



**GOVERNMENT OF TRINIDAD
AND TOBAGO**

**PROPOSED STANDARDS FOR
REGULATING
EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES**

AMENDED

GREEN PAPER

TO BE ADOPTED AS

WHITE POLICY PAPER

APRIL, 2005

**Government of the Republic
of Trinidad and Tobago**

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

**Standards for Regulating
Early Childhood Services**

DRAFT WHITE PAPER

Ministry of Education
Early Childhood Care and Education Unit
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PREFACE

Based on concerns about the regulation of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) services by the Ministry of Education in Trinidad and Tobago, Mrs. Merle John School Supervisor II and Mrs. Zita Wright ECCE Specialist, in consultation with Dr. Janet Stanley-Marcano, Chief Education Officer decided to seek to develop quality standards for Early Childhood Services (ECS). Technical and financial assistance were obtained from UNICEF Caribbean Office in Barbados through Ms. Joy Brathwaite, UNICEF's local consultant and a workshop was organised. Ms. Sian Williams, Early Childhood Specialist with the Caribbean Child Development Centre (CCDC) U.W.I. was selected by UNICEF as Consultant for the exercise.

During the period April 9–11, 2001 nineteen (19) persons representing Early Childhood Stakeholders, including the Legal Advisor, Radha Permanand participated in the exercise to discuss the status of Early Childhood Services, and to clarify systems and identify resources for monitoring and supporting Early Childhood Services in Trinidad and Tobago. The UNICEF consultant used an Early Childhood Regulatory framework developed by St. Lucia as a pattern for developing the first national integrated standards document. At the end of the three-day exercise there was a first draft. It was presented by the ECCE Unit to the National Council for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCECCE) for discussion and some amendments were made.

Senator the Honourable Hazel Manning, Minister of Education, launched the draft document on May 28, 2003. Approximately eighty (80) stakeholders representing a wide cross section of society including reporters were in attendance. Following the launch, copies of the draft document were made available to the general public and highlighted in the electronic media. During the month of June 2003, this Draft Standards Document benefitted from countrywide consultations and focus group discussions with ECS service providers, ECCE teachers/caregivers and numerous stakeholders in education. Recommendations documented during those sessions as well as those submitted were collated and analysed and recommendations for amendments were presented to the National Council for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCECCE) and the Legal Advisor, Ms. Nirmala Maharaj. After lengthy discussions, decisions for amendments were taken.

The Honourable Minister approved the amended draft document on May 29, 2003. Cabinet noted the contents of the Draft Document and agreed to the launching of a Green Paper on the Proposed Standards for Regulating Early Childhood Services and the hosting of consultations with the wider community. This Draft White Paper now forms the nucleus for the creation of legislation for Early Childhood Services as the Ministry of Education supports universal access to high quality education for three-and four-year-old children in Trinidad and Tobago.

The ECCE Unit on behalf of the Ministry of Education would like to thank UNICEF, Ms. Sian Williams and the workshop participants, partners in Education and other stakeholders, the Legal Advisor, ECCE Curriculum Facilitators, Dr. Carol Logie and the NCECCE for their valuable input and continued support.

ECCE Unit
Ministry of Education

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PROPOSED STANDARDS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF SIX YEARS

INTRODUCTION

Currently Early Childhood Services lack a cohesive structure and its ad hoc existence does not always provide quality settings for those whom they serve. The provision of high quality programmes requires comprehensive national legislation that clearly articulates the vision and guidelines for high quality **Early Childhood Development** (ECD) services within the present socio-economic context. Similarly, clear ECD policies must be established to support present initiatives.

The establishment of standards for Early Childhood Services has been identified worldwide as a fundamental step towards a cohesive high quality national agenda for early childhood development. One of the commitments of the government's 2020 vision (p.5) is the improvement of the quality of Early Childhood provision and the introduction of standards of professional practice for Early Childhood Service providers and staff.

The National Council for Early Childhood Care and Education (NCECCE) is a Cabinet appointed Body for Early Childhood Care and Education. One of its responsibilities is the introduction of appropriate legislation and administrative guidelines for the effective operation of all public and private ECCE centres in Trinidad and Tobago. The Council, re-established in May 2002, reflects the composition of partners in the education process and is comprised of representatives from the Ministries of Education, Health, Social Services, Community Development and Gender Affairs, The Office of the Prime Minister – Social Service Delivery, and other stakeholders, SERVOL, The Child Welfare League, The Tobago House of Assembly, Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers' Association (TTUTA), The University of the West Indies, the Inter-Religious Organisation and the National Parent Teachers' Association.

For the purpose of this document, the term **Early Childhood Care and Education Centre** will be used to refer to all facilities providing learning support, care and development services to children from three to children under six years of age. **Early Childhood Services (ECS)** are here defined as all settings offering informal programmes to children under six, and include: Day Care Centres, Preschools, Kindergartens, Early Childhood Care and Education Centres, and Nurseries.

The registered provider is the entity providing the service and may therefore be a person, a partnership, group, church, committee, board, government ministry, non-governmental organisation or a company. Care must be taken to ensure that applications are made correctly as the registered provider ultimately bears the legal responsibility. In the case of public ECCE centres that are wholly funded by government, the registered provider is the government to whom the following regulations also apply.

Philosophy and Standard Setting

The principle underlying Early Childhood Care and Education in Trinidad and Tobago is that all children can learn, and each child regardless of economic status, physical or emotional challenges, ethnic background or gender, has a right to high quality education. The curriculum at ECCE centres should be developmentally appropriate and must meet the needs of children, taking into account the environment in which they live. It should be implemented through meaningful activities and experiences for children, rather than presented as knowledge to be acquired or facts to be stored. Early Childhood Care and Education must bring the activities of home-life, the needs of families and communities into its curriculum and links among the home, the wider community and the ECCE centres must now become an over-riding concern of ECS providers.

