G.P or must be accompanied by a Doctor's letter.
- If medication has not been prescribed by a G.P., parent must discuss this with management before a decision to administer it will be made.
- If dosage is not marked on the label, parent must inform centre about the dosage and times to administer medication and if medication has been administered before drop off.
- Medication will be checked to ensure that it has not expired. If medication has expired, it will not be administered and parent will be notified.
- Parent must complete and sign a medical administration form before prescription or non-prescription medicine will be administered.
- 2 members of staff will be present during administration of medication.
- Both members of staff will sign that medication was administered noting the date, time and dosage.
- If a situation arises where the centre has not been provided with medication, it is our policy not to offer alternative medicine.
- For medications requiring technical skills (e.g. suppositories, injections), staff administering it are required to have received training by an appropriate health care professional and written instructions for administration must be available in the service.

For anti-febrile medications e.g. Paracetamol (Calpol) Ibuprofen (Nurofen), the following will apply

- Medicine will be used when prescribed by doctor, for raised temperatures, for the occasional treatment of obvious teething discomfort.
- Parent must have signed a provisional consent in child's register agreeing to its use as mentioned above and their preference of product (either Calpol or Nurofen).
- Medicine will only be administered following telephone consent from parent or on medical instruction.
- Parent will always be asked if child has had this medicine in preceding hours to eliminate the risk of double dosing.
- Dosage given will not exceed that recommended for the age of the child as recorded by the manufacturers on the container.

- When given for a temperature, a recheck temperature will be carried out at least twice (e.g. 1/2 hr & 1 hour approx) to ensure it has been effective.
- Where the child's temperature does not respond, the parent, and where necessary GP will be contacted.
- Parent must ensure medicine consent form has been read and signed on collection of child.
- In the event of any child developing an apparent adverse or allergic reaction to a medicine given on the premises, staff will follow the services procedures for dealing with a medical emergency and every effort will be made to contact you.

This policy was adopted by Margaret Connell
Date 31st July 2013

Policy for Administering Inhalers

It is the policy of Teach Leanbh that if your child is on an inhaler, which must be administered while in our care, that staff must be provided with training from a person with a medical background and continuous support must be offered. In exceptional circumstances centre staff may administer medication, such as inhalers.

- The inhaler must be prescribed to the child by a G.P.
- Inhaler must be in original packaging and labelled by the pharmacy with the child's name appearing on it.
- Parents must complete and sign a medical administration form before inhaler can be administered.
- Staff must be provided with specialised training from a person with a medical background.
- Continuous support will be offered.
- There will be two members of staff present at the administration of inhalers.
- If a situation arises where the centre has not been provided with an inhaler, it is our policy not to offer alternative medicine.
- 2 members of staff will be present when inhaler is being administered.

This policy was adopted by Margaret Connell
Date 31st July 2013

Allergy Policy

Policy Statement

What is an allergy? An allergy is an extreme sensitivity to a substance such as food or pollen which causes the body to react to any contact with it.

It is the policy of Teach Leanbh that if your child has a known extreme allergy that it is brought to our attention at enrolment. Teach Leanbh together with the parents will devise a management plan before the child starts pre-school. This will ensure that the child receives proper care and support and will help allay any concerns held by parents or staff.

Management Plan

This Management Plan includes name, address, date of birth and a brief account of allergy.

Contact Details - these will include:

Parents name and telephone numbers and two emergency contacts names and telephone numbers.

Name of child doctor

Consent Forms

Procedures Form

Instructions

Supports

Emergency Procedures

Parents will have been issued with such a procedure by their doctor.

A copy of this procedure should be given to management to be kept with the child's records on the premises.

A second copy should be clearly labelled to the child's medication pack, so it would be readily accessible.

All staff are made familiar with this procedure which should include:

1. Assessment of symptoms
2. Administration of medicine as appropriate
3. Contact numbers
4. Ambulance procedures

Medication

The medication often prescribed for a child at risk is injectable adrenaline (administered by use of the – EpiPen or AnaPen). Oral antihistamines may also be prescribed. It is vitally important that the parent/guardian explains what medication his or her child has been prescribed. What symptoms may occur and when and how to use the emergency pack. All staff of Teach Leanbh will know where the medication is stored with its instruction clearly identifiable. They will be kept securely out of reach of children but readily accessible. Responsibility for ensuring the medication is “in date” rest solely with the parent. Medication will only be administered with parents written consent and where training has been provided to staff by parents or a health professional. Two staff will be present at administration as is our policy with all medication.

Staff Training

All staff will receive training and ongoing support.

Precautionary Measures

Parent/guardian must provide their child's own packed lunch, clearly labelled Healthy Options. Parents may also provide & supply of Health options for special occasions such as birthday etc. Vigilance will be ongoing and parents will be informed of any changes which may occur through the Parents Handbook.

Consent and Agreement

Parents must give written consent for staff of Teach Leanbh to take responsibility of administering medication in the unlikely event of an allergic reaction occurring.

Allergy Management Plan of _____

<u>CHILD'S DETAILS</u>	
Full Name	
Address	
Date of Birth	
Allergy	
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>	
Name of Parents	
Tel No's	
Other Emergency contact persons	
1 st contact person and No.	
2 nd contact person and No.	
Details of Child's GP	
Doctor's Name	
Contact No	
<u>MEDICATION</u>	
Name of Medication	
Expiry Details	
Emergency Procedure details	
Storage Details	
<u>TRAINING</u>	
Name of Staff	
Date of last training	
Names of Staff aware of procedures	
<u>PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES</u>	

CONSENT & AGREEMENT SIGNED BY PARENT

I agree to the staff of Teach Leanbh taking responsibility and administering medicine in the event of a reaction taking place

Print Name:

Parents Signature:

Date:

This policy was adopted by Margaret Connell

Date 1st July 2014

Infectious Disease Control:

- Children or adults with colds or heavy coughs, diarrhoea, vomiting, flu like symptoms, rashes should not attend Teach Leanbh. Parents must be advised that a child who has been sick during the night should not attend Teach Leanbh.
- Information on childhood infectious diseases e.g. measles, mumps, rubella is available on the IPPA Play Group Register. Contact your local Health Board for more detailed information on infectious disease control regulations. Children with infectious diseases should not attend Teach Leanbh. (See Appendix)
- A dated notice informing of an infectious disease outbreak/incidence should be displayed in a prominent place and should be verbally communicated. Head lice are a contagious condition and if a case is noticed in Teach Leanbh, it should be brought to the attention of all the parents immediately.
- Observation of children following immunisation is essential. It is good practice to encourage two-way communication on all health issues.
- Staff in Teach Leanbh should be immunised against disease. Advice should be sought from your local GP.
- The childcare supervisor has discretionary rights to refuse entry to an ill child.
- It is the policy of the Day Care that when your child is on antibiotics, you keep him/her at home to reduce risk of infection and to allow time to recover.
- In exceptional circumstances certain medications may be administered by centre staff (only those prescribed by a GP and with written parental consent).
- Anti-febrile agents e.g. temperature-reducing medication will only be administered with written parental consents.
- Medication will be stored in their original container and out of children's area.
- All staff are supported and two adults are present when medication is administered.
- It is our policy not to administer alternative medicine.

Infection Control Policy:

Statement of Intent

At Teach Leanbh it is our aim to minimise the spread of infection for staff and children through the implementation of controls, which reduce the transmission, and spread of germs. We aim to promote and maintain the health of children and staff through the control of infectious illnesses.

Aims

- We aim to control infection by providing on- going infection control training for staff (hand washing, food hygiene, cleaning).
- Exclusion guidelines as recommended by the Preschool Environmental Health Officer apply in the case of all suspected infectious conditions. These guidelines will be distributed to all parents and staff.
- Parents will be informed should staff, children or visitors to the centre report the presence of any contagious condition to the centre.

Procedures

Reporting/Recording of illness

- A contingency plan is in place should an outbreak of an infectious disease occur. All staff roles and responsibilities regarding reporting procedures are clearly defined.
- Staff will report any infectious illness to the Pre-school Owner / Manager.
- The Pre-school Owner / Manager will report an outbreak of any infectious disease to the HSE Preschool Environmental Health Officer and the Public Health Department.
- The Pre School Provider or manager will record all details of illness reported to them by staff or reported by parents of a child attending the Service. These details will include the name, symptoms, dates and duration of illness.

Exclusion from the Service

- Children will be excluded from the service based on the time frames outlined in the Preschool EHO exclusion criteria (see attached).
- A doctor's certificate may be required for certain conditions to ensure they are no longer contagious before children return to the service.
- Children should remain at home if they are suffering from general diarrhoea, vomiting or rashes until 48 hours after being symptom free.

Actions required if the crèche suspects a child to have E.Coli o26

As we need to be prepared to recognise and respond if a child develops symptoms consistent with E.Coli 026 the following procedures shall be carried out:

- All staff shall be knowledgeable of the symptoms of E.Coli 026
- In the event that a staff member thinks a child may have E.Coli 026, there is a procedure in place that will include isolating the child until their parent/guardian is contacted to collect them. The parent/guardian shall be advised to phone their GP/family doctor prior to attending the surgery.
- Parents/carers are reminded that children displaying E.Coli 026 like symptoms (e.g. gastro intestinal, diarrhoea, vomiting or rashes) should stay at home and remain in isolation, pending advice from the GP.
- In the event that a child, who may have E.Coli 026, and is not able to be collected by their parent/guardian, the family GP/Doctor will be contacted by phone and the child shall be accommodated and cared for in isolation away from the other children until he/she is assessed by the doctor.
- Teach Leabh has a clear exclusion policy in place, which will not allow the attendance of any staff member, child or parent in the crèche if they have E.Coli 026 like illness. In the case of staff members being excluded, a relief staffing list has been compiled to enable staff absenteeism to be covered.
- Parents/carers are reminded that displaying E.Coli 026 like symptoms while at home (weekends/holidays) should not return to the Crèche/Montessori School for seven days from the onset of symptoms.

Actions required in the case of probable or confirmed case of E.Coli 026 in the crèche

Teach Leabh has an emergency plan in the event that a child or staff member is diagnosed to be a probable or confirmed case of E.Coli 026.

If the GP/family doctor suspects E.Coli 026 in a child attending our crèche/ Montessori School, we shall act on the following advice:

- The parents/carers of the child with probable/confirmed E.Coli 026 will be advised to keep the child at home for seven days from the onset of symptoms.
- The Department of Public Health may consider closure of the Crèche/Montessori School if there is concern about the potential for spread of the virus.
- If closure is advised alternative arrangements made by parents/carers will be needed for care of children. These alternative arrangements should aim to have as few as possible children being cared for together in any environment.
- We will endeavour to insure that the crèche has not to be closed by adhering to the highest standard of hygiene/sanitation.

Preparation for closure of the Crèche/Montessori School

In the event of advice to close our Crèche/Montessori School on public health grounds or because of staff absenteeism we have developed a plans for partial and total closure:

- We will discuss with staff working arrangements in event of Crèche being closed.
- Communications with parents/carers when Crèche is closed
- Public Health will advise on re-opening
- Plans for the partial re-opening of the Crèche (where feasible) as well as full re-opening of the Crèche
- We will plan for managing staff shortages due to staff being sick or taking leave due to their children being sick

Caring for a child who becomes ill with symptoms suggestive of E.Coli 026 while in Crèche

If a child becomes ill with symptoms suggestive of E.Coli 026 while in the Crèche, the following precautions shall be taken:

- Staff will monitor the child's illness. Written records taken from observations will be monitored closely.
- The child's parents/carers will be contacted immediately. If contact cannot be made then the emergency contract person shall be contacted.
- We call the HSE helpline and the local GP for advice
- A member of staff shall be nominated to look after the child in an isolated room with the door of the room left open.
- Visitors will be discouraged from entering the area/room that the child is isolated in.
- After seeking advice from the local GP a decision shall be made based on the GP's professional opinion as to the next course of action.
- The number of staff who have close contact with the sick child shall be kept to a minimum.

- The staff member caring for the child shall not sit/stay within one metre of the child unless the child needs assistance. This may not be possible with small babies. When providing care for the child, the staff member should observe good hand hygiene practices and consider wearing a surgical mask while caring for the sick child.
- When holding small children who are sick, their chin should be placed on the carer's shoulder so that they will not cough in the carer's face.
- Make sure the child drinks plenty of fluids and try to keep them as comfortable as possible until their parent/guardian arrives.
- When the child has gone home, the isolation room will be thoroughly cleaned before next use.
- Staff looking after affected children will not work simultaneously with asymptomatic children.
- Staff at risk of complications if infected must avoid symptomatic pupils.
- Symptomatic staff shall be excluded from the Crèche for 24 hours from the onset of symptoms.
- Staff shall clean hands thoroughly with soap and water and the alcohol hand rub provided before and after any contact with symptomatic children or staff and their environment.
- Staff and children shall be encouraged to avoid touching their eyes and nose.
- Further guidance on caring for a child with E.Coli 026 can be found in the HSE document “Management of Infectious Diseases in Childcare Facilities & other Settings” at www.hpsc.ie/hpsc/A-Z/LifeStages/Childcare/

Ensuring appropriate message to children

It is important that the right message is communicated to children attending our Crèche/Montessori School in relation to E.Coli 026. Therefore we shall teach and encourage children in an age-appropriate way to follow the advise on personal hygiene (hand washing, respiratory etiquette including minimising contact between hands and mouth/nose, use of tissues). We will emphasize that this is serious, but take care not to scare younger or impressionable children. It is impossible for staff to ensure that every child is following the advise all of the time, however frequent reminders will be given. This advice will also help in the prevention of other infections.

This policy has been formed in conjunction with recommendations made by the Department of Public Health

Hand Hygiene

- Hand washing facilities are always available for children and infants include hot (not exceeding 43 degrees) and cold water, liquid soap and paper hand towels.
- Hand washing facilities are available in all toilets, nappy changing areas, kitchens, baby, toddler and pre-school rooms.
- Children and infants (i.e. special emphasise on infants crawling) are encouraged and reminded and supported to wash their hands after using the toilet, before and after eating, after playing outside, before communal activities such as sand, water, playdough, cooking and shaving foam. When cleaning their nose or when staff deem necessary.
- Staff must wash their hands:
 - before preparing or serving food
 - before feeding children
 - before eating or drinking
 - after going to the toilet
 - after assisting children at the toilet
 - after nappy changing
 - after dealing with any body fluids
 - after cleaning procedures
 - after caring for sick children
 - after handling soiled clothing or items
 - after dealing with waste
 - after removing disposable gloves and/or aprons.
- Hand washing technique: Wet hands under hot water (not exceeding 43°C for children to prevent scalding), apply liquid soap, rub vigorously paying particular attention to palms, backs, wrists, fingernails and fingers and rubbing between each finger and around the thumbs, rinse, dry thoroughly using disposable paper towels and turn off taps using the paper towel.

Toilets and potties

- Toilet areas, including toilet handles, taps, doors, toilet seats and wash hand basins are cleaned frequently throughout the day in accordance with the cleaning schedule and immediately if soiled.
- Potties are emptied into the toilet, cleaned (with hot water and detergent) and disinfected.
- Each child has its own individual potty.
- Trainer seats are thoroughly cleaned after each use.

Nappy Changing

- Nappy changing is only carried out in the designated nappy changing area.
- Parents will provide creams or nappy lotions for their child and these will be clearly labelled for individual use.
- Nappy changing area must be cleaned before use using (with hot water, detergent and disinfectant) and dried thoroughly.
- Hands washed before putting on disposable gloves and apron.
- All nappies are placed in an impervious bag, which is tied and disposed of in a lidded bin and emptied each day.
- When nappy is secure then aprons and gloves are removed, clothes are fastened.
- Clean changing mat as above.
- Wash hands before returning to playroom.
- In the event of a child's hands coming in contact with faeces during changing wipe hands as a temporary measure and wash hands before they return to playroom. Good hygiene practice at all times.

This policy was adopted by Margaret Connell

Date 31st July 2013

Bodily Fluid Spillage

- Spills of blood, vomit, urine or excreta will be cleaned up as quickly as possible. The area will be sectioned off if possible until the spill has been dealt with.
- Disposable plastic gloves are worn when cleaning up any bodily fluid spillage. Paper towels are used to clean up spillages and placed directly into a plastic bag for disposal.
- Ordinary household bleach freshly diluted (1 to 10 parts water), is used for cleaning and disinfection of bodily fluid spillages. (This solution should not make contact with skin. If accidental contact does occur, the skin, eyes or mouth should be flushed with cold water.
- If possible and safe to do so, diluted bleach will be poured directly over the spill, it will then be covered and mopped up with disposable paper towels.
- Disposable paper towels and gloves are disposed of in a plastic bag and sealed.
- A supply of bleach and plastic bags are kept together in a secure place in each room in case of such an incident.

Baby Feeding Equipment

- Bottles, teats and bottle brushes are washed thoroughly before sterilising.
- Feeding equipment is sterilised using a sterilising solution (which is changed daily and mixed according to manufacturers' instructions) or steam steriliser.

Food and Kitchen Hygiene

- Staff involved in toileting children or nappy changing are not involved in food handling.
- Staff will not engage in any aspects of minding children while preparing food.