These standards are guided by International and Regional agreements and relevant national legislation. Internationally, the signatory to the World Summit Declaration (1990) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, 1989. Regionally, Government endorsed the Caribbean Plan of Action (CPA), which was approved at the Second Caribbean Early Childhood Care and Development Conference in Barbados in 1997 and revised in 2002 at the third Conference. The CPA provides a policy framework for developing comprehensive and coordinated services, which have been used to assist in developing national plans. Relevant national legislation: The Education Act 1966, Chapter 39:1, Article 12, No. 1, The Public Health Order 1995, The Public Health Ordinance Chapter 12, and The Environment Management Authority (EMA) Building Regulations.

The proposed regulations are designed to ensure that all service providers throughout the country, irrespective of affiliation (public or private) offer a safe and stimulating environment in which children can develop and learn according to their individual needs and abilities. The ideal is that good quality will come from internal motivation within each centre to raise standards above the minimum.

The following list of statements represents the minimum standards to be applied by the MOE/NCECCE in deciding on the suitability of Early Childhood Services in Trinidad and Tobago. The following eight critical areas have been identified for inclusion within the proposed legislation:

- 1. Registration and Licensing of ECCE Centres;**
- 2. Staffing;**
- 3. Quality Early Childhood Practice;**
- 4. Quality Standards for Children from Birth to Three Years Old;**
- 5. Quality Standards for Early Childhood Environments for Children between Three and Five Years Old;**
- 6. Record Keeping;**
- 7. Health and Safety; and**
- 8. The Physical Environment**

1. REGISTRATION AND LICENSING OF ECCE CENTRES

1.1 All ECCE Centres must be registered by ECS providers at the Ministry of Education – Early Childhood Care and Education Unit (See Appendix A – Application Form).

1.1.1 *Initial application enquiries should be made directly to the ECCE Unit Ministry of Education, Trinidad or The Division of Education, Sport and Youth Affairs, Tobago. It shall be deemed illegal to establish an ECCE centre without applying to the Ministry of Education.*

1.1.2 *Providers of all private ECCE Centres (referred to as infant or nursery schools in the Ed. Act, Chp.39:01; article 12 (a)) must complete and submit the prescribed registration form to have their entry on the Register (article 31(1)) and a Registration Notice.*

1.1.3 *Once the ECS Provider has registered the Centre, the provider will be given a period of five (5) years from the date of registration to complete the licensing procedure, thereby, up-grading the Centre to a fully licensed ECCE centre endorsed by the Ministry of Education, as meeting the requirements of a quality ECCE facility.*

1.1.4 Continuous inspection of licensed ECS is the method of ensuring that providers continue to adhere to the standards contained in this document. All ECS providers and staff must work with ECCE officers of the Ministry of Education on a continuous basis to up-grade the services provided nation-wide.

1.1.5 A license will be granted for a period of three years. It is a requirement of registration that the registered provider co-operates with the Ministry of Education, Early Childhood Unit in arranging a date for the formal licence inspection within two months of the proposed date agreed to upon registration.

1.1.6 *Applications for renewal of licence should include notice of any changes made.*

1.1.7 It is acknowledged that some provision already exceed these minimum standards. The role of the inspectors/ECCE Officers will be to encourage initiatives and practice developments that aim to improve standards.

1.1.8 Where existing provision falls short of the standards, the role of the ECCE officers will be to negotiate changes with the registered providers within realistic, jointly agreed time scales within the five-year period.

1.1.9 The *Ministry of Education/NCECCE* requires the same standards for the government/government assisted ECCE centres (public) and all private settings. All will be inspected by these Standards and expected to comply.

1.1.10 It is the responsibility of the registered provider to ensure compliance with the statutory requirements of the legislation.

1.2 Variances

- 1.2.1** The Early Childhood Care and Education Standards are to provide a consistent level of practice within ECS provision. There must, however, be scope for a degree of flexibility in the application of the Standards. This can be achieved via a variance that can permit an individual provider to depart from the generally accepted Standard where there is sufficient justification, in order to fulfil the aims of the provision (See Appendix C).
- 1.2.2** A request for a variance to an ECS Standard must be made on the appropriate form by the service provider (Appendix D). The overriding criteria for consideration will be the welfare and best interest of the children.
- 1.2.3** Circumstances for a variance can be made for a limited period of time. For example, to allow for already existing provision to improve its standards without having to cease operation.

2. STAFFING

2.1 Personal Suitability of Registered Providers, Educators/Caregivers and other Staff Members.

- 2.1.1** The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has to satisfy itself that anyone who either applies for, or is registered to be an ECS provider is ‘fit’ to do so; furthermore, that any person employed or living on the premises is ‘fit to be in the proximity’ of young children.
- 2.1.2** In the case of an application from a company, Board, Village Councils, Committee group, a list of the Board members, officers or members of the group will be required, and a clear statement of who will hold responsibility for ensuring that the standards are met. This list will need to be updated annually and submitted to the Ministry of Education. Community Boards should include:
- (a) Members of relevant organisations
 - (b) Parents
 - (c) Community Members involved in health, education and other social services
 - (d) Other interested persons within the community.
- 2.1.3** *All staff members and anyone who lives or works on the premises used, or who may come into regular contact with the children must get legal clearance to work at an ECCE centre by obtaining a police certificate of good character. This applies to such persons aged 16 years and over.*
- 2.1.4** Consideration will be given to any cautions, convictions or bind-overs that have been disclosed and may subsequently be a reason for not issuing of license. In the event of an ECS being proposed in an applicant’s own home, checks will be made on every member of the applicant’s household and any person who may come into regular contact with the children in the applicant’s own home.

Applicants are advised that they will not be registered if they, or any person coming into regular contact with children on the premises has ever been convicted of drug related offences or acts of violence. It must be noted that no obscene language must be used.

- 2.1.5 Registered providers and each member of staff must be able to demonstrate that they can cope emotionally and physically with the varying demands of caring for young children. Primary caregivers must satisfy minimum health requirements by completing a health statement to accompany application for licensing that will need to be signed by their District Medical Officer. Registered providers must ensure that each member of staff recruited is able to meet this requirement.
- 2.1.6 Registered providers and each member of staff must (through training/certification) have a practical understanding of the needs and behaviours of young children. Registered providers/managers should try to ensure any staff they recruit, are suitable to care for, or come into regular contact with, young children. Priority must also be given to continued professional development of all staff members.
- 2.1.7 The registered provider and each member of staff's attitude to managing children's behaviour control will be determined by the inspector/ministry official. In addition the provider's views on the importance of allowing children's individuality to be expressed and meeting their individual needs with regard to gender, religion, language, ability and cultural identity will be sought.
- 2.1.8 Registered providers must be committed to providing an environment in which children can develop positive attitudes to differences of culture, language, religion, gender, and ability. They must appoint staff members who are able to carry out this commitment.
- 2.1.9 Staff may only work in ECS from the age of 18 to 60 years except for the present untrained assistants/aides who may work up to the age of 65 years.

2.2 **Levels of Staffing**

- 2.2.1 ECS providers should employ an adequate number of qualified staff in order to meet the individual needs of each child. The specify/child ratio required will not be higher than:

<i>Birth – 2</i>	<i>1: 4</i>	
<i>2+ - 3 years</i>	<i>1: 6</i>	<i>Infants and Toddlers</i>
<i>3+ - 4+ years</i>	<i>1: 15 (maximum)</i>	<i>ECCE Centres</i>

Where children with special needs are attending, lower staff ratios may be necessary and will be negotiated on an individual basis.

- 2.2.2 Where the service provided exceeds 3 hours in a day, and is provided outside of term time, there must be sufficient staff to provide the required ratios to cover staff breaks, shifts, sickness and holidays. Staff/child ratio should be maintained at all times. Where

this is not possible over lunch breaks, managers must ensure that the ratios are sufficient to enable the children to be cared for safely. Low supervision activities should be scheduled and there must be options to call on members of staff who are on a break if they are needed. *Providers must present an alternative staffing arrangement to meet contingencies.*

- 2.2.3** The designated person in charge is the Principal. However, there must be an appropriate number of teaching staff based on the stated adult/child ratio (See 2.2.1). There must be a minimum of two (2) teachers on the premises at **all times**, in spite of the number of children present.
- 2.2.4** If there is an administrator with no professional training, this person must not be counted in the staff/child ratio. If the setting has between 20 and 30 places and a certified administrator/principal takes an active part in the day-to-day management of the setting an individual agreement can be made whereby the administrator/principal can be counted in the ratios for 50% of their time.
- 2.2.5** Support staff employed as office staff, cleaners, cooks or handy-persons must not be routinely counted in staffing ratios. There must be sufficient support staff employed to avoid staff having to carry out tasks that are inappropriate to their role and responsibilities. Regular volunteers, or parents/educators/caregivers who are regularly supporting employed staff on a rota basis, may be included in the overall ratio. (See 2. 1.3).
- 2.2.6** *All staff of government/government-assisted centres must be registered on the register at the Ministry of Education.*
- 2.2.7** New staff members may take up employment pending the outcome of reference checks. If these checks indicate anything that would be contrary to the interests of children, then the individual concerned would be contacted to discuss and/or confirm the details. If it were decided by an officer of the Ministry of Education, that this person was “unfit to be in the proximity of children under the age of six years,” it would be expected that their employment or placement at the ECS would be terminated.
- 2.2.8** All new staff appointments in ECS should be subject to a probationary period of not less than 3 months.
- 2.2.9** The registered provider/principal must maintain staffing levels and have a strategy for *emergencies or unforeseen circumstances.*
- 2.2.10** Any difficulties experienced by the registered provider/principal with regard to staffing and the adequacy of staff cover must be discussed with an officer of the Ministry of Education ECCE Unit, who may approve temporary arrangements.
- 2.2.11** *Age-group conformity is required of the children or relatives of staff attending the setting that the member of staff can carry out his or her duties towards the other children properly.*

2.3 Qualifications of Staff

2.3.1 *The teacher must be appropriately qualified (See Appendix F) for working with children of the relevant age group as described in 2.2.1.*

2.3.2 The Principal must be qualified as specified by the government as appropriate for the ECS (see Appendix F).

Qualified staff must have the appropriate competencies in the following areas:

- *Growth and Child Development in Early Childhood*
- *All Domains of Development*
- Play as an instrument for learning
- Life Skills
- The Context of Communities
- Organisational and financial management procedures
- Administration
- Health, Safety and Nutrition of the young child
- Child protection issues
- Equal opportunities
- Special needs of children
- Working co-operatively with parents/caregivers, families and the community.
- *Teacher Professionalism*

2.3.3 Staff with food handling responsibilities must be in possession of a Food Badge, under Section 156 – Public Ordinance Chapter 12 No. 4. (See Appendix G)

2.3.4 All staff must have an understanding of quality Early Childhood Care and Development, as well as quality education practices as set out in these standards and as evidenced by certification and training by accredited training institutions.