Cleaning

- All areas are cleaned regularly in accordance with a documented cleaning policy and rota. Toilets and hard contact surfaces (playroom tables) are cleaned frequently.
- All cleaning equipment is kept separate to each area and easily distinguished e.g. colour coded.
- Playroom tables are cleaned before being used for meal and snack times.

Toys and Equipment

- Toys and equipment will be cleaned according to the toy cleaning programme and schedule.
- Toys and equipment will be cleaned with hot water and detergent and disinfectant.

Laundry

- Linen used for cots and sleep mats is washed after each use.
- Linen is washed in the hottest washing cycle of the washing machine.
- Cleaning cloths used in the playrooms, kitchen and sanitary accommodation are washed separately.

Pets

- Children must wash their hands after playing with pets.
- Pet's feeding bowls are not accessible to children.
- The play area is inspected before use and cleaned of any pet droppings or soil.
- All pet animals are free of disease and have appropriate health checks.
- Minded children will never be left alone with a pet.

Outings to farms or zoos

- Children will wash and dry their hands after contact with animals, animal cages as well as before eating and when leaving the farm/zoo.
- All meal breaks will be taken in designated areas away from where the animal's kept.
- Children will be constantly supervised during their visit to the farm or zoo. The importance of hand washing will be reiterated to the children by staff throughout the visit.

Illness

Initial discussions with parents need to include arrangements for when illness occurs. Before the agreement begins, you will need to make clear to the parents under what, if any, circumstances you will accept a sick child. You also need to discuss what arrangements the parents will make, if you, or your family is sick. It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the Pre School Provider/Child minder if their child has an infectious/contagious condition. The Pre School Provider/Child minder cannot accept the care of the child until they have been medically treated and the condition is no longer contagious. The parents of other minded children must be informed of any infectious or contagious conditions. See following page for a list of conditions.

Diseases	Early Symptoms	Incubation Period	Period when Infectious	Minimum Period of Exclusion
Measles	Cold, Cough, Fever or chill, Sore eyes, white spots in mouth (1 or 2 Days), rash after 2 or 3 days on face, weak chest.	8 -15 days	From a few days before the running nose and head cold to 7 days after rash appears	7 days from appearance of rash
German Measles	May have fever, sore throat, stiff neck, Rash after 1-2 days usually starts on face	14 - 21 days usually 12 days	From 7 days before to at least 4 days after rash appears	4 days from appearance of rash
Whooping Cough	Fever and Catarrh for approx 1 week before cough develops.	7 - 14 days	From 7 days after exposure to 21 days after whooping begins.	21 days after whooping begins
Mumps	Fever, sore throat, dry mouth, pain when chewing.	12 - 25 days	From 7 days before swelling appears to 9 days afterwards.	9 days from appearance of swelling.
Chicken pox	May be a slight fever, headache, nausea, spots appear on the 2nd day starting on the back.	11 - 21 days	From 5 days before until 6 days after the last lot of blisters.	6 days from appearance of rash.
Conjunctivitis	Sore eyes, inflamed discharge or watering.	1 - 3 days	Contagious until treated.	Until treated and cleared.
Impetigo	Blisters, spreading at the edges which are raised, thick yellow crust when blisters break.		Contagious, spread by hands and by objects touched.	Until skin is completely healed.
Ringworm	(Body) Round red areas with a raised border.	10 - 11 days	Contagious spread by scratching and material under finger nails.	Until treated.
Scabies	Intense itching, blistering, pin point blood crusts.	Several days	Mites spread rapidly by contact from clothing or bedding.	Until treatment has commenced.
Bad Cold	Coughing or sneezing		While child is coughing or sneezing.	Coughing and sneezing may pass germs between children
Gastroenteritis	Diarrhoea and vomiting	Varies dependant on organism	Varies	Until 48hrs after normal bowel habits have returned and/or vomiting has stopped. (Exclusion period may be longer for certain organisms e.g. E.coli 0157)

How should I clean soiled laundry?

- Put on disposable plastic apron and gloves
- Flush any solids into the toilet – don't rinse soiled laundry in the sink as this can spread
- E. Coli.
- Put the laundry directly into the washing machine and wash at the highest temperature the fabric allows.
- Wash your hands afterwards

If you can't wash soiled clothes in the childcare facility, flush solids down the toilet and place the clothes in a sealed, waterproof bag for washing at home. Explain to parents the best way to handle the soiled clothes to reduce the risk of spreading infection.

Policy No. 8a Nutrition - Healthy Eating

Policy Statement

It is the policy of Teach Leanbh to promote a healthy lifestyle through healthy eating, by encouraging children to eat nutritious food during dinner and snack times.

- Food provided in Teach Leanbh should be fresh, nutritious, balanced across the food groups and varied.
- It is the policy of Teach Leanbh that there is no sweets, crisps, chewing gum, nuts, popcorn etc. There is a healthy reward system in place.
- The owner/manager is responsible for keeping up to date with current regulations regarding additives etc. in foodstuff. Contact your local health promotion unit.
- All individual dietary needs must be met, (e.g. allergies, medical, religious or cultural). It is good practice to record these for all members of staff.
- Where milk is provided for children it must be full cream and pasteurised.
- Flexibility and sensitivity to meet all needs must surround the settings of meal/snack times (e.g. when a child may be hungry, not interrupting the flow of play).
- Adults should preferably sit with small groups of children to encourage good eating habits, stimulate conversation and enhance the quality of the interaction.
- If a child's eating or drinking patterns vary the parent must be notified.
- There is a 4 weekly menu rotated.
- If a parent is breastfeeding, provision is made to facilitate this.
- All staff will be trained in food handling.
- Teach Leanbh operates the HACCP system for food handling and preparation.
- Teach Leanbh is part of the HIP -Healthy Incentive Project, run by the HSE.
- Information about Healthy eating at Teach Leanbh can be found on our notice board by the main door at the front of the building.

This policy was adopted by Margaret Connell

Date 31st July 2013

Healthy Eating

The early years of a child's life are critically important for the formation of good lifestyle habits, including a positive attitude towards healthy eating. At Teach Leanbh, we promote and encourage healthy eating. Healthy eating habits started in childhood will stay with your child forever. The choices we have made preparing their menus will influence their chance of a healthier life in years to come. Children grow and develop fast, so they need a high quality, varied diet, with a good balance of energy, protein, vitamins and fibre. Healthy eating is about having a varied balanced diet and enjoying lots of different food. We use a good working knowledge of the food pyramid in preparing our menus.

The Healthy Food Pyramid is a fun way of teaching your children about the different food groups. The pyramid is divided into five shelves, each representing a different food group. Choosing a variety of foods from each shelf ensures that your children have a balanced and healthy diet. You should select most of your children's food from the bottom two shelves of the Healthy Food Pyramid. Smaller amounts of food should be chosen from the next two shelves, while food at the top of the pyramid should be eaten sparingly.

Children in full day care in Teach Leanbh receive breakfast, 2 meals and 2 snacks.

What are our meals?

Our meals contain at least one serving from each of the four bottom shelves of the food pyramid. Carbohydrate group, Protein group, Fruit and the Vegetable shelf?

What are our snacks?

Our snacks contain food from at least 2 shelves of the four bottom shelves of the food pyramid i.e. Protein and Carbohydrate, Carbohydrate and Dairy, Fruit, Vegetables and Carbohydrate, Dairy and Fruit/Vegetables.

The following menus have been developed; keeping in mind, any special dietary requirements and special emphasis is placed on being culturally aware. We follow this by involving parents from different cultures to give a demonstration, with the possibility of including this in our menu; this to date has been a huge success.

At Teach Leanbh, we operate the HACCP system, where there is traceability and accountability, ensuring all food used at Teach Leanbh is of top quality and presented to our children at quality standards. To ensure this, all staff receives training in food handling, ensuring a quality service for our children. We continually involve parents, staff and children in our menu selection.

Children in our daycare should receive 70% of their daily food in the service. Thus, the importance of our daily food (service) selection.

Environment

The fact that families have brought each of their children to the service is verification of the degree of trust they have in the care provided at Teach Leanbh. There are families who have been coming to us since the establishment of the facility, ones who have returned to us and of course new families. We value the respect that each family has in us and continually work to maintain and even better our performance. A Home from Home as described by one of our parent is a huge compliment, which all in Teach Leanbh value.

Our centre has received an “*All Ireland Centre of Excellence Award*” in 2008, an “*Enterprise Award*” in 2003 and an “*Outstanding Achievement Award*” in 2008.

When creating our Home from Home, parents, staff and children work in a harmonious setting where everyone’s input is valued. Staff, parents, and children work together to create a healthy promotion policy, which is visible in the hallway. When drawing up this policy, physical activities, food practice, nutrition practice, dental health and confidence building are all taken into account. It is prepared using the whole school approach; which we evaluate and review regularly.

The physical environment is bright, airy and spacious; it is aesthetically pleasing to the eye. The layout is spacious and its layout is such that it allows free flow for staff and children. There is sufficient space indoors for physical, active movement and we have a specially constructed Gross Motor Room.

The entrance hall will greet you with its colourful display of our Healthy Incentive Project. Included is our policies, on our whole school, healthy eating policy, menus, physical play, outdoor timetable, hygiene, healthy options and photographic evidence of our children, on view for parents, staff and potential customers.

All of the rooms are laid out with evidence of at least 3 food related materials, which are visible for all to see and experience that healthy eating is not just talked about, it is an everyday experience. Fruit bowls and water stations are in each of the rooms for our children to enjoy.

Outdoors has both man-made and natural surfaces for physical play to allow for agility and enjoyment. Our walks outdoors allows safety and enjoyment for our daily nature walks.

All staff on induction are taken through our policy on our healthy eating incentive. Staff are given formal training on food handling and HACCP, which ensures food reaching our children is of the highest standard. Staff take time to sit with children at meal times and experience different food textures themselves. Staff are involved at every aspect of our project to the drawing up of our menu, timetable for physical play, walk/outdoor time, dental, hygiene and our healthy reward system. Staff present food in such a way, taking into account that we are encouraging children to self-help themselves and to encourage a family style service.

Children

Children attending Teach Leanbh are encouraged to practice a family style food service, where adequate time is allowed for meal times. Children are encouraged with good hygiene practice of washing hands before meal times, setting the table and serving themselves. Children and staff sit together in a homely style, that provides encouragement and confidence to children, to experience new tastes and to feed themselves. Conversation flows, which gives a holistic experience to our environment. Tables have tablecloths and flower dressing to enhance the atmosphere.

Active Life Style

“To aid life leaving it free to unfold itself is the basic task of an educator.”

The Ethos of Teach Leanbh is that we want to develop the whole child prospective; where diet, physical play, educational needs and hygiene all take equal importance. We strive to ensure that each child's individual needs are met. It has been said that the more play experience we have as a child will support us in later life. Thus, the importance of ensuring that children have an active outdoor lifestyle.

It promotes:

Healthy weight

Healthy bones

Psychological wellbeing

Helping children to become strong and healthy, develops self-esteem and therefore encourages children to have a go at new activities. Children naturally learn so many skills through play e.g. Communication, socialising, thinking, movement and imitating.

At Teach Leanbh we are fortunate to have a rural setting, where we have the opportunity for long walks, at least 3 times daily and opportunities to enjoy the nature of the countryside. A timetable has been developed to ensure that children have opportunity for physical play daily (indoor/outdoor.) A Gross Motor room has also been constructed, to support children's play. Rain proof clothing, wellingtons and coat's are available for children on rainy days.

Hygiene and Dental Health

It is the policy of Teach Leanbh to promote good personal hygiene. All staff act as good role models. Children are encouraged in the practice of washing their hands from an early age. Visual displays are to be seen throughout the centre, on hand washing and good personal hygiene practice. We promote good hygiene practice at meal times, toileting, after exercise and after activities.

At Teach Leanbh, we promote the policy that the more you look after your teeth the longer you hold on to them. We empower children with the knowledge of being sugar smart and in doing so being kind to their teeth. We promote best drinks for teeth. - milk and water are the best drinks for our teeth, which you can have anytime without damaging your teeth. We support children with usual aids and practical demonstrations on how to keep their teeth clean and we at Teach Leanbh do not use sweet treats as a reward system, only healthy options e.g. Fruit bowls and cheese boards are available freely to children throughout the day.

Our policy is Healthy Toothy Drinks

Deochanna Sláinliúla d'Fhiacla

Fluid Intake

At Teach Leanbh, it is our policy to ensure that children attending our service are having enough liquid everyday.

Fluid Rules to be Cool

Having enough liquid everyday is very important for you. Being tired, not able to concentrate or having headaches are all signs that you are not drinking enough. At Teach Leanbh, we have water stations in each room, visible and accessible for children. Milk and tap water are the drinks offered to children in our service. At least 6 water drinks are offered during the day, milk, and water at meals and snack times.

Studies have shown that drinking lots of liquid improves how children are and how good they are at exercising concentration levels and general wellbeing. We encourage babies from 6 months to drink from a cup without a lid. A cup without a lid is the best chance of encouraging your baby to develop a sipping action when drinking, which encourages speech and language development, independence and sociability.

Healthy Reward System

A poster is available in each room.

It is the policy of Teach Leanbh that there is a healthy reward scheme in operation. Fruit and vegetables are provided as treats during the day. No food from the top of the food pyramid is provided at Teach Leanbh, as either a reward or an incentive.

Fruit is available in all rooms during the day. In the evening healthy options are available in the hallway for the children to take.

This was drawn up in consultation with the parents and Teach Leanbh staff:

Margaret Connell
Karen Cox
Bronagh Sheridan
Fidelma Gorman
Rebecca Kershaw
Beata Urbanovic
Sinead Benison

The next Annual Review date in January 2015.

Policy No.9 Hygiene

Policy Statement

Teach Leanbh is committed to the promotion of a healthy environment and a high standard of personal hygiene for adults and children.

Teach Leanbh will comply with relevant legislation including:

The Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006

Staff should always model and explain the reasons for hygiene practices.

- Washing hands after using toilet.
- Washing hands after outdoor play/play with pets.
- Washing hands before and after handling food – ideally disposable gloves suitable for food preparation should be used.
- Staff must be aware at all times that it is in their personal and professional hygiene practices and routines, they are setting an example (modelling) for the children.
- All cuts and sores must be covered with suitable dressings.
- Dealing with spills:
- Good quality disposable gloves must always be used when cleaning up spills of body fluids.
- Any spills of body fluid or excrement should be wiped with disposable paper towels and hygienically disposed of in double plastic bags and/or incinerated.
- A supply of clean clothing should be readily available for accidents.
- A supply of polythene bags should be available to wrap soiled garments.
- Treat the area of the accident with chlorine or iodine bleach based solution diluted according to the manufactures instructions using disposable cloths.
- Mops for general floor washing must be disinfected using rubber gloves and they should be left to dry, mop head up and replaced regularly.
- All toilets, surrounding walls and wash hand basins must be cleaned and disinfected every day and between sessions if there is more than one session.
- Teach Leanbh should have daily and weekly cleaning routine in respect of floors, tables, playroom and outdoor equipment, toys and frequently mouthed objects. Sand should be sterilised regularly and covered when not in use.
- Cups and beakers should be covered with a clean cloth not stacked inside one another and where possible, air-dried. Damaged cups/beakers must not be used.
- All cleaning cloths, towels etc., must be changed every day and between sessions. Different clothes must be used with respect to kitchen and toilet.
- Any leftover food must be properly disposed of.
- Routine cleaning which may pose a safety risk should not take place when children are on the premises.

Pest Control

- All door and window openings to the food storage and preparation area should be effectively screened to prevent the ingress of birds, vermin and insects.
- Adequate proofing to the structure to prevent infestations of vermin and insects.

Reference Síolta Standard - Organisation

Policy No. 10 Comments & Complaints

Policy Statement

Teach Leanbh welcomes children's and parent's views in the development of the service. It is the policy to Teach Leanbh to give careful attention and prompt and courteous response to any suggestions, comments or complaints thereby ensuring the development of the high quality pre-school service, which meets the needs of children and parents. Information on these procedures will be made available to staff and parents.

Compliments/Complaints Procedures

Teach Leanbh welcomes your feedback, as we believe all feedback is positive whether it is a compliment or a complaint. Based on the ethos of the service we welcome both on an informal manner direct to the Manager, however there is a formal process available where a Parent/guardian can present us with a written complaint or compliment which will be assessed on a case by case basis by the Manager. All Written complaints or compliments will be responded to within 7 days of receipt of the letter.

Comments Procedure:

1. A comment can be made verbally or in writing to the manager or to the childcare supervisor.
2. A note of the comment will be made in the comment book along with any action taken.
3. The complaints procedure should be availed of if a satisfactory response is not received with a reasonable time.

Complaints Procedure:

1. If you wish to make a complaint you should contact the childcare supervisor to resolve the matter.
2. Should you feel that the matter is unresolved then the complaint should be put in writing to the manager.
3. A written acknowledgement of the complaint will be sent as soon as possible.
4. If the complaint is related to the behaviour of a member of staff, the staff member must be informed that a formal complaint has been made and be given the full details.
5. If required a request may be made in writing to the management to have the complaint heard by a wider group.
6. Membership of the panel should not comprise anyone directly involved in the complaint or related to the complaint or a member of staff.
7. One other person may accompany the person making the request.
8. Following the request the complaint must be facility with a meeting within one month.
9. An external mediator will keep an agreed written record and where appropriated, a formal letter of the outcome will be issued, with in a reasonable period following the meeting.
10. In instances where the complaint involves the welfare of a child/children, the information should be made known to the relevant local Health Board personal.
11. Confidentiality is of the utmost importance when dealing with comments and/or complaints.

Policy No. 11 **Sleep and Rest**
Policy Statement

Teach Leanbh will ensure that adequate and suitable facilities are provided for pre-school children to rest during the day. Teach Leanbh facilitates each child's individual need for sleep or rest and liaises with parents / guardians in relation to children's sleep patterns / needs. Children are allowed to sleep or rest when they are tired and not just at designated times. Children are provided with suitable sleeping facilities away from the general play area. A separate area is provided with sufficient space requirements, for the under 2 years, with children having access to a standard cot.

- Children over 2 years have access to sleep mats. This will comply with fire safety requirements set out by Local Authority.
- Sleep Equipment is checked regularly and maintained in perfect condition.
- Children are also monitored by an electronic monitor.
- Babies in sleep room will all be in sight, hearing and monitored at all times.
- A sleep log will be kept and stored within sleep room.
- Children are checked by a member of staff every 10 minutes.
- Sleep room temperature is checked every 30 minutes, when the room is occupied.
- Staff will display sensitivity and warmth conducive to sleep.
- In the event of a child becoming distressed, intervention, support and reassurance are offered immediately.
- Sleep patterns are reviewed regularly.
- Parents receive written feedback on their child's daily sleep pattern.

Best Practice:

- 1 Child per cot.
- Babies are placed on back with their feet at foot of cot.
- Tuck (bed clothes) in securely below shoulders.
- Baby's clothes are loose and light fitting.
- Equipment maintained in excellent condition - checked regularly.
- Babies in sleep room will be within sight or hearing and monitored at all times.
- A sleep log will be maintained and stored within sleep room.
- Parents receive written information on daily sleep patterns.

This policy was adopted by Margaret Connell

Date 31st July 2013

Policy for Sleep Room Temperature Checking

The temperature of the sleep room will be maintained between 16° and 20°.

- A temperature probe is used and results recorded to ensure temperature is maintained.
- Sleep room temperature will be checked every 30 minutes, when the room is occupied.
- Viewing panel is provided to allow staff to view children at all times.
- Lighting is controlled, allowing the environment to be conducive to sleep, while also allowing children to be monitored.
- Each child has their own linen and this is washed after daily use.

Best Practice

- Each child has their own cot.
- Babies are placed on their back.
- No objects are left in cot.
- Blanket is tucked in securely below shoulder and babies clothes are loose and light fitting.

This policy was adopted by Margaret Connell

Date 31st July 2013

Policy on the use of Soothers

It is the policy of Teach Leanbh that soothers are only given at nap time. Some research suggests that giving a baby a soother can reduce the risk of cot death.

- Each child has their own soother, clearly labelled, in an air-tight container.
- Soothers are not attached to strings or cords when in use.
- After use, each soother is sterilised and placed in its own marked container.
- Containers are kept in their boxes, in the sleep room in each individual child's basket.
- Soothers are replaced regularly.

This policy was adopted by Margaret Connell

Date 31st July 2013

It is the policy of Teach to comply with all legislation in force in the area of safety and hygiene including:

- The Child Care Regulations 2006.
- The Fire Services Act 1981.
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 2005.
- Building Regulations 1997.
- Ensure the health and well-being and personal safety of all users while on the premises.
- Have proper accident prevention and emergency procedures agreed and started with all facility users.
- Ensure all agreed safety procedures are reviewed and followed consistently.

General:

- Teach Leabh must have the recommended ratio of adults to children on the premises. There should be sufficient experienced adults with current first aid training to ensure that one such person is always on duty.
- Teach Leabh must make clear provision for safe arrival and departure of children. They should keep written information about who should collect each child and children should only be allowed to leave with authorised adults.
- Teach Leabh must ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to ensure that children do not have unsupervised access to the street; outdoor play area, kitchen area and any other areas that may be a safety risk etc.
- Care must be taken that children cannot enter or exit the premises undetected.
- Teach Leabh must have a phone.
- Fire exits must not be locked and access to them must always be kept clear. If the main entrance to the premises must be locked to ensure the safety of the children then the key must be left in a position that is known and accessible to all adults.
- Children must be supervised by adults at all times and never left unattended. Staff must know how many children are present at any one time.
- In line with policy statements all parents must be advised of Teach Leabh procedures. Special emphasis should be placed on gates, doors, parking arrangements and the storage of prams and buggies.
- In planning out furniture and equipment emphasis should be placed on minimising safety risks and allowing clear circulation space whilst ensuring that corridors are not created between activities.
- Children should be shown how to carry objects carefully.
- Adults should ensure that unsuitable objects are not available to children in Teach Leabh. Safety checks both indoor and outdoor should be made before and after each day.
- Adults must not smoke or drink hot beverages in the playrooms.
- Special attention must be placed on outdoor play areas.

Accidents and First Aid:

- There should be a fully equipped first aid box, easily identifiable, the location of which is known to all adults. The contents of the box should be checked at least once a month. Teach Leabh must have present at all times at least one member of staff holding an up to date first aid certificate.
- Teach Leabh must have a proper filing system for children's record cards in order to facilitate easy access to parental permission and other information in case of an emergency.
- Minor accidents should be treated in Teach Leabh and parents/guardians/carers advised of the nature of the injury and the action taken when the child is collected.
- All accidents/incidents, even the most minor, must be reported to the insurance company.
- An accident record book must be kept.
- Teach Leabh should have an agreement with local surgery in case of an accident of sudden illness.
- Up to date safety statement is available and updated frequently.

Safety Statement:

- A safety statement is the managers written program of safeguarding and health in the workplace.
- Owner must be responsible for ensuring compliance with the Health, Safety & Welfare at Work Act 2005 & General Application Regulations 2007.

Fire:

1. Teach Leanbh must have at least one fire extinguisher of 1gallon capacity in the building, situated in close proximity to the main access/exit.
2. The appointed staff member should know how to use the fire extinguisher and where the fire hydrant is located. The fire equipment must be checked regularly.
3. Some means of fire detection is required in every room used by the service.
4. Teach Leanbh must have a standard fire drill and this should be posted in every room. Drills should be initiated early in the year and continued on a monthly basis. Records of these drills must be kept.
5. It is the policy of Teach Leanbh that on sounding of fire alarm, the named person commences evacuation immediately.
6. Evacuation procedures posted in children rooms, entrance hall & kitchen.

Accident & Emergency

In the event of an accident/emergency the child's welfare is our first concern. Paediatric First Aid procedures will be applied immediately. All staff are trained in first aid. If we deem it necessary, medical assistance will be sought immediately.

Numbers Posted in office: 999/112
 or alternatively
 Dr. Walsh Tel.: 043-3341394

Parent advised as soon as possible.

Accidents can be controlled through good management in combination with active employee involvement. Prevention is the direct responsibility of all Managers/Supervisors alike.

Risk Assessment

Teach Leanbh is committed to the highest standard of Health and Safety for children, staff, parents and visitor accessing our premises.

Risk assessments are carried out on a daily/monthly basis and its results are evaluated to ensure that we fully adhere to our obligations to Health and Safety of our clients.

Teach Leanbh believes that children should be encouraged to grow and develop to their full potential in a suitable planned environment, where they know what is expected of them and where clear limits are set, appropriate to their age and stage of development and any special needs they may have. It is our policy that no corporal punishment of any kind is inflicted on any child in our Service.

1. Acknowledgement of a child's effort, achievements and feeling by sincere encouragement will lead to growth of self-esteem and discipline.
2. Consistency in managing behaviour is vital, in order for children to have the security of knowing what to expect and can build up good patterns of self-discipline.
3. Adults must act as good role models by following rules and showing respect for each other and the children.
4. In line with our Aistear in Action rules that will apply to all children and adults in the group must be discussed and agreed. These rules must be made known to all adults, staff and parents and to the children. These rules will be explained to newcomers, adults of children. Rules will be kept to a minimum.
5. The key to behaviour management is good observation skills in adults.

Observing

- What is going on?
- What is the behaviour you wish to change?
- What led up to each incidence of unwanted behaviour?
- What did the child do?
- What was the consequence?

It is only by observation that you can really see what is going on in a group. This is a skill, which can only be acquired through ongoing training, practice and discussion.

We view behaviour in our service using the following table:

	Minor	Moderate	Severe
Level at which it impairs the child	Minimal	Significant	Severe
Impact on relationships round the child	Minimal on child/family life	Significant	Severe
Chronicity	Occasional	Chronic – on-going	Chronic – very frequent

- Chronicity means chronic – takes into account how often the behaviour occurs e.g. now and again, daily etc

Positive Strategies for Minor Behaviour Problems

Definition: Negative behaviour incidents are unwelcome behaviour responses such as temper tantrums, fighting, hitting, screaming, sulking, biting, kicking, refusing to co-operate etc. that are in keeping with the developmental stage and occur on occasions, for short period of time, and results in minimal or short lived negative impact on the child itself or on others around them.

Procedure:

1. One to one adult support for the child who has misbehaved will help the child to see what went wrong and offer possible solutions.
2. Comfort and support is necessary where another child has been hurt in a incident.
3. Explanation for challenging, unwanted behaviour and attitudes will be made clear immediately to the child/children.
4. It must be made clear to the child in question that it is the behaviour and not the child that is unacceptable
5. Adults will speak quietly and calmly to children when dealing with these situations e.g. I like you dearly but I do not like how you behaved.

Positive Strategies for Moderate Behaviour Problems

Definition: Where negative behaviours are happening more frequently than one would normally expect and is having a greater impact on the child itself and on those around them.

Procedure:

6. Recurring problems will be dealt with in an inclusive manner following observation and involving the child's parents and other appropriate adults.
7. The opportunity for staff to engage in training child development, observations, and behaviour management skills underpins this policy.
8. Books and activities should be made available to help children explore and name their feelings where appropriate in conjunction with an adult.
9. A joint approach will be developed in conjunction with parents e.g. rewarding Positive Behaviour/star chart/special story building

Positive Strategies for Severe Behaviour Problems

Definition: Challenging behaviours are frequent and repeated actions by a child that impacts significantly on other children or the child itself, or their ability to engage in the daily activities, and which fails to improve under the usual behaviour management strategies or requires ongoing intensive one-to-one management to keep under control. The behaviours may have been present from the start, gradually worsening as the child gets older or involve a deterioration of their behaviour from a previously normal pattern.

10. The childcare service in co-operation with the childcare worker and the parents will develop individual plans for children who display severe challenging behaviours. Parents will be involved, included, informed and supported to follow plans for children. Where necessary additional support may be sought through referral to other professionals. One-to-one support will be offered. The child's age and level of development will be taken into account. To preserve the dignity of everyone involved, the child will be removed from the activity and the parents informed and the problem discussed and a joint approach will be agreed upon.

Contacts:

PHN
Tivoli House
Speech & Language Therapist
Special Needs Intervention Team

Our Behaviour Management Policy No 13 has been updated to comply with Regulation 9 of the Childcare Pre-School Services Regulations 2006.

This Policy has been adopted by Margaret Connell

Dated: 19th February 2015

Biting Policy

It is the policy of Teach Leanbh to support children at all stages of development and to help them to reach their full potential, in a well supported environment. We offer support and appropriate intervention to biting. Biting is a universal characteristic of a child's developmental stage, however, biting will not always manifest itself. Those children that do bite will not be labelled as naughty. Biting can occur for many reasons – teething, affection, attention or hunger. Once we become aware of any child in our care, who has started to bite, we will:

- Observe the child carefully.
- Once we have determined the context in which the biting is taking place, then appropriate action and intervention will take place.
- An incident report will be completed, each time a child bites or is bitten. This will be shown to the parents, of that child and they will be asked to sign the report.
- At no stage will a child's name be mentioned to any other parent if they have bitten a peer.
- This policy has been written to ensure compliance with regulation 9 please see – Policy No. 13, Teach Leanbh Policy & Procedures. - Behaviour Management

This policy was adopted by Margaret Connell

Date 31st July 2013

Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children states that all organisations working in direct contact with children should have procedures and guidelines derived from and consistent with the current **Children First National Guidance and Our Duty to Care: the Principles of Good Practice for the Protection of Children and Young People**. This policy has been developed to comply with our responsibilities to safeguard the children in our care.

We at Teach Leanbh are committed to practice, which protects children from harm and to full compliance with the Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Our Duty to Care.

We recognise the rights of children to be protected from harm, treated with respect, listened to and to have their views taken into consideration in matters that affect them.

Management, staff and volunteers/students in this service recognise that the welfare of children is paramount and our service will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- Having procedures to recognise, respond and report in relation to concerns for children's protection and welfare
- Having a confidentiality policy
- Having a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers/students
- Having a safe recruitment procedure
- Having procedures for managing/supervising staff/volunteers/students
- Having a procedure to respond to accidents
- Having a procedure to respond to complaints
- Developing a staff allegations procedure and disciplinary procedure

As part of the policy this service will: -

- Appoint a designated liaison person (DLP) for dealing with child protection concerns
- Provide induction training around the group's child protection policy and procedures
- Ensure that staff attend child protection training, as appropriate
- Provide supervision and support for staff and volunteers in contact with children
- Share information about the child protection policy and good practices with families and children
- Review the groups' child protection policy and practices on a regular basis

This policy will be reviewed on 20th September 2015, or earlier if necessary

Recognising, Responding, Reporting Concerns about a Child's Welfare or Possible Abuse

Staff working with children in early years settings may at times be concerned about the general welfare and development of children they work with. They should feel that they could discuss any concerns with their Line Manager or the Designated Liaison Person. Good communication with parents is very important in ensuring best outcomes for children in this regard and any concerns should be discussed with parents (unless doing so might put a child at further risk). It is not always clear that a child may be being harmed or abused. DLP's may discuss concerns informally with Duty Social Workers of the HSE if they are not sure whether to report a concern or not (**see section 2.7, Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook, for further detail**).

Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (DCYA 2011, paragraph 3.2.1) states that 'Everyone must be alert to the possibility that children with whom they are in contact may be suffering from abuse or neglect.' This responsibility is particularly relevant for those who work closely with children and families.

"If you identify a child as being at risk of harm – you must act",
(Paragraph 3.7.3, Children First, 2011).

Designated Liaison Person¹

It is the responsibility of the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) or the Deputy DLP to make contact with the HSE Duty Social Worker or in the event of an emergency and the unavailability of the HSE contact An Garda Síochána.

Designated liaison person(s) will ensure that they are knowledgeable about child protection and will undertake any training considered necessary.

The Designated Liaison Person is: **Margaret Connell, Owner/Manager**

The Designated Liaison Person is: **Bronagh Sheridan**

Reporting Procedures

All staff members in **Teach Leanbh** are aware of their responsibility to recognise and respond to child abuse and welfare concerns. **The definitions and signs and symptoms of abuse are contained in this policy in Appendix I.**

A concern could come to your attention in a number of ways and it is important to know how to respond

1. A child tells you or indicates that she/he is being abused. This is called a disclosure:
 - **Follow the Suggested Guidelines for Responding to a child who discloses to abuse, Appendix 3.**
 - **Report to your DLP without delay.**

2. Admission or indication from an alleged abuser.
3. A concern about a potential risk to children posed by a specific person, even if the children are unidentifiable.
4. Information from someone who saw a child being abused.
5. Evidence of an injury or behaviour that is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused in any other way.
6. An injury or behaviour that is consistent both with abuse and an innocent explanation, but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse.
7. Concern about the behaviour or practice of a colleague.
 - **Record information and report to DLP without delay.**

7. Consistent indication over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.
 - **Record dates and observations and consult with DLP.**
 - **Consult Appendixes 1 & 2.**

8. Retrospective Disclosures by adults
Although our service is for children, it is possible for anyone to be in a position where an adult might disclose abuse that took place during their childhood.
 - **It is essential to establish whether there is any risk to any child who may be in contact with the alleged abuser revealed in the disclosure.**
 - **Record the information and report to DLP without delay.**

¹ See Appendix 6 for information on the role and function of the DLP.

Concerns about a child are discussed with or reported to the HSE within 24 hours. The DLP will make a formal report to the HSE using the Standard Report Form following the procedure detailed below.

Emergency Procedure: A child should never be left in immediate danger. If for any reason staff/volunteers are unable to contact the DLP or Deputy DLP, everyone needs to know that they should contact the Duty Social Worker or if not available An Garda Síochána.

- Referral to the HSE Children and Family Services Social Work Service is made using the Standard Report Form.
- Standard Report Forms are located in office bottom drawer of desk.
- Standard Report Forms can also be accessed directly from Children and Family Services or downloaded from [www.hse.ie/go/children first](http://www.hse.ie/go/childrenfirst).
- If the concern is urgent and the child is in immediate danger, make the report by telephone and follow it up with the completed Standard Report Form.
- Remember: The quality of the information that is provided will help influence the ability of the Social Work Service to respond.
- In the event of an emergency and the unavailability of the HSE Duty Social Worker at **043 3350584 Tivoli House**. Contact An Garda Síochána at: **043-3350570 Longford District headquarters or 043-6687660 Granary District Headquarters**

We recognise that it may be difficult for a member of staff, volunteer or student to raise a child protection or welfare concern. We recognise the need to provide support to people in the organisation who report child protection or welfare concern.