2.3.5 It is desirable that the registered provider be experienced in early childhood care, development and education. If this is not the case, or the registered provider does not wish to be the principal, responsibilities between the registered provider and the principal must be clarified as follows:

- The registered provider is responsible, by the act of registration and licensing for ensuring that the ECS Standards are implemented on site.

- The principal is responsible for standards of daily care and education in the setting. The principal should also encourage and support the education and training of other staff members, and also ensure that appropriate training opportunities are available to all.
- For all other responsibilities, the differing roles should be clearly defined. Both principal and registered providers must have some input into decisions on staff recruitment and budgets.

Where the registered provider is a group, committee, organisation or company it must be made clear which designated person has the responsibility for overseeing the setting, and how this will be carried out.

2.3.6 Specialist support to meet children’s medical, speech, language or behavioural needs may be required, and it will be necessary for staff to liaise with relevant colleagues in other services.

2.4 Personnel Practice

2.4.1 The registered provider must have a written personnel policy, setting out recruitment and selection procedures.

2.4.2 All staff members must have a contract of employment and a job description. This must specify general and specific duties and accountability. There must be written disciplinary and grievance procedures. A form of written agreement must also be available for regular volunteers, students and interns.

2.4.3 An induction process must take place that introduces new staff/volunteers/students to colleagues, children, parents/educators/caregivers, relevant agencies, policies and procedures. An induction package is desirable to facilitate this.

2.4.4 The registered provider and each member of staff must ensure effective communication systems are in place to check they are meeting the aims of their setting. They will need both to plan ahead and to review the past. The systems should include staff meetings and individual supervision or appraisal.

2.4.5 The principal must be concerned with providing a high quality service, and must, therefore, demonstrate at the meetings with ECCE officers:

- The effective development of staff
- Effective staff supervision
- A system of planning and decision making which allows the views of all relevant persons to be heard
- Awareness of the need for staff to be able to work with and share respect for the families of the children attending the ECS

- A knowledge of relevant legislative requirements
- Awareness of the need to work with other agencies such as Health and Community organisations
- Strategies for the mandatory reporting of child abuse.

2.5 Written Policies and Procedures

A policy hand book must be prepared with clearly written policies and procedures, which are used to clarify and reinforce expectations and responsibilities of staff, and thereby maintain good standards of practice. These should at least include:

- Admissions
- Materials, equipment and room arrangement
- Daily routine
- Curriculum statement and policies
- Assessment (observation, record keeping, planning)
- Meal times
- Outings
- Team work
- Discipline
- Equal opportunities (see 3.1)
- Confidentiality
- Special needs and a referral system (see 3.2)
- Partnership with parents/educators/caregivers, families and the wider community
- Child protection
- Complaints
- Children's illness/medicine/accidents (see Appendix G)
- Emergency procedures
- First aid (see Appendix H)
- Infection control
- Fire precautions
- Supervision of children within setting
- Safe environment in compliance with specifications of the Environmental Management Authority (EMA).

3. QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

3.1 Equal Opportunities

- 3.1.1** Mandatory equal opportunities must be promoted for adults and children of both sexes with regard to employment, training and admission to the service provided. (Convention on the Rights of The Child, (CRC), 1989, **Article 2**).
- 3.1.2** All members of staff must treat the children and families, to whom an ECS is provided, with equal concern and, in doing so, must in the care that they give to each child, acknowledge and respect their specific needs with regard to their religious persuasion, culture and linguistic background as well as gender and ability. (Convention on the Rights of The Child, (CRC), 1989, **Article 3**).
- 3.1.3** All settings must show evidence of how they carry out the standards above. The ECS must have a policy statement and guidelines for staff members about how this should be implemented.
- 3.1.4** It is important that children are called by their given name, and that this is not corrupted or shortened. However, during the course of a child's stay at an ECCE Centre he/she should become used to responding to his or her legal name in preparation for formal schooling. In event that the guardian specifies, the child will have the right to be called by the name specified.

3.2 Children with Special Needs

- 3.2.1** Every child benefits from the stimulation he or she receives from contact with other children and those with a physical or learning disability are no exception. Children gain from planned care and education which integrates able-bodied children and children with special needs. This contact at an early age may facilitate understanding that all people have equal value irrespective of ability or mobility. Parents/educators/caregivers of children with special needs may also benefit from the support they can gain from the setting.
- 3.2.2** If special needs children are registered, providers should acquire the support/resources necessary and ensure, wherever possible, that appropriate facilities, e.g. wheelchair access, is available. Lower staff/child ratios may be necessary and negotiated on an individual basis, or special arrangements made with parents/educators/caregivers to provide the support required.
- 3.2.3** Where children's needs have not been identified or where the ECS requires advice or assistance in identifying needs, parents/guardians should be consulted and permission sought to approach an appropriate referral agency.

3.3 Discipline/Managing Children's Behaviour

- 3.3.1** Corporal punishment is strictly forbidden. Staff must treat all children with respect. A child must not be smacked, shaken, treated roughly, called names, teased or belittled in any way (CRC). There are no circumstances in which such punishment can be justified, and staff will be subject to disciplinary proceedings should such an occasion arise.
- 3.3.2** All cases of corporal punishment must be reported.
- 3.3.3** Staff must have written policy guidelines displayed within the centre stating what types of behaviour would be regarded as developmentally unacceptable and inappropriate and how such behaviour should be dealt with. These must present a positive and consistent approach to discipline that is not destructive or damaging to the child, but preserves the child's dignity.
- 3.3.4** Parents must be informed about these guidelines and the setting's policy with regard to discipline. Staff must endeavour to explain the behaviour policy to parents and to consult with them on the rationale for its implementation in the ECS.
- 3.3.5** No action that is inhumane, degrading or humiliating may be used at any time for any reason. (*See Appendix E "Some Alternatives to Punishment"*)

3.4 Child Protection

- 3.4.1** Staff in all settings has responsibility to be aware of the law and the Government's policy regarding Child Protection (Convention on the Rights of the Child). This involves recognizing, recording and reporting signs of child abuse and/or neglect (See Appendix J).
- 3.4.2** Written internal procedures must be in place for staff to pass any concerns on to administrators within the setting, so that they can be recorded and acted upon appropriately.

3.5 Confidentiality

- 3.5.1** Staff must respect the right of the child and his/her family to complete confidentiality unless there are child protection concerns, in which case the government's policy applies.
- 3.5.2** Confidential records, including computer records, **must be secured**. Provision must be made for storage and safe keeping of these records.
- 3.5.3** Care must be taken over the disposal of old records on children who have left the setting, as these may contain confidential information.

3.5.4 Confidential records must form part of the transfer documents to the primary school principal. The ECCE centres might want to make duplicates to keep for at least one year.

3.6 Partnership with parents/educators/caregivers

3.6.1 A policy of partnership between *parents/guardians* and the setting must be developed, offering *parents/guardians* a variety of ways to support and/or become involved in the setting's operation, as well as in the individual development of their own child. *The model might be negotiated between the ECS provider and the parents/guardians.*

3.6.2 *A policy hand book is needed for parents/guardians and must include the following:*

- Name, address, telephone number of setting, with registration and insurance details
- Names of the provider and the administrator and qualifications
- Admission criteria
- Ages of children admitted and the number of places available
- Hours of opening and periods of closure for holidays
- Fees, methods of payment, arrears and non payment
- Attendance and health rules
- Settling-in procedure for new children
- Arrival and departure procedures, including details of those authorised to deliver and collect the child, and procedures for late collection of children
- Arrangements for access to the child by relatives/others and details of court orders pertaining to custody of and access to the child
- Information on the curriculum
- What the children will do: activities, play materials and routines/schedules
- Assessment procedures
- Arrangements for children with special educational needs
- Field Trips
- Discipline policy and behaviour guidelines
- Equal opportunities policy
- Child protection responsibilities
- Partnership with parents/caregivers
- Arrangement for festivals and birthdays
- Illness/accident, missing children and incident procedures
- Complaints procedures

- Any expectations of parents/caregivers e.g. spare clothing, nappies, etc.
- Accessibility of other written policies and procedures e.g. fire drill.
- Administration of medication

3.6.3 Written placement agreements/contracts must be made and reviewed as appropriate.

3.6.4 Ways must be sought for sharing information, including those items listed above, with parents/caregivers, e.g. notice boards, newsletters, leaflets, parents/caregivers' meetings, etc.

3.6.5 Parents/guardians must be kept informed about all significant issues concerning the progress and welfare of their children.

3.7 Supervision

3.7.1 *Children must **never** be left unsupervised.*

3.8 Physical Care of Children

3.8.1 Children must be physically well cared for. Particular attention must be paid to hair and skin care of all children, as agreed with the parents/caregivers.

3.8.2 Appropriate treatment for children with a skin complaint must be followed in consultation with parents/caregivers.

3.9 Meals and Snacks

3.9.1 If meals are provided, there must be a healthy balanced diet that meets children's nutritional needs. Care should be taken with regard to additives and preservatives, as prescribed by the School Nutrition Company. Menus must be displayed.

3.9.2 Menus must offer a range of foods which meet the medical, religious and cultural dietary requirements of children in the setting. The occasional provision of foods from different countries and cultures gives positive recognition to children of that culture and also encourages children to learn, enjoy and respect other traditions and cultures.

3.9.3 Children must be allowed to eat in a way they would naturally eat at home, e.g. spoon or knife and fork. This must be carefully discussed with parents as 'conformity' may be required when children leave the home setting to attend school.

3.9.4 There must be sufficient space for the children to eat safely and comfortably in small groups.

3.9.5 Staff should eat with the children, with meal times being regarded as a time to talk and share news.

3.9.6 Adequate contingency plans must be made to provide meals in the event of the planned menu becoming unavailable.

3.10 Field Trips

3.10.1 Field trips should be planned to coincide with the Centre's programme of activities.

3.10.2 *Permission for field trips must be sought from the Ministry of Education beforehand.*

3.10.3 Planning for field trips must ensure the safety of the children. The site should be visited prior to the trip to ensure safety and adequate facilities.

3.10.4 Staff members should have knowledge of local community resources.

3.10.5 *Staffing ratios for field trips will be dependent on where the group is going, and how they are getting there. It must be noted that shorter field trips are recommended for younger children.*

- | | |
|--|--|
| ○ <i>For neighbourhood field trips</i> | <i>1 adult: 3 children (3-4 years)</i> |
| ○ <i>Special field trips</i> | <i>1 adult: 2 children (3-4 years)</i> |
| ○ <i>(no bathing activities)</i> | <i>1 adult: 1 child (birth-2+ years)</i> |
| ○ <i>Using public transport</i> | <i>1 adult: 5 children (3-4 years)</i> |

3.10.6 Children must wear identification in case they get lost. Some suggestions are:

- Identification pendants, necklaces or bracelets.
- Plain coloured badges, identifying the setting and giving the telephone number.

3.10.7 Careful consideration must be given to the need to take first aid equipment and qualified First Aiders on any field trip. This will depend on the length of the field trip and the availability of immediate and appropriate assistance. Appropriate First Aid support must normally be taken on group trips outside the immediate locality.