If the Designated Liaison Person chooses not to pass on a concern raised by a member of staff, volunteer or student, he/she will inform them of this in writing, indicating the reasons. The Designated Liaison Person will advise the individual that he/she may proceed to make a report themselves and that the provision of the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 will apply. The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 provides protection from civil liability and penalisation by an employer where reports are made to designated officers in the HSE or to An Garda Síochána reasonably and in good faith.

Not all concerns that are raised will necessarily meet reasonable grounds for concern (see Appendix II). Where concerns do not meet reasonable grounds for concern these will be documented in (our incident book, observation logs), and kept confidentially and securely for future reference (see Record Keeping and CPWPH 2.7).

Where there is a concern that a child has gone missing this information will be reported to the HSE Child and Family Social Work Services. We also recognise our responsibility to report potential risks to unidentifiable children to the HSE Child and Family Social Work Services.

Contact details:

The duty social worker is available at:

Laois	Social Work Department Child and Family Centre Portlaoise	Tel: 057 86 92567 Fax: 057 86 62535
Offaly	Social Work Department Derry Suite Castle Buildings Tara St Tullamore, Co Offaly	Tel: 057 93 70700 Fax: 057 93 70748

Longford	Social Work Department Tivoli House Dublin Road Longford	Tel: 043 3350584 Fax: 043 3350798
Westmeath	Duty Social Work Athlone Health Centre Coosan Road Athlone Co Westmeath	Tel: 090 64 83106 Fax: 090 64 91329
	Duty Social Work Child and Family Centre Springfield Mullingar Co Westmeath	Tel: 044 93 84450 Fax: 044 93 84396

When a child protection concern is being reported to the HSE, good practice would indicate that parents/carers should be informed about the report UNLESS DOING SO MAY PUT THE CHILD AT FURTHER RISK. The DLP may seek advice from the HSE Social Work Department in relation to this. **Where appropriate, the DLP will inform the parent(s) of our intention to make a referral the HSE Child and Family Services.**

Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Employees and Volunteers

'Our Duty to Care' advises that two procedures need to be followed:

- Reporting procedure in respect of the child
 - The procedure for dealing with the employee
1. Reporting procedure in respect of the child
 - The designated liaison person will follow the standard procedures for dealing with concerns/disclosures of abuse and reporting to the HSE.
 - We recognise that the welfare of the child remains the paramount consideration and that where there are reasonable grounds for concern the reporting procedure will be followed without delay.
 - In private services, if the DLP is not the owner/operator, the designated liaison person will also inform the owner/operator without delay

DLP Margaret Connell & Duty DLP Bronagh Sheridan

2. The procedure for dealing with the employee
 - The owner/operator will inform the employee/volunteer that an allegation has been made against him/her and the nature of the allegation.
 - The employee will be given an opportunity to respond. The owner/operator will note the response and pass on the information when making the standard report to the HSE. The worker will be informed of how the information they provide will or may be used.
 - Further action will be guided by the employment contract and the rules of natural justice – the first priority is to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk. Protective measures, proportionate to the level of risk, must be undertaken.
 - Follow up action on the allegation/concern will be taken in consultation with the investigating agencies: the HSE and/or An Garda Síochána. After these consultations, when pursuing the question of the future position of the employee, the owner/operator will advise the employee of the agreed procedures to be followed
 - We will take care to maintain close liaison with the HSE and/or An Garda Síochána during the course of the investigation.
 - We will keep parents informed of actions planned and taken, having regard to the rights of others concerned.

(Adapted from Children First Appendix 9 and Our Duty to Care, Section Seven)

FORM NUMBER: CC01:01:00

STANDARD REPORT FORM

(For reporting CP&W Concerns to the HSE)



A. To Principal Social Worker/Designate: _____

1. Date of Report

2. Details of Child

Name:		Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address:	DOB			Age	
	School				
Alias		Correspondence address (if different)			
Telephone		Telephone			

3. Details of Persons Reporting Concern(s)

Name:		Telephone No.	
Address:		Occupation	
		Relationship to client	
Reporter wishes to remain anonymous		<input type="checkbox"/>	Reporter discussed with parents/guardians
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Parents Aware of Report

Are the child's parents/carers aware that this concern is being reported to the HSE? Yes No

5. Details of Report

(Details of concern(s), allegation(s) or incident(s) dates, times, who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent's view(s), child's view(s) if known.)

STANDARD REPORT FORM

(For reporting CP&W Concerns to the HSE)

**6. Relationships**

Details of Mother		Details of Father	
Name:		Name:	
Address: (if different to child)		Address: (if different to child)	
Telephone No's:		Telephone No's:	

7. Household composition

Name	Relationship	DOB	Additional Information e.g. School/ Occupation/Other:

8. Name and Address of other personnel or agencies involved with this child

	Name	Address
Social Worker		
PHN		
GP		
Hospital		
School		
Gardaí		
Pre-School/Crèche/YG		
Other (specify):		

9. Details of person(s) allegedly causing concern in relation to the child

Relationship to child:		Age		Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name:			Occupation				
Address:							

10. Details of person completing form

Name:		Occupation:	
Signed		Date:	

CHILD PROTECTION

Reporting Procedure

CONCERN

If you have a concern about the protection/welfare of a child contact

CONTACT

Designated Liaison Person:

Margaret Connell (Owner/Manager)

Designated Liaison Person:

Bronagh Sheridan

CONSULT

According to our Child Protection Policy the Designated Liaison Person may be required to report to the HSE Duty Social Worker / Garda

Social Work Team Area: Tivoli House, Longford
Telephone Number: 043-3350584

Out of hours contact: Granard Garda Station
Telephone Number: 043-6687660

We have an up-to-date Child Protection Policy	Yes
Garda vetting has been obtained/sought for all staff	Yes
We have current Codes of Behaviour	Yes

Confidentiality

It is the policy of Teach Leanbh to keep confidential all personal information about the families, children and staff in this service.

However, an exception to this is when child protection concerns arise, in which case the organisation cannot keep such information secret. In this situation information will be shared on a 'need to know' basis in the best interest of the protection and welfare of the child. Sharing of information for the protection of child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection. Parents and children have a right to know if personal information is being shared, unless doing so could put the child at further risk.

Management, staff, volunteers/students in this service will be advised of our confidentiality policy and may be required to sign up to it.

Record Keeping

Keeping accurate and up to date records in relation to children, staff and service provision is essential in order to comply with the Child Care (Pre-school Services) Regulations 2006. The Pre-school Inspector will have access to files for inspection purposes.

Parents may have access to the files and records of their own children on request but may not have access to information about any other child.

Only staff involved with a particular child will have access to confidential files.

Confidential files are retained in a locked cabinet

Where there are welfare or child protection concerns, observations/records will be kept on an ongoing basis and information shared with HSE Child and Family Services as appropriate.

This policy was adopted by Margaret Connell

Date 31st July 2013

In line with Children First (4.7.5 viii) it is our policy to share our records with the HSE where a child protection or welfare issue arises. We also are committed to attend and share information as required at formal child protection and welfare meetings organised by the HSE Children and Family Services, i.e. Child conferences and strategy meetings.

Code of Behaviour

We at Teach Leanbh believe that staff and volunteers should have a child centred-approach to working with children. All staff and volunteers should have a clear understanding of what is acceptable with respect to their behaviour with children. This is important to protect children from harm and staff/volunteers, children and parents from misinterpretations of their actions. We recognise that all children have an equal right to our service provision in line with the Equal Status Acts and the National Disability Strategy.

We aim to do this by-

- Valuing and respecting all children as individuals;
- Listening to children;
- Involving children in decision making as appropriate;
- Encouraging children;
- Having an anti-bullying policy;
- Promoting positive behaviour;
- Having an accident/incident policy.

We do not:

- Engage in or allow inappropriate touching in any form
- Verbally abuse or physically punish any child
- Condone bullying or abusive behaviour by staff, volunteers or other children
- Undertake intimate care needs without consulting and agreeing arrangements with the child and parents.
- Engage in practices which demean children

We are aware:

- Of developing favouritism or becoming overly involved with any one child.
- That while physical contact is a valid way of comforting or reassuring a child it should take place in response to the need of the child and not the need of the adult and in an open environment
- Of the need to be sensitive to the diverse cultures in our childcare setting.
- That children should be supported and encouraged to let staff know if they have any complaints, concerns or difficulties.

Interview Process

The interview panel consists of the Manager/Owner and 1 other from the childcare profession.

In the past we have contacted a number of childcare professionals to seek gender balance on the interview panel however we have been unsuccessful in obtaining a suitable interviewer as there is no-one available. Nonetheless we are committed to gender balance as part of the interview process and will strive to address that balance in the future.

Interviewers are given a checklist for use within the interview process as part of the County and City enterprise Boards Employment Legislation guide for Small and Medium Businesses 2006.

Each member of the panel is supplied with the applications and C.V's in advance.

A marking scheme and score sheet are prepared.

When the interviews are completed the interview panel prepares a full report on the interview process. The report is signed by both members of the panel and is kept on file for at least a year, together with the short-listing report and the interview score sheet.

Selection Process

The position is offered to the candidate with the highest mark on the score sheet, after references have been checked. A reference is sought from the current or most recent employer. Both references are contacted verbally by telephone and this is followed up with a written reference.

Letters of regret are sent to all unsuccessful candidates within one week of the interviews.

Employing people with disability

When employing a person, Teach Leanbh as an employer is obliged to do all that is reasonable to accommodate the needs of that person with a disability. Teach Leanbh believe that a person with a disability is to be considered fully competent and capable to carry out the duties attached to the position with the assistance of special treatment or facilities as long as these are not to a disproportionate burden.

Teach Leanbh takes a number of practical steps in this area as follows.

Teach Leanbh has an equal opportunities policy in place

Teach Leanbh ensures that job descriptions, person specification and recruitment and selection procedures do not unintentionally discriminate against people with disabilities.

Teach Leanbh conducts interviews in a manner that emphasises abilities, achievements and individual qualities relevant to the job to be filled.

Teach Leanbh review accessibility to the nursery.

Recruitment

- Teach Leanbh should be advertised internally and externally to ensure recruitment from the widest possible field and in accordance with current Equal Opportunities Legislation.
- Selection for employment must be on the basis of suitability for the advertised post, in line with current Equal Opportunities legislation. It should be made clear if internal applicants will be treated on equal terms with external applicants or will be given preference if their suitability is equal.
- The selection will be on the basis of:
 - Understanding the value of pay.
 - Having a sufficient standard of health to cope with demands of childcare work.
 - Training or qualifications
 - Experience
 - Ability to work with children, parents and other adults, including members of professional bodies.
 - Identity check verified & validated
 - Suitable references verified & validated (most recent employer)
 - Vetting/Garda clearance.
 - Police check where necessary for period live outside the jurisdiction
 - Health Declaration
 - Qualifications verified

- A declaration form
- All employees will be issued with written terms and conditions of employment and a signed contract of employment, within 8 weeks of commencement.
- Confirmation of all appointments will be subject to a satisfactory completion of a period of probation.
- An induction program will be provided for all employees on the commencement of their employment.
- The pre-school service must conform to its legal obligations as an employer in relation to registration and taxation.
- Teach Leanbh will conform to its legal obligations in relation to redundancy.
- Staff appraisals and reports will be carried out annually.

Trainee

All trainees, volunteers and students undergo the same recruitment process as staff. Suitable references, Garda clearance and a health declaration are obtained prior to commencement.

All trainees, volunteers and students are appropriately mentored and closely supervised, parents are advised of their selection and no trainee works alone and is not calculated in the adult child ratio.

It is the policy in Teach Leanbh that no trainee is involved in toileting or nappy changing of children.

Reference: Relationships in the Nursery

Relationship between Management & Staff

Written induction methods for new staff members

- All new employees will have an induction programme at the commencement of their employment. The purpose of the induction is to help the new employee settle into their employment as quickly as possible and to make sure she/he has all the necessary information in order to perform job duties effectively.
- New staff member is advised prior to first morning of work of start time and parking arrangements.
- On arrival new staff member is met by the Manager and given a copy of the employee handbook. New staff member will sign an acknowledgement of receipt of the employee handbook.
- New staff member is introduced to staff present at the time and shown staff facilities.
- A tour of the nursery is then given.
- New staff member is shown where the First Aid box is and guided through the Fire evacuation policy.
- New staff member is given a copy of the Policies and Procedures handbook of Teach Leanbh and Manager highlight Child Protection policy, Behaviour Management policy and Record Keeping policy amongst others.
- New staff member will sign a copy of the Policies and Procedures document when they have read and understood it. A copy of the UN convention on the rights of the child and Childcare Regulations is given to the new staff member.
- Break and lunch times are allocated to new staff member.
- New staff member is introduced to the children in her/his care and given a concise update on each child.
- New staff member is told the management structure and operating procedures for the nursery.
- New staff member is supported by all other staff members and contracted by the Manager at various time during the first week for feedback and support.
- New employees will be expected to familiarise themselves with all written documentation provided relating to the nursery.
- Parents/Carers will be introduced to new staff member at first available opportunity in all cases.
- As per the employee handbook page 6 Staff Records section, new staff member is made aware of the record keeping policy of employee documents.

Staff Absence

If the event of staff absence, in so far as possible it is our policy to have a suitable relief panel to draw from/or management will take over the duty of staff absent.

Recruitment Procedure

This service will ensure that all staff and volunteers are carefully selected by undertaking the following:

- Devising a clear **job description** which outlines the qualifications, skills and experience needed;
- **Advertising** widely using the agreed job description;
- Requesting candidates to supply information on **an application form**, which should include information re: personal details, past and current work/volunteering experience, qualifications and/or skills relevant to the post and signature;
- **A declaration form** should be submitted in relation to criminal convictions and suitability to work with children in terms of conduct, character and background;
- **Interviews** should be conducted by more than one person. It is the responsibility of the interview panel and not one individual on it to appoint staff/volunteers; All processes should be consistent and transparent. (i.e.: scoring sheets and feedback to candidates). During interviews check out any gaps in the candidate's employment history and attitudes, for example: child-centred ethos, discipline, child protection, race or culture.
- Two **written references** should be supplied; Ideally, a reference form should be developed for the job and sent to the referees with a stamped return envelope, see Our Duty to Care Template Appendix 7. These must be followed up with a phone call to verify that they are bone fide This is also an opportunity to ascertain if there have been any concerns that have not been outlined in the written reference.
- **Garda vetting** in relation to all candidates, staff or volunteers (if available);
- The development of **criteria on decision-making** regarding suitability in the event of a vetting disclosure.
- Two forms of **identification** including photo ID, address and signature such as passport/drivers licence should be supplied;
- Using an **employment contract** with staff or written agreement with volunteers;
- Having a **probationary period** which is written into a contract;
- **Volunteers and students** should not be left unsupervised at any time.

Please see also HSE Standard Operating Procedure: Garda Vetting, Employee References [and recorded validations] & Qualifications For Early Years / Pre-School Services available at http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/Find_a_Service/Children_and_Family_Services/Pre-school_Services/reg8and14.html

Induction, Training and Supervision/Support

- All management, staff, volunteers and students will be briefed on the child protection policy as part of their induction training.
- All management, staff, volunteers and students will be required to sign up to the child protection policy.
- All management, staff and volunteers will be encouraged to attend Keeping Safe Training and other relevant training as identified.
- Staff will be provided with information in relation to particular skills training to encourage professional development and best practice.
- The Designated Liaison Persons will be released to attend HSE Designated Liaison Persons Training and/or other relevant training as identified
- Regular 2 monthly supervision and support will be available to new and existing staff and volunteers, through one to one meetings or group meetings.

Complaints Procedure

We in Teach Leanbh aim to work in partnership with parents by seeking parent's views and encouraging parents to participate in any decision-making in relation to the service.

We undertake to ensure all complaints are taken seriously and dealt with fairly and confidentially.

We will endeavour to quickly and informally resolve complaints through discussion with the parents and members of staff as appropriate.

Parents will be made aware that there is a complaints procedure in operation and will receive a copy of the complaints form as part of the child protection policy.

PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED IF A PARENT/GUARDIAN HAS A COMPLAINT

PRIVATE CHILDCARE SERVICES

- In the first instance the owner/manager will meet the parents and staff (as appropriate) to try to resolve the issue informally.
 - If the issue still remains unresolved the owner/manager will ask the parents to put their complaint in writing to them, a further meeting may take place and agreements reached will be written up and copies forwarded to parents and staff (as appropriate) within 2 weeks.
- Most complaints are resolved at this stage. However if there are other or more serious issues arising from the complaint then both sides may agree the need for a third party to mediate in relation to the complaint within 2 weeks.

Depending on the nature of the complaint the following procedures may also be followed:

- **Code of Behaviour**
If there is a breach of the Code of Behaviour by staff, i.e. poor practice, the disciplinary procedure may be invoked by the management committee or owner of childcare service.
- **Pre-school Regulations (2006)**
The HSE Pre-school Inspector will be involved in preparing a report in relation to any breach of the pre-school regulations.

Appendix 1: Definitions and Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

NEGLECT (See also Child Protection and Welfare Handbook 1.5)

Where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment and affection from adults, and/or medical care.