3.10.8 A list of children (with the names of their parents/guardians and contact numbers) must be taken on field trips with a copy left at the setting. The list should include pre-seating arrangements for vehicles.

3.10.9 Parents/guardians must give written consent for field trips. Specific consent for special field trips will be needed and parents/guardians need to know when and where their children are going and what time they will be back.

3.10.10 *Booster seats and/or car seats should be provided and used as appropriate for children under three. Vehicles must be properly maintained and the drivers adequately insured.*

3.10.11 Each adult must be clear which children they are responsible for. There must be register checks at the start of the field trips and on leaving the destination, with regular head counts during the trip.

4. QUALITY STANDARDS FOR CHILDREN FROM BIRTH TO THREE YEARS OLD

Criteria of quality care are:

- The quality of the relationships between adult and child (nurturing)
- The characteristics of the relationships between children (respectful, cooperative, supportive, sharing etc)
- The relationships between adults (respectful, supportive, cooperative)
- Quality of partnership between parents/caregivers and workers in the setting (respectful, supportive, co-operative, collaborative).
- Group size, number and ratio of adult educators/caregivers
- Continuity, training and experience of caregivers
- Recognition of the developmental needs of children and the use of strategies to meet these needs
- The ability of the centre to structure and support the child's learning
- The provision of opportunities for children to initiate activities
- Children's involvement in choosing activities and projects
- The activity programme, including elements of imagination, challenge and in-depth research.
- Equality of opportunity policy in employment and service delivery.
- Organisation, display and accessibility of equipment, toys and materials.
- Attention to health, safety and type of physical environment.

4.1 Infant and Toddler Care

A registered provider who decides to offer care for children birth to three must ensure that the following criteria are satisfied:

4.1.1 Groups of children must be cared for in their own space, with proper facilities for nappy changing and preparation of feeds and sterilisation of equipment close to it. Provision must be made for breast-feeding.

- 4.1.2 Staff rotas must be organised so that there is as much continuity of care as is reasonable given the circumstances.
- 4.1.3 Ideally the same person should look after a child in this age group during each shift.
- 4.1.4 The administrator and the staff looking after very young children must have a knowledge of the development of children from birth.
- 4.1.5 Nappy disposal must be carried out by use of plastic bags and special refuse collection, or by incineration. Use should be made of disposable gloves.

4.2 Interaction

- 4.2.1 Interaction between adults and adults, adults and children must be warm, natural and responsive. Children must be listened to and talked to with respect. Children must be shown how to listen to each other and to adults with respect and to respond appropriately. Adults should extend children's thinking and learning by appropriate communication strategies.
- 4.2.2 An environment that encourages children to play and explore together must be provided, promoting collaborative activity, as children learn from each other.

4.3 Organisation

- 4.3.1 Each staff member must have primary responsibility for an identified group of children. Through such continued contact, caregivers are able to learn and respond to children's individual needs.
- 4.3.2 The daily routine must be consistent, and offer opportunities for child-initiated and adult-initiated times, indoor and outdoor play, active and quiet times, and the opportunity to play alone or in groups. Care routines, bathing, feeding, changing are to be used as opportunities for learning.
- 4.3.3 Children must have opportunities for play that build on their own interests and experiences and are developmentally appropriate. To facilitate this, the play environment must be rich in learning resources, materials and equipment. These need to be available and accessible to enable choice, exploration and discovery, fostering each child's independence, problem-solving and decision-making skills. As a minimum, there should be a creative area (sand, water, non-toxic paints, malleable materials), role-play area, quiet area (books, puzzles) and construction area (blocks [non-toxic] construction).
- 4.3.4 Access to an outdoor area is essential for children who are looked after for longer than 3 hours a day.

4.4 Physical Resources

- 4.4.1** Toys and equipment must be in good repair, safe and sufficient for the number of children present.
- 4.4.2** There must be sufficient floor space for uninterrupted play, and low-level storage to promote children's independence and choice. The use of rugs and cushions should be promoted to create cosy areas. There must be sufficient numbers of child-sized chairs and tables. (See Appendix H)
- 4.4.3** Equipment and toys must be chosen to enable children to develop their social, emotional, cognitive and physical skills. Real items and natural materials should be included as well as commercial toys.
- 4.4.4** Materials and equipment must be consciously drawn from a wide variety of cultures, and concepts common to all cultures should be considered (such as foods, music, dance, language, families, shelter, dress etc.) when providing opportunities for play.
- 4.4.5** There should be opportunities for learning about festivals from various cultures and major world religions.
- 4.4.6** Books, posters, jigsaws, rhymes etc. must show positive images of various races and cultures and avoid racial stereotyping. This approach must be inherent in child-care practices, whether or not children from different cultures attend the setting.
- 4.4.7** The approach of staff to the children's use of play materials must be non-sexist, and children of both sexes must be actively encouraged to use all the equipment and materials available. Children's preferences and not their gender must be the deciding factor in what they do.
- 4.4.8** There must be adequate equipment for outdoor play, on grassed or paved area as appropriate. Fixed climbing frames, slides and swings must be securely anchored to the ground.
- 4.4.9** Where a Government standard exists, equipment and furniture must conform to it.
- 4.4.10** Displays should be used to acknowledge and value children's work, promote self-esteem by the use of photographs and posters, enhance interests and promote discussion. Displays should be placed at child's eye level and changed periodically to reflect new themes, enhance interest and promote communication.

4.5 Learning Opportunities for the Under 3's

4.5.1 Adults must create an environment where the following learning opportunities can occur and then recognize, support and build on them when they do.