1. Usually not one event
2. Happens over a period of time
3. Results in the child's development being severely affected

(Children First, pg. 8)

Child neglect is the most common category of abuse. A distinction can be made between 'wilful' neglect and 'circumstantial' neglect. 'Wilful' neglect would generally incorporate a direct and deliberate deprivation by a parent/guardian of a child's most basic needs, e.g. withdrawal of food, shelter, warmth, clothing, contact with others. 'Circumstantial' neglect more often may be due to stress/inability to cope by parents or carers.

Signs and Symptoms

- Abandonment or desertion – Parent does not pick up child and cannot be contacted;
- Children persistently left alone – without adequate care and supervision;
- Malnourishment;
- Lack of warmth;
- Lack of adequate clothing;
- Lack of protection and exposure to danger;
- Inattention to basic hygiene;
- Persistent failure to attend school;
- Non-organic failure to thrive i.e. child not gaining weight due to malnutrition but also due to emotional deprivation;
- Failure to provide adequate care for child's medical problems.

(Children First, Appendix 1, pg. 70)

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Is normally to be found in the relationship between a parent/guardian and a child rather than in a specific event or pattern of events. It occurs when the child's developmental need for affection, approval, consistency and security are not met. Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms. Some of the indicators that may raise a concern include:

(Children First, pg. 8)

- Rejection;
- Continuous lack of praise and encouragement;
- Lack of comfort and love;
- Lack of attachment;
- Lack of proper stimulation (e.g. fun and play);
- Lack of continuity of care (e.g. frequent moves, particularly unplanned);
- Inappropriate non-physical punishment (e.g. locking in bedrooms);
- Family conflicts and/or violence;
- Inappropriate expectations of a child's behaviour – relative to his/her age or stage of development (e.g. expecting 3 year old to be able dress self independently);
- Serious over-protectiveness.

Every child who is abused sexually, physically or neglected is also emotionally abused.

(Children First, pg. 71)

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Is that which results in actual or potential physical harm from an interaction or lack of interaction, which is reasonably within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power or trust. There may be a single or repeated incidents.

(Children First, pg. 9)

Signs and Symptoms

Unsatisfactory explanations, varying explanations, frequency and clustering for the following events are high indices for concern regarding physical abuse:

- Shaking
- Bruises, fractures, swollen joints
- Burns/scalds
- Cuts and abrasions
- Damage to body organs
- Haemorrhages (retinal, subtotal)
- Poisonings
- Failure to thrive
- Coma/unconsciousness
- Death

(Children First, pg. 71, see Children First, pg. 72 – 73 for further detail)

SEXUAL ABUSE

When a child is used by another person for his or her sexual gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others.

(Children First, pg. 9)

Signs and symptoms

‘Cases of child sexual abuse principally come to light through –

- (a) Disclosure by the child or his or her siblings or friends
- (b) The suspicions of an adult
- (c) Physical symptoms

(Children First, pg. 73)

Cares and other professionals should be alert to the following physical and behavioural signs:

- Bleeding from vagina/anus
- Difficulty/pain in passing urine/faeces
- An infection may occur secondary to sexual abuse, which may or may not be a definitive sexually transmitted disease. Professionals should be informed if a child has a persistent vaginal discharge or has warts/rash in genital area.
- Noticeable and uncharacteristic changes in behaviour/mood, child becomes withdrawn, fearful or acting out.
- Hints about sexual activity.
- Age inappropriate understanding of sexual behaviour.
- Inappropriate seductive behaviour.
- Sexually aggressive behaviour with others.
- Uncharacteristic sexual play with peers/toys.
- Unusual reluctance to join in normal activities that involve undressing, e.g. games, swimming.

Particular signs and emotional problems suggestive of child abuse in **young children (aged 0 – 10 years)** include:

- Mood change where the child becomes withdrawn, fearful, acting out.
- Lack of concentration, especially in an educational setting.
- Bed wetting, soiling.
- Pains, tummy aches, headaches with no evident physical cause.
- Skin disorders.
- Reluctance to go to bed, nightmares, changes in sleeps patterns.
- School refusal.
- Separation anxiety.
- Loss of appetite, overeating, hiding food.

All signs/indicators need careful assessment relative to child's circumstances.

(Children First, pg. 73-74)

Especially Vulnerable Children

- Children in residential settings
- Children in Care
- Children who are homeless
- Children with disabilities
- Separated children seeking asylum
- Children being trafficked
- Other identified risk factors include the age of the child

(Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook 3.2.1)

Appendix 2: Reasonable Grounds for Concern (See also Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook 2.2 – 2.4)

Any injury or behaviour that is consistent both with abuse and an innocent explanation, but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse.

Consistent indication over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

Admission or indication by someone of an alleged abuse.

A specific indication from a child that he or she was abused.

An account by a person who saw the child being abused.

Evidence (e.g. injury or behaviour) that is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused any other way

(Children Protection and Welfare Handbook, pg. 30)

Are you worried about a child, but unsure if it's a concern about possible abuse or neglect? Consider the following

Check out your concern with a child, for example:

'Johnny, how are you feeling today? You've looked a bit down the last few days, and I've noticed you haven't been playing with any of your friends.'

Check out your concern with the parent (s), for example:

'How has Johnny been at home? He seems to be a bit down the last few days.'

Check out your concern in a general with your colleagues:

'How does Johnny seem to you the last few days?'

Maybe something has happened at home or in your service that could explain your concern

How long has the behaviour been going on? How often does it occur? Is there a pattern?

Record your observations

Discuss your concern with your Designated Liaison Person

The Designated Liaison Person may need to ring the HSE Duty Social Worker for advice to determine if reasonable grounds for reporting exist.

Appendix 3: Guidelines for Responding to a Disclosure by a Child

- Be as calm and natural as possible.
- Remember that you have been approached because you are trusted and possibly liked. Do not panic.
- Be aware that disclosures can be very difficult for the child.
- Remember, the child may initially be testing your reactions and may only fully open up over a period of time.
- Listen to what the child has to say. Give them the time and opportunity to tell as much as they are able and wish to.
- Do not pressure the child. Allow him or her to disclose at their own pace and in their own language.
- Conceal any signs of disgust, anger or disbelief.
- Accept what the child has to say – false disclosures are very rare.
- It is important to differentiate between the person who has carried out the abuse and the act of abuse itself. The child quite possibly may love or strongly like the abuser while also disliking what has been done to them. It is important to therefore to avoid expressing any judgement on, or anger towards, the alleged perpetrator while talking with the child.
- It may be necessary to reassure the child that your feelings towards him or her have not been affected in a negative way as a result of what they have disclosed.

For further guidance on How to Respond to Disclosures, read Child Protection and Welfare Practiced Handbook, pg. 32 – 33.

Appendix 4: Safe Management of Activities

Planning Activities

This can be achieved by:

Knowing the children

- Having some defined criteria for membership
- Have a registration form for members on which you could record, for example:
 1. Medical details;
 2. Any special needs/consent for medical attention – especially in relation to children with a disability;
 3. Emergency contact numbers of nearest relative or person with ‘parental responsibility’.

Knowing your staff and volunteers

- Follow a thorough recruitment procedure.
- Keep secure records of details provided at the time of recruitment.
- Have a work schedule, which should be clearly displayed so that everyone knows who is on duty.
- Keep a record of complaints/incidents about or involving workers, children/young people or parents.
- Acknowledge stress and help staff through it.
- It is important that parents are subject to the same recruitment and supervision procedures as other staff and volunteers. Unrestricted access by parents is also a risk.

Supervision of Children

Practical Matters

Such as:

- Number of participants;
- Age and age range;
- Type of activity;
- Environment where the activity is undertaken;
- Particular needs of individual participants, e.g. disabilities; and
- Organising programmes well in advance.

There are a number of basic principles to be aware of:

- Children should not normally be left unattended;
- You should know where children are and what they are doing;
- Dangerous behaviour by children should not be allowed, for example horseplay;
- Children will be safer if supervised by two or three adults; your organisation should have clear guidelines for ratios of staff and children for all activities;
- Having clearly defined supervision arrangements will not only minimise the occurrence of accidents but also contribute to the protection of children from intentional harm from either adults or peers.
- Some children with behavioural problems may require special attention. Most crises can be avoided if prior preparation has been made (such as training) and sensible procedures followed

Safe Management of Activities also includes:

- Keeping Records such as:
 - Attendance register;
 - Accident book
 - Authorisation/parental consent form.
- Adopting Health and Safety Policies
- Required standards of premises and equipment
- Heating and ventilation
- Sanitation facilities
- Fire precautions
- First aid facilities
- Regular checking of equipment
- Providing adequate insurance cover for children, staff, volunteers and third parties.

(Adapted from Keeping Safe Session 2 Handout (Volunteer Now, 2011))

Appendix 5: Guidance on Developing a Code of Behaviour²

Reflective Questions for Content Areas Does your Code include information contained in ODC p.6 & Factsheet 1:	Y/N/ Some what	Review Comment
Positive statements about how workers should behave towards children?		
A commitment to treat all children equally in line with the Equal Status Acts 2000 - 2004?		
A clear outline of what is acceptable and not acceptable behaviour towards children?		
What is considered inappropriate and appropriate touch in relation to the service / activity you provide?		
What is good practice for safe management of activities (procedures will need to reflect the range of activities your organisation provides for children and should include adult : child ratios)?		
Individual, tailored intimate care procedures for children requiring assistance with tasks of a personal nature developed in consultation with parents and child (where appropriate)?		
Safe practice guidelines for workers working in one to one situations?		
Guidance on contact and boundary issues with service users outside the work environment / organisation activities?		
Guidance on the appropriate use of technology and electronic communication?		
Guidance on the appropriate use and storage of images?		
Guidance on appropriate relationships with children?		
Clear statements about how workers should report concerns they note about a colleague's behaviour with regards to a child/ren?		
Outline staff responsibilities to make Protected Disclosures under Section 103 of the Health Act 2007.* (CPWPH 4.6)		

² Excerpted from HSE Interim Guide for the Development of Child Protection and Welfare Policy, Procedure and Practice, 2012

Appendix 6: Guidance on the Role of the Designated Liaison Person

The Designated Liaison Person:

- Should have completed the Keeping Safe Training as a minimum.
- Should be in a position to have an ongoing role with the service;
- Should be in a senior position;
- Should be open to and comfortable with the topic of child abuse/welfare;
- Should be available and committed to undergoing further training in the area of child protection and positive childcare practices;
- Is responsible for linking informally with the HSE Duty Social Worker to discuss concerns around children in their service.
- Is responsible for making reports to HSE on behalf of the service
- Is responsible for informing parents if a child protection concern is being passed on **unless doing so is likely to further endanger the child**

The role of the designated person and deputy designated person should be written into a job description and contract of employment.

Policy No.15 **Outings & Outdoor Play**

Policy Statement

Teach Leanbh is committed to planning and undertaking appropriate and well-supervised outings. Outings provide an opportunity for adults and children to share in active learning experiences which can then be used to enhance many areas of the curriculum of Teach Leanbh.

The Child Care (Pre-School Services) (NO2) Regulations 2006 and Explanatory Guide to Requirements and Procedures for Notification and Inspection, Part V Regulation 27(f) safety measures set out the requirement for the operational procedures be in place for the safe conduct of outings and that a preschool child is escorted safely on any outing. The National Standards for Pre School Services, Standard 20.8 require that a written policy is in place in relation to the safe conduct of any outings, to ensure the Health, Safety and Welfare of the participating children.

Planning an Outing

- 1.A Risk Assessment of the outing destination has been carried out before the outing takes place.
- 2.The results are evaluated and any necessary steps are taken to safeguard the children and staff.
- 3.A check list is developed before departure.
- 4.Permission from parents signed and returned prior to outing.
5. Full information on the outing is given to the parents this will include destination, method of travel, time of departure and expected time of arrival back, parent/child ratio, number of children travelling, food and safety measures.
- 6.Permission is obtained for a group photo.
- 7.Parents are being encouraged to actively take part in the planning, preparation and participation of outings.
- 8.Outings can be an opportunity to extend the curriculum and be in response to children's interests.
- 9.At least one adult to every two children and one adult to every one child with special needs with the addition of one extra adult supervisor, in line with our insurance cover.
- 10.Children with special needs should be taken on outings whenever possible.
- 11.Children should be introduced in smaller groups to the local community, businesses and activities.
- 12.The above guidelines for outings apply to these local visits as well as for more formal outings.
- 13.To build on the learning experiences of outings, children and adults must be given an opportunity to discuss these experiences and to explore and investigate other aspects of the curriculum in relation to these events.

Responsibilities

- 1.Every adult including the extra adult is aware of their responsibilities for e.g. roll call, head counts, dealing with accidents/incidents and co-ordinating responses to any critical incident that may arise on the outing. e.g. Search and stay on site in the event that a child goes missing.
- 2.Each adult is clearly aware of their role/responsibilities during the outing.
- 3.A check list is compiled for the outing.
- 4.Children are prepared for the outing, destination e.g. Have appropriate clothing, suncream, or provided with any other item deemed necessary.
- 5.Written policy/procedures are available which are to be followed in the event of a child going missing. This policy includes search methods, who is to be contacted, who stays on site, who returns the rest of the group to the pre-school.
6. All staff are familiar with procedures on how to deal with a critical incident e.g. Choking, drowning. Staff are trained in First Aid.

Insurance

- Adequate insurance is held for each child going on the outing and this is checked with the insurance company.
- Insurance states prior to every outing the adult/child ratio for outings and these are adhered to adult/child ratio of 1:2 and for children with special needs adult/child ratio of 1:1 with the addition of an extra adult supervisor on all outing (this persons role will be to supervisor and support in a case of an emergency).

Management of Outing

- Children are appropriately supervised at all times.
- Each adult is responsible for named child/children who are solely in their care.
- Frequent head count/roll calls at key stages are taken (e.g. Leaving the pre-school, leaving the venue) carried out during the course of the outing.
- Children are easily identified by use of , name tags, hats, armbands etc.
- Transport used complies with all relevant safety requirements and insurance cover.

First Aid

- There is a qualified person in first aid who holds a current first aid certificate present on every outing.
- A fully stocked first aid box is taken on each outing.
- Person in charge has a charged mobile phone in the case of an emergency.
- All necessary medication is available for children who require it.

Records

- Pre-school attendance register, including all emergency contact numbers and parents contact details are taken on every outing.
- Details of each child's medical history, including allergies are available.

Other

- Packed lunches if provided are stored in a cool boxes.
- Suitable clothing and footwear are provided.
- Group photograph is taken on embarking on the outing (this ensures that a current up to date picture for each child and what they are wearing is available should it be required).
- For the children remaining in the pre-school the adult/child ratio and all other requirements of the pre-school regulations are met.

Policy for Outdoor Play

- Outdoor play will be linked to our curriculum.
- Children will have access to daily walks and outdoor play.
- Children will have access to farm animals, keeping in mind Health & Safety.
- We will have a stock of suitable clothing for outdoors use.
- Visit to farm animals and interest parks will be incorporated into our curriculum.
- Parental consent will be sought and obtained.

Policy No.15a Possibility of a Child Going Missing on Outing

Policy Statement

We are committed to the highest possible safety measures for all children taking part in an outing. Children have natural enquiring minds and love to explore. In the event of actually a child going missing on an outing we are committed to ensuring the safety of all children and their immediate safe return to the centre.

- The designated person in charge will ensure the safety and well being of all other children.
- An extra supervisory adult will be present on all outings who will act in a calm manner.
- They will raise the alert and ring for backup.
- Parent will be contacted immediately.
- Gardai will be contacted with a detailed description of the child.
- A search by supervisor in the immediate area will be carried out.
- A detailed incident report will be carried out.
- Insurance company will be contacted.

This Policy was adopted by Margaret Connell
February 2014

Policy No. 16 Curriculum

Policy Statement

Teach Leanbh is committed to developing a curriculum that creates a child centred, play based environment, which empowers young children to actively pursue their own learning. Adults who will provide appropriate, timely balanced intervention as well as support, continuity and progression to encourage positive attitudes towards learning will facilitate this process.

Issues to Consider

In developing the curriculum, the issues to reflect are:

The child
The context
The content

While reflecting on the child Teach Leanbh should consider:

The individuality of the child
The need to encourage independence, self-discipline and concentration.

While reflecting on the context:

A safe, secure, comfortable and stimulating environment. Facilities that are suitable to age, needs and capabilities of the child. Collaboration of appropriately qualified and experienced staff in partnership with parents.

While reflecting on the content:

The need for a balanced, developmentally appropriate curriculum to take account of the holistic development of the child. The need for a process of observation and evaluation to assist in the planning of the curriculum.

While considering all of the above, it is important to remember that there should be a shape to the day. However, it should be flexible enough to allow children to seize opportunities for learning that are not always adult directed.

Physical Development

In order to provide for physical development, the pre-school service should have a range of suitable equipment both small and large, indoor and outdoor to allow children to develop both growth and fine motor skills, physical control, mobility and co-ordination. To facilitate this development, access to supervised, safe suitable open spaces, where children can run, skip, jump etc. is essential. For the development of fine motor skills, children must have access to a wide range of equipment, e.g. crayons, scissors, brushes, construction materials, pegs and boards etc.

Social Development

Adults should provide opportunities for children to play together in settings, which encourage them to learn to share, negotiate and co-operate, make concessions, assert themselves and fit in as part of the group. All aspects of the curriculum help children to develop their social skills but some particularly relevant ones are make-believe play, poems, stories, music and outings.

Emotional Development

Successful learning depends on healthy emotional development and this can only take place in a relaxed yet secure environment. Children need help to identify, name and explore their feelings, both positive and negative. They will need opportunities to express their feelings and by working through them gain more self-esteem. This should lead to a growing sensitivity to the feeling of others and a greater awareness of responsibility for their actions. As children develop emotionally, they will grow in self-esteem and self-confidence, which will enhance their relationships with both children and adults.

Language Developmental

Adults must be aware that children's language develops at different rates and their experiences vary, therefore the variety of activities, experience and opportunities for language must be as wide as possible. The adult plays a vital role in fostering language development by:

Engaging in meaningful exchanges, giving children the opportunity to practice listening and speaking. Using non-verbal to prompt continued speech. Providing a variety of props e.g. puppets, books provide an environment rich in symbols. Encouraging conversation in groups of various sizes, from small groups to the whole group. Providing a quiet time to help children refine their listening skills. Using rhymes, songs jokes to allow children play with words.

Intellectual Development

To develop intellectually, a child must be helped in understanding how to learn. A variety of safe, well maintained equipment will enable children to extend their understanding of concepts, while encouraging problem solving and improving memory and concentration skills.

Children need to be helped to reflect on their experiences and encouraged to learn from them. While obvious equipment such as sand, water, bricks, etc. develop concepts such as weight, volume, quality, space size, etc. less obvious areas such as make believe play are vital for the development of less tangible concepts such as time. Children's curiosity is enhanced by engaging with a variety of natural and other materials, leading them gradually into an appreciation of science, technology and maths.

Aesthetic and Creative Development

The role of the adult is to stimulate the imagination and encourage experimentation and appreciation of the world around us by providing a wide range of materials and opportunities which:

Allow children to express themselves through music, mime, dance, painting, etc. Develop a vocabulary, which allows the child to express relevant concepts. Develop the capacity of all the senses.

Children who have opportunities to experiment and express their ideas through a variety of materials become more aware of the world around them. Supportive adults who provide access to a wide range of media e.g. dough, clay, crayons and junk reinforce this awareness.

Items and activities should encourage the use of all senses and aid self-expression while building on previous experience, e.g. music, mime and cooking. A variety of natural materials as well as a range of equipment made from these will encourage appreciation of texture, form etc. For children, the process is more important than the end product so becoming involved in a group activity may give children freedom to express themselves without undue pressure.

It is the policy of Teach Leanbh that children's activities will be displayed for parents/carers to see.

Planning meetings How & Who?

Individuals needs met in curriculum

Curriculum	Infants
	Toddlers
	Pre School
	SAC

Teach Leanbh ethos of our programme is based on developmentally appropriate practice, which focuses on the following:

1. A balance between children's self-initiated learning and staff guidance
2. Opportunities for children to make meaningful choices between activities offered
3. Scope to explore through active involvement
4. A mix of small group, whole group and independent activities
5. Play as a primary (but not exclusive) medium for learning
6. Adults who demonstrate, question, model, suggest alternatives and prompt reflection
7. Systematic observation of children's learning and behaviour

Teach Leanbh programme seeks to build self esteem in children by the following actions; Trusting, having realistic expectations, accepting, rewarding, celebrating achievement, modelling appropriate behaviour, empathizing, defining appropriate boundaries, giving genuine praise, shared problem solving, giving responsibility, negotiating, encouraging, respecting, acknowledging, describing actions (not labelling behaviour), listening, really hear the child and giving time.

Teach Leanbh believes that children foster independence through their environment, curriculum, routine and resources.

Room Layout

- The room layout will facilitate play. Through play children are helped to develop physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually.

Play allows children to:

- Invent & create
 - Discover
 - Develop speech & muscles
 - Express ideas
 - Learn new skills
 - Concentrate
 - Experiment
 - Co-operate with each other
-
- The rooms are safe, spacious, clean, bright, welcoming, warm and accessible to adults and children with disabilities
 - The room and materials are organised in attractive and inviting ways.
 - The room is designed so that the array of materials/equipment help children to understand the kinds of behaviour and interactions that are expected in each area.
 - Separate areas in the room are designed to facilitate active learning, exploration and easy access.

Areas in the room include:

Creative/Art Play Area – encourages physical, intellectual & social development

- Puzzles
- Collage
- Painting
- Colouring
- Drawing
- Playdough

Symbolic (pretend) Play Area - encourages language, social & emotional development

Doll/house Play

- Pretend play (dentist/shop etc.) & Dress Up
- Role Play

Science Play Area – encourages physical, intellectual, language and social development

Sand & Water

- Maths & Science tools such as measuring devices
- Objects from the environment (turf, leaves etc.)

Music Play Area – encourages physical, intellectual, language, emotional and social development

- Puppet Shows
- Musical Instruments
- Music DVD's /CD's

Materials/Equipment/Facilities

- Toys and equipment are available to the different age groups to promote all areas of development through play and exploration. They are presented in an organised, accessible and inviting way.
- Materials/Equipment are placed in clear-labelled plastic boxes for storage and on shelves at children's height to encourage children to put materials away after use, thus encouraging certain areas of development.

- Children have access to materials such as sand & water and play dough to help develop precise fine & gross motor control.
- Large (non breakable) mirrors are placed throughout the room. Babies look at reflections of themselves and others, which assists them in establishing a sense of self.
- Materials are changed frequently depending on the child's interest/themes or developmental level.
- In accordance with the pre-school regulations 1996, the nursery complies with the following recommendations
 - ◆ Heating
 - ◆ Ventilation
 - ◆ Lighting
 - ◆ Toilet/changing facilities
 - ◆ Insulation
 - ◆ Sanitary accommodation
 - ◆ Kitchen area
 - ◆ Staff Room
 - ◆ Fittings, furnishes and equipment are suitable for the purpose for which they are used. They are checked and maintained and kept hygienically cleaned.

All of the above listed should comply with the Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 1996

Health and Safety

We adhere to the following:

- Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005
- Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations, 1996
- Fire Services Act, 1981 (Fire Drills, Equipment)
- Building Controls Act 1990
- Environmental health regulations for the preparation and storage of food for public consumption.
- Insurance including public liability.
- Good hygiene through well established routines for hand washing, toileting, tooth brushing and meal times.

Outdoor Area

Outdoor space is needed for the children to run, shout, exercise in the fresh air and feel a sense of freedom. It is a key support to healthy child development; it is of special value in providing freedom, physical activity and a range of challenges to children in order to meet their needs. It also helps stimulate the child's mind and body.

- Outdoor play areas is adequately supervised, with a minimum of two adults present at all times.
- It is safely accessed and necessary arrangements are made for the security of the child.
- Impact absorbing surfaces are placed beside swings, slides, etc.
- All outdoor equipment are regularly inspected, checked and maintained.
- The outdoor area is free from plants or harmful substances such as weed killer, etc.

- a) Time is an important aspect when organising a nursery timetable. There can be a number of reasons why activities are timed as they are. In the morning such activities are organised, as the children are more alert and stimulated by everything around them. So free play is a great idea in the morning as the children can develop a lot of their skills such as physical, motor skills etc. In the afternoon there is a more relaxed and freer environment for the children. For the children in full time day care, usually by the afternoon their concentration is not as sharp and their needs are for a slower more relaxed mode of play.
- b) The timetable I have designed caters for Free Play, Arts & Crafts, Outside Play and Musical Play for both sessions. Break times are at 11am and 4pm for either full time care children or for sessional day care, at this time the children will be ready to unwind and relax after their free play. After lunch at 1pm the children will be full of energy again and ready to play, so we include free play straight after lunch.
- c) **The choice of activities** – Play allows children to find out about themselves and the world. It allows them to discover, create, experiment, develop speech & muscles, learn new skills and invent. There are a number of activities in the crèche for the child to complete; each activity promotes different areas of development. Such activities include Arts & Crafts, Musical Time, Free Play, Outside Play, Story Time, Dress-up time and many more. The different activities develop certain skills. By playing dress or pretend play the child can take on a different role, for example that of a doctor and by helping them

dress and undress themselves, they develop a level of independence. These games allow the child to express themselves. And in turn will develop their social and emotional development. Drawing, pasting, colouring, playdough and Arts & Crafts develop skills such as physical and intellectual skills. For example, painting or rolling out shapes from the playdough will require arm and hand movements and hand & eye movements when hammering the dough or cutting out shapes to create something.

Free play is a great way to discover what the child likes and it gives the child the time to explore the different equipment/toys they enjoy. Free play promotes all aspects of development.

Outside play and playing with water and sand helps develop their arm and hand movements. The water and sand also develops their pouring skills. With the sand the child will use their senses to explore the texture of the sand.

Musical time, which includes singing, making music using instruments and sometime videos on television. This is great enjoyment that can help develop their language skills. As children are familiar with the different words and are more confident in the usage of these words. The different sounds from the different instruments will provoke curiosity, discovery and expression. The children may dance to this songs, etc. And this will in turn encourage their physical skills. Speech therapists use musical activities specifically to help children with speech defects. It is also an excellent inspiration for releasing tension and letting off steam.

Jigsaws, bricks, blocks etc. will develop intellectual skills. These different activities will require memory, thinking and reasoning problem solving. It is also an important concept to encourage children to talk among themselves during playtimes, as this will develop their social/emotional skills.

d) The material and equipment used -

- Soft toys – dolls, teddies, etc.
- Musical toys
- Books
- Tape recorder for music activities, musical instruments.
- Trucks, cars, lorry's, garage set
- Blocks, bricks, Lego, jigsaws
- Playdough and cutters/shaper for it
- Material for Arts & Crafts – child's scissors, different colour paper, glue, glitter, string, paint, paint brushes, stapler, etc.
- For outside, swings, slides
- Sand and water pit
- Toy sets of different professions (doctor set, kitchen set, microwave etc.)
- Dress up clothes
- Tables
- Old shirts to cover the children up so as they won't create a mess when they are painting, pasting etc.
- Safety mats
- First aid kit (in the event of any accidents)

Free Play

Free play for the start of each session, will give the child the chance to explore the area and the different toys and materials. Also free play is a good idea as a starting activity as the children are most active when they first enter the nursery. After they have finished free play they can concentrate on different activities, which involve less energy. Free play allows children to discover, create, experiment, develop speech & muscles, learn new skills and invent. Free play is a great way to discover what the child likes and it gives the child the time to explore the different equipment/toys they enjoy. Free play promotes all aspects of development. Free play develops different skills such as **physical development** (running, walking and crawling – helps develop the child's muscles). **Language development** (when talking to the different children within the crèche). **Emotional and Social development** (when learning to share toys with the children in the crèche) and **Intellectual development** (learning how to perform a certain task, e.g. Make a jigsaw or build something out of blocks/bricks).

Staff

Children's Needs

- Staff must be prepared to meet the needs of the children who display unusual interests and skills outside the normal developmental stages.
- Staff should offer children the choice to participate in group work or in a private activity.
- Staff must respond to questions, giving information, vocabulary and opportunities for discussion. This will help the child's intellectual and language skills.
- Staff should view themselves as facilitators for children offering assistance, advice and support when needed by the children, as children need opportunities to repeat acquired skills to fully assimilate their learning.
- Staff should encourage discovery and exploration, decision-making and encourage children to work together.
- They should encourage independence skills such as toileting, feeding, dressing and tidying up.
- Warm positive relationships with staff help children to develop a sense of trust & feelings of competence. These interactions are critical for the development of the child's healthy self-esteem.
- Staff should divide their time between all the children and not give preferential treatment to particular children.
- Staff should use praise and affirmation to reinforce certain behaviours and attitudes.
- Staff need to set limits: Punish bad behaviour (no play, etc.) and challenge racist, sexist and any offensive language or behaviour.
- Provide physical contact and comfort for children.

Environment

- Staff should have a major influence in designing, planning and preparing the environment with stimulating challenging activity choices, as children will learn through active exploration and interaction with other children, adults, materials and equipment.
- Staff should organise play space in such a way that it enables children to do things for themselves, and to take responsibility for their own activities and environment.

Diversity & Equality

- Staff should promote diversity and equity for children. Providing a wide range of multi-cultural materials/equipments/activities that helps ensure the child's individuality which will in turn:
 - Enhance the child's self-concept and self-esteem.
 - Support the integrity of the child's family.
 - Enhance the child's learning processes in both the house and the childcare centre.
 - Provide challenging experiences for children so that they can learn about and explore the world through play.
- Have a commitment to equality of opportunity and recognise and respect differences of race, disability, age, ethnic group, social class, marital or family status, sexual orientation or membership of the travelling community.
- Be recruited and employed on the basis of equal opportunities.

Documentation

- Be capable of filling our record, HACCP, accident reports, etc.
- Be aware of the different policies and procedure that exist in relation to child development.
- Help the manager with the writing up and implementation of policies and procedures.

Policy No.17 Employment & Recruitment Policy
Policy Statement

Teach Leanbh is committed to ensuring that the principles and practices of equality of opportunity in terms of gender, disability and ethnic origin shall apply to all conditions of service of our employees, including recruitment, selection, promotion, career development, pension, training and special leave entitlements. Teach Leanbh will comply with all legislation in this area.

Reference: Staff Conditions & Professional Development

Recruitment and Selection Procedures

Recruitment Policy

The management/owner of Teach Leanbh is committed to ensuring that our recruitment procedures are fair, open and transparent and comply with relevant employment legislation. Personal information received is dealt within the strictest of confidence.

Recruitment Procedures

Job description

A detailed job description is prepared before each post is advertised and is available to all applicants.

Each job description includes:

1. Job title
2. Location of the position
3. Who the employee will report to
4. Overall purpose of the job
5. Key area of work
6. Duties and responsibilities
7. Conditions of employment
8. Personal specification

The person specification outlines:

- Qualifications
- Skills
- Experience
- Personal characteristics
- Other attributes required to carry out the job satisfactorily

Advertisement Policy

All vacant positions in Teach Leanbh are advertised on the staff notice board, FAS website and local media.

All advertisements state clearly that Teach Leanbh is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

Short-listing Policy

The Manager will shortlist candidates based on the information in the advertisement and the job description. Assessment of applications is based on information provided by the applicant.

All applicants who meet the selection criteria are invited to attend for interview. A letter of regret is sent to all applicants who do not meet the selection criteria.

All candidates must be over 18 years of age to work in Teach Leanbh.

Interview Process

The interview panel consists of the Manager/Owner and 1 other from the childcare profession.

In the past we have contacted a number of childcare professionals to seek gender balance on the interview panel however we have been unsuccessful in obtaining a suitable interviewer as there is no-one available.

Nonetheless we are committed to gender balance as part of the interview process and will strive to address that balance in the future.

Interviewers are given a checklist for use within the interview process as part of the County and City enterprise Boards Employment Legislation guide for Small and Medium Businesses 2006.

Each member of the panel is supplied with the applications and CV's in advance.

A marking scheme and score sheet are prepared.

When the interviews are completed the interview panel prepares a full report on the interview process. The report is signed by both members of the panel and is kept on file for at least a year, together with the short-listing report and the interview score sheet.

Selection Process

The position is offered to the candidate with the highest mark on the score sheet, after references have been checked. A reference is sought from the current or most recent employer. Both references are contacted verbally by telephone and this is followed up with a written reference.

Letters of regret are sent to all unsuccessful candidates within one week of the interviews.

Employing people with disability

When employing a person, Teach Leanbh as an employer is obliged to do all that is reasonable to accommodate the needs of that person with a disability. Teach Leanbh believe that a person with a disability is to be considered fully competent and capable to carry out the duties attached to the position with the assistance of special treatment or facilities as long as these are not to a disproportionate burden.

Teach Leanbh takes a number of practical steps in this area as follows.

Teach Leanbh has an equal opportunities policy in place

Teach Leanbh ensures that job descriptions, person specification and recruitment and selection procedures do not unintentionally discriminate against people with disabilities.

Teach Leanbh conducts interviews in a manner that emphasises abilities, achievements and individual qualities relevant to the job to be filled.

Teach Leanbh review accessibility to the nursery.

Recruitment

- Teach Leanbh should be advertised internally and externally to ensure recruitment from the widest possible field and in accordance with current Equal Opportunities Legislation.
- Selection for employment **must** be on the basis of suitability for the advertised post, in line with current Equal Opportunities legislation. It should be made clear if internal applicants will be treated on equal terms with external applicants or will be given preference if their suitability is equal.
- The selection will be on the basis of:
 - Understanding the value of pay.
 - Having a sufficient standard of health to cope with demands of childcare work.
 - Training or qualifications
 - Experience
 - Ability to work with children, parents and other adults, including members of professional bodies.
 - Identity check verified & validated
 - Suitable references verified & validated (most recent employer)
 - Vetting/Garda clearance.
 - Police check where necessary for period live outside the jurisdiction
 - Health Declaration
 - Qualifications verified
 - A declaration form
 - All employees will be issued with written terms and conditions of employment and a signed contract of employment, within 8 weeks of commencement.
 - Confirmation of all appointments will be subject to a satisfactory completion of a period of probation.

- An induction program will be provided for all employees on the commencement of their employment.
- The pre-school service must conform to its legal obligations as an employer in relation to registration and taxation.
- Teach Leanbh will conform to its legal obligations in relation to redundancy.
- Staff appraisals and reports will be carried out annually.

Trainee

All trainees, volunteers and students undergo the same recruitment process as staff. Suitable references, Garda clearance and a health declaration are obtained prior to commencement.