Emotional, Social, Moral and Spiritual Development

- Development of personal values such as honesty, fairness and respect
- Development of sense of self
- Relationships with adults and peers
- Interests, making and expressing choices, preferences and decisions
- Confidence in his/her use of space and equipment both indoors and outdoors
- Self help skills
- Participation in festivals and celebrations

Physical Development (gross and fine motor skills; hand/eye coordination)

- Awareness of hands, fingers, feet and toes
- Fine finger use, holding and using a range of tools
- Lying, rolling, sitting, reaching, crawling, walking, climbing, running
- Using wheeled toys, throwing, kicking, catching, balance.

Communication (early language and literacy)

- Use and understanding of spoken and or gestured language; eye contact, body language, indicating needs, expressing feelings, describing what is happening
- Drawings and early attempts at writing
- Looking at books and listening to stories, rhymes and songs
- Recognising pictures, symbols and letters, re-telling familiar stories.

Discovery and Exploration (very early maths, science and technology)

- Exploring objects with mouth, hands, feet, eyes and ears
- Awareness of colour, shape, size, number, volume and weight
- Exploring and noticing differences, similarities and changes in the properties of materials
- Finding out about things and how they work.

Creative Development

- Pretending and role play
- Developing appreciation and invention in music and movement
- Exploring construction, craft, natural and malleable materials
- Developing an awareness of colour

4.6 Observation, Record Keeping and Planning

- 4.6.1** Written observations of children’s significant developmental progress must be made. They must be dated and categorised into areas of learning and development to show where children are and to inform planning.
- 4.6.2** Observations must be noted routinely by all staff and shared with colleagues in group meetings. Each worker with “key” responsibility for an individual child should be responsible for recording observations and sharing them with parents/educators/caregivers or workers.
- 4.6.3** There should be both long and short term planning to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum. Short term planning should identify the intended learning the materials and adult support needed. It should be based on observations so as to build on children’s interests and to enable continuity and progression. Specific plans to meet individual needs should be noted.

4.7 Rest Periods

- 4.7.1** Adequate resting and sleeping facilities must be provided for those children requiring them. Mattresses and bedding must be personalized, clean and hygienic. Where children are not toilet trained, mattresses must be covered with a water-proof covering. Parents/caregivers should be asked to provide personalised bedding where necessary.
- 4.7.2** Parental wishes must be sought so that agreements can be made concerning the children’s sleeping and resting arrangements. Particular care needs to be taken to discuss children who appear not to want to rest or sleep, if their parents/caregivers/teachers are requesting that they do so.

4.8 Transition

- 4.8.1** Children’s transition in the setting (from group to group, age group to age group etc) must be planned and prepared for through relevant communication and sharing of records between workers and parents/educators/caregivers. Transitions should be gradual and planned individually according to the child’s need.

5. QUALITY STANDARDS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD ENVIRONMENTS FOR CHILDREN BETWEEN THREE AND FIVE YEARS OLD

5.1 Curriculum Standards

Curriculum standards are broad yet measurable statements to which staff should adhere in order to provide quality programmes.

- 5.1.1 Provisions must be made to develop children's knowledge, understanding and skills as outlined in the National ECCE Curriculum Guide.*
- 5.1.2 There must be equitable opportunities for learning irrespective of gender, disability, ethnicity or background.*
- 5.1.3 Activities planned to facilitate children's learning and development must be integrated through Themes and/or Projects.*
- 5.1.4 The programme must be planned so that children acquire life skill as they work and play during their daily routines.*

5.2 Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- 5.2.1 A well-planned programme of personal, social and emotional development must be provided to help children to work, play and co-operate with others.*
- 5.2.2 High expectations of behaviour must be set and respect for self, other, and the environment must be encouraged.*

5.3 Cognitive Development/Intellectual Empowerment

5.3.1 *Knowledge and understanding the world*

- 5.3.1.2 There must be opportunities for children to respond in different ways to their experience of the world and to take part in appropriate celebrations and festivals.*
- 5.3.1.3 The programme must promote cultural valuing such as pride in national identity.*
- 5.3.1.4 Development of children's knowledge and understanding of their environment must be encouraged as this provides a foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning and can also contribute to children's awareness of social issues.*

5.3.2 Language and Literacy Development

- 5.3.2.1 Language development/effective communication must be given a strong focus by providing opportunities for children to informally speak and share their views with their peers, and other members of the community.*
- 5.3.2.2 Opportunities for children to develop and practice the five elements of language and literacy (speaking, listening, reading, writing and viewing) must have a high priority, with emphasis on learning through talk.*
- 5.3.2.3 There must be encouragement of the use of creative and expressive skills.*
- 5.3.2.4 Creole or dialect must be recognized as the first language of most children under six and be accepted, valued and respected. Conversations with children must be in Standard English, offering children many opportunities to hear, experience and speak in Standard English.*
- 5.3.2.5 Emergent Literacy must be supported.*
- 5.3.2.6 The curriculum must encourage the use of a wide variety of reading materials/books.*
- 5.3.2.7 There must be a comfortable book corner and listening area where children can hear stories read them to them by an adult or on tape, or where they can retreat and browse through books.*

5.3.3 Mathematical Concepts

- 5.3.3.1 Mathematical learning should be activity oriented and planned within four broad areas: number; patterns, shape, space and position; comparison of measure including time and money; statistics (information gathering), tables and charts.*
- 5.3.3.2 There must be promotion of an awareness of using gathered information to solve problems, reason and gain understanding of events and experiences*
- 5.3.3.3 Opportunities to capitalize on children's self chosen activities, (for example, encouraging children to compare the heights of blocks) should be fully exploited.*
- 5.3.3.4 Mathematical thinking must involve the process of communication, problem solving and representation.*