All trainees, volunteers and students are appropriately mentored and closely supervised, parents are advised of their selection and no trainee works alone and is not calculated in the adult child ratio.

It is the policy in Teach Leanbh that no trainee is involved in toileting or nappy changing of children.

Reference: Relationships in the Nursery

Relationship between Management & Staff

Written induction methods for new staff members

- All new employees will have an induction programme at the commencement of their employment. The purpose of the induction is to help the new employee settle into their employment as quickly as possible and to make sure she/he has all the necessary information in order to perform job duties effectively.
- New staff member is advised prior to first morning of work of start time and parking arrangements.
- On arrival new staff member is met by the Manager and given a copy of the employee handbook. New staff member will sign an acknowledgement of receipt of the employee handbook.
- New staff member is introduced to staff present at the time and shown staff facilities.
- A tour of the nursery is then given.
- New staff member is shown where the First Aid box is and guided through the Fire evacuation policy.
- New staff member is given a copy of the Policies and Procedures handbook of Teach Leanbh and Manager highlight Child Protection policy, Behaviour Management policy and Record Keeping policy amongst others.
- New staff member will sign a copy of the Policies and Procedures document when they have read and understood it. A copy of the UN convention on the rights of the child and Childcare Regulations is given to the new staff member.
- Break and lunch times are allocated to new staff member.
- New staff member is introduced to the children in her/his care and given a concise update on each child.
- New staff member is told the management structure and operating procedures for the nursery.
- New staff member is supported by all other staff members and contracted by the Manager at various times during the first week for feedback and support.
- New employees will be expected to familiarise themselves with all written documentation provided relating to the nursery.
- Parents/Carers will be introduced to new staff member at first available opportunity in all cases.
- As per the employee handbook page 6 Staff Records section, new staff member is made aware of the record keeping policy of employee documents.

Staff Absence

If the event of staff absence, in so far as possible it is our policy to have a suitable relief panel to draw from/or management will take over the duty of staff absent.

Staff Professional development & Training

- Teach Leanbh encourages all staff to avail of training opportunities locally. The Manager informs staff of upcoming training at staff meetings and contributes to the cost of staff attending courses.
- Teach Leanbh will encourage staff to take advantage of such training opportunities as are relevant to staff development and to the good of the service.
- Teach Leanbh will provide opportunities for internal training e.g. staff meetings.
- Teach Leanbh will pay for Manual Handling First Aid. All other costs of training will be assessed on an

individual needs basis.

- Annual cost of €200 will be paid by Teach Leanbh. There will be no carry over.
- To highlight staff's important contribution to our service and as an incentive for achievement, Teach Leanbh awards a "Staff of the Month" prize of €100.
- To encourage staff involvement in the upkeep of materials, Teach Leanbh will provide €100 per two months towards materials or supplies.

At annual staff appraisals training needs assessment is carried out with each staff member and direction then given to the employee on potential training opportunities. Where staff are undertaking training both manager and other staff members are encouraged to support that individuals efforts and provide practical help if necessary.

Staff Meetings

Staff meetings take place on the last Wednesday of each month.

Staff is informed of the next staff meeting date via the staff notice board and are welcome to put forward agenda items prior to the meeting.

Minutes are taken at the meeting and reappear on staff notice board within 10days of the meeting.

Teach Leanbh is committed to a bottom up approach to developing the Nursery where all views, opinions and ideas of staff members are listened to, given due consideration and discussion and feedback/implementation. Where the Manager does not consider alternatives or ideas possible, the reasons why are explained to staff and alternatives, revised measures discussed.

Staff Support

Staff working in each room are given time to discuss the children in their area and programme plans at staff meetings. Staff is given the opportunity to make decisions and take responsibility for their room. Where the Manager introduces change the result is communicated to all staff, tasks are delegated responsibilities to see these changes are implemented.

At monthly staff meetings, the Manager uses this meeting as an opportunity to issue a staff weekly check-up. This is "a pick-up list" for staff and action required on issues that need to be picked up on.

E.g. The Manager has picked up on the fact that Montessori cleaning roster and other rosters are not signed, the corresponding action thus required is that staff sign the rosters.

The Manager organises 2 events per year (Christmas party and social outing after the summer show in the Summer) to recognise the commitment of staff to Teach Leanbh and encourage staff morale and communication through staff appraisals and one to one support as the Manager works with the staff.

Where conflict arises there is an informal process whereby Manager is informed and parties affected are met informally and the issue is resolved or grievance procedure is followed as per employee handbook.

Staff Supervision

Staff are supervised both on a formal and informal basis. Formal supervision takes place where the employee is supervised prior to annual appraisal. Employee concerns are considered at staff appraisal.

Staff relationships with each other

As per Employee Handbook – Section on Dignity and Respect at Work.

Overall staff respects the views of others, all staff members are given the opportunity to contribute their thoughts and ideas for the children's development as they think appropriate. Given individual skills staff is consulted on issues by other members of staff. Idea storming takes place at staff meetings in order to reach solution driven discussions. Teach Leanbh staff are encouraged to ask, never assume, and always ask. Staff are responsive to this form other staff as it is central to staff ethos.

Forms are available for staff to contribute to the enhancement of the nursery and working environment through the suggestion box in the staff room, staff wish list for equipment and input to Manager on new equipment or resources for each room.

Staff relationships with children

Staff are encouraged to listen attentively to each child and promote language development through listening and conversation skills with the child. All conversation in the nursery is child centred with positive affirmative conversation and language that engages the children at child level and eye level.

Children are given time to respond to questions and expand on answers that leads to further conversation and opportunity for the child to express themselves and their thoughts and feelings which staff can then respond to.

As communication is child centred, we promote activities to be child led, where children are encouraged to develop their independence through self-help skills. Where a child has the capabilities to assist themselves in a task they will be encouraged to do so in their own time.

Transition Times

Teach Leanbh believes in consistency of staff and seek to promote the method of moving staff when children make the transition from one room to another for an initial period until children are comfortably adjusted to their new and challenging environment.

Similarly at transition times within the day i.e. Arrival, departure time staff will work with the children to ease them at transition times that may be difficult or distressing for the child by introducing a special activity or new interest.

Appropriate responses

Whether it is body language, verbal contact or physical contact staff are role models for the children in the nursery. Pleasant tone of voice is used; appropriate mannerisms and body language are displayed.

Positive encouraging language is communicated and phrases or words with negative connotations are avoided particularly when dealing with a behaviour management issue. Equal respect and consideration for all children in all activities is central to the nursery.

Reference: Staff Conditions & Professional Development

General Staff Conditions

Work Life Balance Policy

Teach Leanbh provides work life balance options to staff as requested. Work life balance options are considered on a case-by-case basis with the Manager. As staff has different family and personal needs on work life balance option does not suit all, therefore we look at work life balance options on a case-by-case basis.

As per employment contract for each staff member, all staff is aware of their duties, roles and responsibilities. Staff are committed to flexibility in the workplace, which is discussed at regular staff meetings that take place. Issues regarding stress in the workplace are worked through discussion and support for staff at staff meetings. A new variation in work routine can be provided to staff at times of stress and anxiety e.g. greater non-contact time or greater colleague support.

General well-being for all staff is promoted at Teach Leanbh and reflected in the employee handbook.

Where staff are travelling out of the country on holidays the importance of vaccinations are highlighted by the manager and referred to the Tropical Medical Bureau or staff members GP.

A separate staff room is provided for the staff. Adequate cover for lunch and breaks is arranged by the manager. Relief staff to cover staff absence is arranged by the Manager.

Staff at Teach Leanbh adheres to the HSE Pre-School Regulations. Teach Leanbh complies with the adult/child ratios as per guidelines and no worker works in isolation; there are always two adults present at all times. The cook is supernumerary when preparing food.

Policy No. 18 **Bullying**

Bullying either verbal or physical will be dealt with in a very serious manner. Written documentation will be kept and dismissal procedures will be implemented if necessary.

Teach Leanbh school/crèche recognises that bullying and harassment are a breach of this policy and will take appropriate action, including the dismissal of serious offences, against those who contravene policy.

Scope of Policy

This policy statement applies to all employees in Teach Leanbh school/crèche. Its scope encompasses the conduct of all the Teach Leanbh staff, with respect to conduct that arises out of their employment in the company in addition to the conduct of vendors, contractors, subcontractors and others associated with the organisation. It covers bullying or harassment that might occur at work associated events.

Bullying/Harassment Policy

Teach Leanbh school/crèche is committed to providing all of its employees with an environment free from bullying/harassment. All employees will be expected to comply with this policy and management will take appropriate measures to ensure that bullying/harassment does not occur. Appropriate disciplinary action, including dismissal for serious offences, will be taken against any employee who violates this policy.

The policy applies to employees both in the workplace and at work associated events such as meetings, conferences, and work related social events, whether on the premises or off site. The policy applies to bullying/harassment not only by fellow employees but also by a client, customer or other business contact to which an employee might reasonably expect to come into contact with in the course of their employment.

Definition of Bullying

Workplace bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work.

An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work but as a once off incident is not considered to be bullying. The bullying can include conduct offensive to a reasonable person, e.g. oral and written slurs, physical contact, gestures, jokes, displaying pictures, flags/emblems, graffiti or other material which state/imply prejudicial attitudes which are offensive to fellow employees. Other examples of bullying behaviour include:

- Personal insults.
- Persistent unjustified criticism and sarcasm.
- Public or private humiliation.
- Shouting at staff in public and/or in private.
- Sneering.
- Instantaneous rage, often over trivial issues.
- Unfair delegation of duties and responsibilities.
- Setting impossible deadlines.
- Making it difficult for staff to have access to necessary information.
- Aggression.
- Not giving credit where credit is due.
- Continuously refusing reasonable requests without good reasons.
- Intimidation and threats.

Definition of Harassment

Sexual harassment is any form of verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which has the effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. The unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material.

Examples of sexual harassment include:

- Sexual gestures.
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, and calendars.
- Sending suggestive and pornographic correspondences including faxes, text messages or e-mails.
- Unwelcome sexual comments and jokes.
- Unwelcome physical conduct such as pinching, unnecessary touching etc.

- Harassment on the grounds of marital status, family status, race, age, ethnicity, religious belief, sexual orientation or disability is defined as any unwanted which has the purpose or effect of violating a persons dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.
- The unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material.

Complaints Procedure

There is both an informal and formal procedure to deal with the issue of bullying/harassment at work. Any investigation will be completed as quickly as possible.

Informal Procedure

It is often preferable for all concerned that complaints of bullying or harassment are dealt with informally whenever possible. This is likely to produce solutions that are speedy, effective and minimise embarrassment and the risk of breaching confidentiality. Thus, in the first instance a person who believes that they are the subject of bullying/harassment should ask the person responsible to stop the offensive behaviour. If a person finds it difficult to approach the alleged perpetrator directly then a person should seek help and advise on a confidential basis from their manager.

Having consulted with the contact person, the complainant may request the assistance of the contact person in raising the issue with the alleged perpetrator(s). In this situation the approach of the contact person should be by way of a confidential, non-confrontational discussion with a view to resolving the issue in an informal low-key manner. A complainant may decide, for whatever reason, to bypass the informal procedure. Choosing not to use the informal procedure will not reflect negatively on a complainant in the formal procedure.

It is recognised that it may not always be practical to use the informal procedure particularly where the bullying or harassment is serious or where the people involved are at different levels in the organisation. In such circumstances the employee should use the formal mechanism as set out below.

Formal Procedure

Where formal complaints have been made, then the employee should contact their supervisor/manager as soon as possible. If this is inappropriate, then the employee should contact (company to decide who this should be). In the interests of natural justice the alleged bully or harasser will be notified in writing of the nature of the complaint, given a copy of the allegation, informed of his or her right to representation and will be given every opportunity to rebut the detailed allegations made.

The complainant will be subject to an initial examination by a designated member of management who can be considered impartial, with a view to determining an appropriate course of action. An appropriate course of action at this stage, for example, could be exploring a mediated solution or a view that the issue can be resolved informally. Should either of these approaches be deemed inappropriate or inconclusive, a formal investigation of the complaint will take place with a view to determining the facts and the credibility or otherwise of the allegation(s).

Whilst it is desirable to maintain utmost confidentiality, once an investigation of an issue begins, it may be necessary to interview other staff. If this is so, the importance of confidentiality will be stressed to them. Any statements taken from witnesses will be circulated to the person making the complaint and the alleged bully/harasser for their comments before any conclusion is reached in the investigation.

When the investigation has been completed both parties will be informed as to whether or not the complaint has been upheld.

Both parties will be given the opportunity to comment on the findings before management decides upon any action. All complaints received will be treated seriously, confidentially and dealt with as soon as is practicable. Strict confidentiality and proper discretion will be maintained, as far as is possible, in any necessary consultation to safeguard both parties from innuendo and harmful gossip. Management will maintain a record of all relevant discussions, which take place during the course of the investigation. Both parties will be given an opportunity to comment on the conclusions of the investigation team. Both parties will be given a copy, in writing, of the conclusions reached by the investigating team.

Action Post Investigation

Where a complaint is upheld a disciplinary hearing will take place. The disciplinary action to be taken will be in line with the company's disciplinary policy. Should a case of bullying/harassment be proven then the organisation will take appropriate disciplinary action. This can include a warning, transfer, demotion or other appropriate action up to and including dismissal. Records of the warning for bullying/harassment will remain in the employee's file and will be used in determining disciplinary action to be taken if any further offences of the same or similar nature occur in the future.

Regular checks will be made by one of the investigators to ensure that the bullying/harassment have stopped and that there has been no victimisation for referring a complaint in good faith. Retaliation of any kind against an employee for complaining or taking part in an investigation concerning bullying/harassment at work is a serious disciplinary offence.

If a complaint is found to be malicious, then the appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal will be imposed.

Policy No. 19 Television and Video

On special occasions, children are allowed access to suitable viewing. Children are supervised throughout to ensure safe distance from screen.

Policy No. 20 Religion

Teach Leanbh is under Roman Catholic management, nurturing and developing of the Catholic faith. As part of our curriculum we celebrate the religious festivals of Christmas and Easter. Teach Leanbh welcomes and respects members of different faiths.

Policy No. 21 Record Keeping and Assessment

Policy Statement

It is the policy of Teach Leanbh, as a requirement of Regulation 5, to carry out periodic key observations for every child. Observation assesses each child's needs. We draw up a curriculum to meet those needs, which links to the Montessori programme and Aistear Curriculum.

- We will provide challenge, stimulation and an environment for progression.
- Parental consent will be sought before periodic observations are carried out.
- Observations will be carried out by Teach Leanbh key workers.
- Permission from parents will be sought before any member of staff, on work experience, carries out an observation.
- Observations will be reviewed and a programme will be drawn up to suit each age group.
- Observations are confidential and will only be shared with parents.

This policy was adopted by Margaret Connell

Date 31st July 2013

Policy No.22 Fund Raising

Policy Statement

It is our policy not to take part in fund raising for our facility. We make an exception in the case of some charities.

Policy No.23 Redundancy

Policy Statement

It is the Redundancy Policy of Teach Leanbh that:

Lay-off and/or short time

The school/crèche intends to provide continuity of employment, but there may be circumstances outside the school/crèche control, which necessitate the short time or lay-off. In such a situation, you will be paid for the hours worked.

Redundancy

The school/crèche has provided secure employment over the years and it is anticipated that we will continue to be successful for the future. However, economic circumstances can change rapidly and adversely affect the fortunes of all companies including ours. If the school/crèche finds itself in a situation that necessitates redundancy, selection for redundancy will be based on the need to secure as many jobs as possible by retaining the right balance of skills within the school/crèche

Cessation of Employment

Teach Leanbh school/crèche may terminate your employment according to the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Act 1973-2001. The notice period are listed below:

Length of Service	Minimum Period of Notice
13 weeks – 2 years	1 week
2 years – 5 years	2 weeks
5 years – 10 years	4 weeks
10 years – 15 years	6 weeks
15 years or more	8 weeks

You are obliged to give the school/crèche a minimum one-week's notice of your intention to terminate your employment with the organisation. Notice of termination of employment by the school/crèche shall be one week's notice or as in accordance with Minimum Notice of Terms of Employment Act 1973-2001, which ever is the greater. This shall not preclude both parties from agreeing to a lesser period of notice of termination of employment. Employment may be terminated without notice for serious misconduct or failure to carry out such duties as may be assigned by the school/crèche from time to time.

Change to Terms and Conditions of Employment

The school/crèche reserve the right to make reasonable changes with your agreement to nay of your terms and conditions of employment by way of notice in writing.

Policy No. 24 IT

General Rules

All employees should ensure they keep up to date with and comply with changes in school/crèche policies relating to IT. Failure to comply with policy may result in disciplinary action.

Employees should ensure that information held on IT systems is not amended, lost, disclosed or accessed by third parties, without prior authorisation.

For systems access protected by passwords, employees should ensure passwords are kept strictly confidential. A duty of care is placed on each employee to ensure IT equipment is protected from physical damage and theft.

Employees should ensure that copyright agreements and licenses for all software are strictly observed. Software obtained from external or unauthorised sources should not be used on school/crèche equipment without authorisation. Only approved, authorised and licensed software should be used on school/crèche computers and demonstration or games software should not be installed, stored or run on school/crèche PC's.

All diskettes/memory sticks containing data/programmes should be scanned for virus contamination prior to installation on PC's.

Key information should be backed up on CD's/Floppy Disc's, securely stored when not in use and labelled appropriately. School/crèche PC's should be generally used only for business related purposes. Occasional personal use of equipment is permitted; however, this should be restricted to outside work hours or during lunch hours.

Email/Internet Usage

Computer viruses can cause significant damage to IT systems. When using floppy diskettes/data CD's or opening email/attachments from outside the school/crèche or from the Internet, employees should ensure that they have been anti-virus checked using the appropriate software. All attachments should be scanned for viruses before opening.

Teach Leanbh is committed to promoting a healthy environment and high standard of personal hygiene for adults and children. This policy has been put in place for the protection of children, staff and parents on these premises.

Background

Influenza A (H1N1) – Swine Flu, is a new flu virus, which has been circulating worldwide since April 2009. The World Health Organization has declared this to be pandemic – a flu epidemic that spreads around the world. The new flu virus appears to be highly contagious and can spread quickly from person to person through tiny droplets in coughs and sneezes. These can be inhaled and also droplets can be passed from surfaces like door handles and handrails. Child under 5 (and particular under 2)

Swine Flu and Symptoms

The symptoms of swine flu are broadly the same as those of ordinary flu, but may be more severe and cause more serious complications. The typical symptoms are:

1. Sudden fever, and
2. Sudden cough.

Other symptoms may include:

- Headache,
- Tiredness,
- Chills,
- Aching muscles,
- Limb or joint pain,
- Diarrhoea or stomach upset,
- Sore throat
- Runny nose,
- Sneezing, and
- Loss of appetite

Symptoms for children under the age of 5 years are:

- Bluish skin colour
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

Infection Control

To help prevent the spread of respiratory illness through knowledge of Influenza A (H1N1) and practice of good respiratory and hand hygiene we at Teach Leanbh will:

- Display posters (prepared by the Health Service Executive) on good hygiene practices
- Information from the HSE in relation to Influenza A (H1N1) is available to all staff and students.
- We encourage good hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette to staff, children and parents.
- We will help to source information for parents from other countries in their own languages.
- Children and staff will be checked visibly each day to see if they have symptoms of flu. **Any child or staff member who is sick will not be allowed to remain at the Crèche**
- Staff are reminded to stay at home if they feel they have symptoms of flu.
- In our room environments the sharing of pencils, crayons and pens will be discouraged during the pandemic. The wiping and cleaning of hands and objects will be encouraged when passed around i.e. Musical instruments or toys.
- Children will not be allowed to share wind instruments.

- We will ensure environmental cleaning procedures are in place to prevent the spread of respiratory illness including:
 - Adequate supplies of cleaning materials are readily available
 - There are procedures for regular cleaning of hard surfaces
 - Hand hygiene facilities are adequate and working properly
 - **Alcohol – based hand rubs are accessible at the entrances and within all rooms and we insist all persons entering and exiting the crèche to avail of these.**
 - Procedures are in place for isolating and caring for children who fall ill while awaiting collection by parent/guardian

Communication and guardian ship arrangements for children

In the event of Influenza A (H1N1) case in our Crèche/Montessori School or based on advice to close on public health grounds, we have put together the following communications plan:

- A list of contact details of the children's parents/carers – these will also include emergency contact numbers
- GP contact details for all children attending the Crèche/Montessori School have been checked and permission to call GP if necessary
- An up to date list of contact details for the Department of Public Health has been drawn up.

Actions required if the crèche suspects a child to have Influenza A (H1N1)

As we need to be prepared to recognise and respond if a child develops symptoms consistent with Influenza A (H1N1) the following procedures shall be carried out:

- All staff shall be knowledgeable of the symptoms of Influenza A (H1N1)
- In the event that a staff member thinks a child may have Influenza A (H1N1), there is a procedure in place that will include isolating the child until their parent/guardian is contacted to collect them. The parent/guardian shall be advised to phone their GP/family doctor prior to attending the surgery.
- Parents/carers are reminded that children displaying flu-like symptoms should stay at home and remain in isolation, pending advice from the GP, or for seven days from the onset of symptoms.
- In the event that a child, who may have Influenza A (H1N1), and is not able to be collected by their parent/carer, the family GP/Doctor will be contacted by phone and the child shall be accommodated and cared for in isolation away from the other children until he/she is assessed by the doctor.
- Teach Leanbh has a clear exclusion policy in place, which will not allow the attendance of any staff member, child or parent in the crèche if they have a flu-like illness. In the case of staff members being excluded, a relief staffing list has been compiled to enable staff absenteeism to be covered.
- Parents/carers are reminded that displaying flu like symptoms while at home (weekends/holidays) should not return to the Crèche/Montessori School for seven days from the onset of symptoms.

Actions required in the case of probable or confirmed case of Influenza A (H1N1) in the crèche

Teach Leanbh has an emergency plan in the event that a child or staff member is diagnosed to be a probable or confirmed case of Influenza A (H1N1).

If the GP/family doctor suspects Influenza A (H1N1) in a child attending our crèche/ Montessori School, we shall act on the following advice:

- The parents/carers of the child with probable/confirmed Influenza A (H1N1) will be advised to keep the child at home for seven days from the onset of symptoms.
- The Department of Public Health may consider closure of the Crèche/Montessori School if there is concern about the potential for spread of the virus.
- If closure is advised alternative arrangements made by parents/carers will be needed for care of children. These alternative arrangements should aim to have as few as possible children being cared for together in any environment.
- We will endeavour to insure that the crèche has not to be closed by adhering to the highest standard of hygiene/sanitation.

Preparation For closure of the Crèche/Montessori School

In the event of advice to close our Crèche/Montessori School on public health grounds or because of staff absenteeism we have developed a plan for partial and total closure:

- We will discuss with staff working arrangements in event of Crèche being closed.
- Communications with parents/carers when Crèche is closed

- Public Health will advise on re-opening
- Plans for the partial re-opening of the Crèche (where feasible) as well as full re-opening of the Crèche
- We will plan for managing staff shortages due to staff being sick or taking leave due to their children being sick

Caring for a child who becomes ill with symptoms suggestive of Influenza A (H1N1) while in Crèche

If a child becomes ill with symptoms suggestive of Influenza A (H1N1) while in the Crèche, the following precautions shall be taken:

- Staff will monitor the child's illness. Written records taken from observations will be monitored closely.
- The child's parents/carers will be contacted immediately. If contact cannot be made then the emergency contact person shall be contacted.
- We call the Flu Information Helpline and the local GP for advice
- A member of staff shall be nominated to look after the child in an isolated room with the door of the room left open.
- Visitors will be discouraged from entering the area/room that the child is isolated in.
- After seeking advice from the local GP a decision shall be made based on the GP's professional opinion as to the next course of action.
- The number of staff who have close contact with the sick child shall be kept to a minimum.
- The staff member caring for the child shall not sit/stay within one meter of the child unless the child needs assistance. This may not be possible with small babies. When providing care for the child, the staff member should observe good hand hygiene practices and consider wearing a surgical mask while caring for the sick child.
- When holding small children who are sick, their chin should be placed on the carer's shoulder so that they will not cough in the carer's face.
- Make sure the child drinks plenty of fluids and try to keep them as comfortable as possible until their parent/guardian arrives.
- When the child has gone home, the isolation room will be thoroughly cleaned before next use.
- Staff looking after affected children will not work simultaneously with asymptomatic children.
- Staff at risk of complications if infected must avoid symptomatic pupils.
- Symptomatic staff shall be excluded from the Crèche for seven days from the onset of symptoms.
- Staff shall clean hands thoroughly with soap and water and the alcohol hand rub provided before and after any contact with symptomatic children or staff and their environment.
- Staff and children shall be encouraged to avoid touching their eyes and nose.
- Further guidance on caring for a child with Influenza A (H1N1) can be found at "Guidance on Caring for persons at home with Influenza A (H1N1)" at www.hpsc.ie

Ensuring appropriate message to children

It is important that the right message is communicated to children attending our Crèche/Montessori School in relation to Influenza A (H1N1). Therefore we shall teach and encourage children in an age-appropriate way to follow the advice on personal hygiene (hand washing, respiratory etiquette including minimising contact between hands and mouth/nose, use of tissues). We will emphasize that this is serious, but take care not to scare younger or impressionable children.

It is impossible for staff to ensure that every child is following the advice all of the time, however frequent reminders will be given. This advice will also help in the prevention of other infections.

This policy has been formed in conjunction with recommendations made by the Department of Public Health.

Policy No.26 School Transportation

It is the policy of Teach Leanbh to provide a school collection service as an option, which will only be facilitated upon receiving written consent from parents.

- Vehicle insurance has been indemnified to facilitate the transportation of children to and from Teach Leanbh.
- Where applicable, safety seats are provided for children.
- 2 members of staff will be present when transporting children.

This policy was adopted by Margaret Connell

Date 31st July 2013

Policy No. 27 **Audio Visual Equipment** Policy Statement

The use of the equipment is solely to ensure best practice at all stages of care. All information is confidential, unless in relation to child protection issues and it is not linked to Internet usage

Policy on the use of CCTV Recording

It is the policy of Teach Leanbh to operate a Close Circuit Television System for the purpose of assisting the creche to achieve its security objectives of ensuring the personal safety and protection of children, staff, parents and visitors to the centre. We reserve the right to use any evidence obtained in this manner in any disciplinary issue.

Teach Leanbh will conform to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 in relation to the use of CCTV.

The Data Controllers are Margaret Connell (Crèche Manager) and Bronagh Sheridan (Supervisor) who are responsible for the data/information collected using CCTV.

Location

The following areas are currently monitored by CCTV:

- Gate and Pathway leading to facility
- Main Entrance Door and Hall
- Sleep Room
- Toddler Room
- Baby Room
- Pre-Montessori Room
- Montessori Room

CCTV Monitor

Teach Leanbh Crèche has a CCTV monitor which is located in the office. This monitor is controlled by the authorised Data Controllers named above.

Fairness

Management of Teach Leanbh Crèche respects and supports the individual's entitlement to go about his/her lawful business and this is the primary consideration in the operation of CCTV. Although there will be inevitably some loss of privacy with CCTV, cameras are not used to monitor the progress or activities in the ordinary course of lawful business. They are used to address concerns, deal with complaints or support investigations. New employees will be informed immediately, at induction that a surveillance system is in operation.

Role of the Management

- To ensure the system is always operational.
- To ensure that servicing and repairs are carried out as necessary to the system.
- To respond to any individual's written request to view a recording that exists of him/her or his/her children.
- To ensure signage is in place that will make individuals aware that they are entering a CCTV area.
- To ensure that areas of privacy (toilets etc) are not monitored using CCTV.
- To ensure confidentiality is maintained at all time. Information will only be recorded to disc off the hard drive if a complaint/investigation has been lodged within 48 hours of the incident and the disc is to be stored in a locked filing cabinet and will only be available to those directly connected with achieving the objectives of the system.

Traceability

Recordings must be logged and traceable throughout their life in the system.

Time and Date Stamping

The correct time and date must be overlaid on the recording footage.

Copies of recorded information must be strictly controlled and only made in relation to incidents which are subject to investigation.

Retention

Information will remain on the hard drive of the system and will be recorded over when the memory is full – memory will usually start to re-record every 48 hours

Access to Recordings

There is no obligation on Teach Leanbh to comply with a request that it considers unreasonable or vexatious or if it involves disclosing identifiable images of third parties. Third parties must give consent. Recordings will however be provided, if required by law or authorised agencies such as the Gardai.

- Requests for access to recordings must be made in writing within 24 hours of an incident.
- Sufficient information must be provided to locate the relevant recording, a specific date and time window.
- Viewings will take place, if appropriate, in the service in the presence of management.
- Management will investigate any request to view a recording and has 21 days to respond to a request.
- If a copy of a recording is made on CD and is given to a third party that third party must sign a declaration form that they will not share the CD with anyone else, copy it or use it for unauthorised purposes.
- An incident report will be completed for each incident requiring investigation

If access to or disclosure of the images has been permitted, then the following should be documented:

- The date and time at which access was allowed or the date on which disclosure was made.
- The identification of any third party who was allowed access or to whom disclosure was made.
- The reason for allowing access or disclosure.
- The extent of the information to which access was allowed or which was disclosed.
- The identity of the person authorising such access.

Where the images are determined to be personal data images of individuals (other than the data subject) may need to be disguised or blurred so that they are not readily identifiable. If the system does not have the facilities to carry out that type of editing, an editing company may need to be hired to carry it out. If an editing company is hired, then the manager or designated member of staff will ensure that there is a contractual relationship between the Data Controller and the editing company.

This policy was adopted by Margaret Connell

Date 31st July 2013

Policy No.28 Key Worker

Policy Statement

Teach Leanbh is committed to ensuring that children are supported and can form and sustain secure relationships with adults and other children in our centre, from all age groups and within their own family and community.

To ensure this we operate a key worker system.

On induction you will be introduced to your key worker who is responsible for your child's care and development.

The key worker is a conscientious, caring and competent adult who is available to all children in their group. They will

- Listen and respond to children
- Recognise play as a medium for working with children
- Talk with children in a respectful manner
- Comfort and support children
- Support children to interact positively
- Provide opportunities for children to socialise with sibling and children of mixed age groups either on a one to one, small or large group setting.
- They will communicate with you on a daily basis orally and through our notebook system.
- They will support parent/guardian of child with the transition process into our centre.
- They will provide ongoing support

The key worker's name and list of children in their care are displayed in each group's area.

Policy No. 29 Interaction & Socialisation

Policy Statement

Teach Leanbh is committed to ensuring that children are supported and provided with a wide range of opportunities to interact positively in pairs, small groups. Provide opportunities for children to socialise with siblings and children of mixed age group.

Environment

- Staff should have a major influence in designing planning and preparing the environment with stimulating challenging activity choices, as children will learn through active exploration and interaction with other children and adults, materials and equipment.
- Staff should organise play spaces in such a way that it enables children to do things for themselves and allow opportunities to socialise and interact with others.

Staff & Management

- Staff should develop positive relationship, which in turn will develop a sense of trust and competence, provide physical contact and comfort for children. These interactions are critical for the development of a child's health and self esteem.
- Staff should promote and provide for interaction between siblings in a positive and warm environment thus building a firm bond.
- Staff should provide for activities, which will stimulate interaction between mixed age groups.
- Staff should have a commitment to equality of opportunity and recognise and respect difference of race, disability, age, ethnic group, social class, and marital or family status. Our knowledge of social class and providing for interaction.
- Staff should ensure that sibling interaction takes place on a daily basis and that it is provided for in the development of our program.

Policy No. 30 Fitness to Work Policy

Fitness to Work Policy

Staff should be fit to work at all times. This means that they must not be suffering from or carrying any illness or disease that could cause a problem with (Food Handling) or their ability to care for the children accessing our centre or cause a problem with food safety e.g. gastro intestinal, fever, skin rashes. People who are not fit to work could spread food poisoning bacteria to food.

Before staff are recruited they must undergo a medical examination ensuring their vaccination are up to date and fitness to work with children. An employee must notify the management or the person in charge if they are unable to attend work before 8am.

If a staff member falls ill during work time, notify your supervisor immediately.

Teach Leanbh reserves the right to exclude an employee from work if in their opinion the employee will pose a risk to children or adults accessing our service.

A doctor's cert may be required on return to work to ensure that the employee is fit to resume work.

Teach Leanbh reserves the right to refer an employee to a doctor nominated by the nursery. The doctor will provide a full report and the nursery will bare the cost. The final decision rests with Management.

Fitness To Work Assessment Form

This form may be used for existing food handlers and childcare workers, for new food handlers and childcare workers on recruitment and for return of food handlers and childcare workers to work after illness.

Name of Employee: _____ Date of Assessment: _____

Reason For Assessment: (tick box) Existing Food Handler/Childcare Worker
Pre-employment assessment
Return to work after illness

1. Have you suffered from diarrhoea and/or vomiting within the last 48 hours? **Yes/No**
If **no**, have you in the last 48 hours taken any medication to control
Diarrhoea and/or vomiting? **Yes/No**
2. At present are you suffering from:
 - i) Infected wounds, skins infections or sores? **Yes/No**
 - ii) Boils, sties or septic fingers? **Yes/No**
 - ii) Discharge from eye, ear or gums/mouth? **Yes/No**
3. Have you ever had, or are you known to be a carrier of typhoid or paratyphoid? **Yes/No**
4. In the last 21 days have you been in contact with anyone, at home or abroad,
who may have been suffering from typhoid or paratyphoid? **Yes/No**

If the answer to any question is 'yes', the individual should not be permitted to handle food or enter food-handling areas if there is any likelihood of direct or indirect contamination. Further advice should be sought e.g. from your Environmental Health Officer and/or Doctor.

Action Taken

Owner/Manager: _____ Date: _____

I hereby declare that the information I have given is correct and I undertake to notify my employer/manager if I suffer from any of the above illnesses/conditions.

Employee: _____ Date: _____

**The policies and procedures of Teach Leanbh will be reviewed on an annual basis.
The next review date is July 2015.**

All Policies and Procedures are adopted

Signed by: _____

Owner: Margaret Connell

Date: / /

Signed by: _____

Parent/ Guardian/Staff

Date: / /