5.4 Physical Development

- 5.4.1 Wellness must be promoted to ensure children's physical health and holistic development.*

5.4.2 *There must be a carefully planned outdoor and indoor area to support children's wellness*

5.4.3 *If there is no access to outdoor space, arrangements must be made to enable children to use large apparatus and to move with confidence, control and awareness of space. (Preference however, is for outdoor space.)*

5.5 Creative Development

5.5.1 *Opportunities must be provided for developing children's ability to express ideas and feelings in creative ways. These must include a wide range of experiences in art, craft, music, dance and imaginative play.*

5.6 Spiritual and Moral Development

5.6.1 *Focus must be placed on building spiritual awareness as well as positive morals and values. Spiritual awareness refers to the knowledge of a supreme being and the ways to communicate with this supreme being. Moral development refers to acquiring the concepts of what is right and wrong.*

5.6.2 *This area must encompass important aspects of spiritual and moral development including the development of personal values such as honesty, fairness, independence, respect and an understanding of self and others.*

5.7 Planning a Balanced Curriculum

5.7.1 *All plans must be written and well articulated within the environment for parents/supervisors and visitors to see.*

5.7.1 *Plans should:*

- *identify the purpose of the activities clearly and what children are intended to learn;*
- *summarize what children are to do, how they will be grouped, how staff are deployed and the resources needed;*
- *show how children's knowledge and understanding can be extended and adapted to suit children who learn at different rates or who have particular needs;*
- *be based on the assessments made by staff of children's progress.*

- 5.7.2** *At each setting the Curriculum should be broad, balanced and coherent, covering all the areas stated in the National Curriculum Guide. There should be balance both within and across the areas.*
- 5.7.3** *Children's words and photographs of events must be displayed and also be kept on record.*
- 5.7.4** *The programme should take into account the ages and stages of development of different children, including any who have special educational needs.*

5.8 Assessment of Children's Attainment and Progress

- 5.8.1** *There must be careful assessment based on regular observation of children.*
- 5.8.2** *Assessment must be based on shared observations of those who work with the children as well as parents/guardians.*
- 5.8.3** *Assessments should help staff to listen and respond to children, encourage them, build on their responses and steer them towards new learning or clearer understandings both in the settings and at home.*
- 5.8.4** *Staff expectations for children's progress and attainment should be based on child development theories and principles as well as the best cultural practices.*
- 5.8.5** *Staff should show awareness of anti-bias issues such as gender, religion and culture.*

5.9 Promoting Children's Learning

- 5.9.1** *Resources should be organized to allow independent access for children.*
- 5.9.2** *The range of materials, equipment and apparatus should be sufficient and appropriate to support good teaching in each of the eight areas of learning. The resources should support the learning of all children, including any with special needs. The accommodation and play space, indoors and outdoors, also need to be suitable.*
- 5.9.3** *An attractive and comfortable place to sit with a variety of books, should be provided*
- 5.9.4** *Classrooms should have writing areas with a variety of paper and tools to scribble and write.*
- 5.9.5** *Early childhood spaces should have an imaginative play area with a variety of resources to promote and extend role play.*
- 5.9.6** *Dry and wet sand and a water tray should be provided, each with suitable equipment for filling, pouring, measuring, and so on.*

- 5.9.7 *Within the Centre's space, growing and living things should be included as part of the everyday environment.*
- 5.9.8 *Children should be provided with interesting objects to sort, count, feel and describe;*
- 5.9.9 *Equipment should also promote early mathematical and scientific investigations.*
- 5.9.10 *Variety of indigenous small and large materials found within the local community should be used.*
- 5.9.11 *Cooking equipment and materials for use by children should be available.*
- 5.9.12 *Range of creative media such as paint, clay wood and junk materials should be part of curriculum resources.*
- 5.9.13 *Range of musical instruments (home-made, durable) tapes, CD's and records for listening to music should be available.*
- 5.9.14 *Artifacts and pictures that reflect both the local and the wider community should be evident.*
- 5.9.15 *Opportunities for active, first-hand experience both indoors and out-doors should be provided.*
- 5.9.16 *The indoor area should be enhanced with labelled displays at children's eye level that include children's work, pictures and posters, letters of the alphabet, a number line with the numerals 1 to 10, and mini-exhibitions with which children can interact.*
- 5.9.17 *The outdoor area should, if possible, have different surfaces and a garden area for planting and growing, and be equipped with climbing and balancing apparatus and wheeled toys. Where there is no direct access to outdoor space, arrangements should be made by the setting to ensure opportunities are provided for children's physical development. Displays should be used to stimulate as well as highlight children's representational skills.*
- 5.9.18 *Staff should use good interpersonal skills to encourage children to communicate their own ideas.*

5.10 Effective Home/ECCE Communication

- 5.10.1 *Effective links must be established with parents/guardians providing opportunities for the exchange of knowledge and information, which will contribute to children's learning.*
- 5.10.2 *There should be a notice board displaying helpful information about the setting and its daily events.*
- 5.10.3 *There may be booklets for parents/guardians about the setting and how to help their child at home.*
- 5.10.4 *Written forms of communication need to be complemented by informal and verbal communication initiated by staff as frequently as possible.*

5.10.5 Parents/guardians should be welcomed into the setting and encouraged to share their particular insights and expertise.

5.10.6 Settings must actively promote partnerships with parents/guardians by encouraging them to help in learning centres and with educational visits/field trips.

5.10.7 Professional contacts with other relevant agencies must occur as required.

5.10.8 Information about children should be shared with the previous and next setting. All records should be passed to the school as part of the transition process. It must be noted that confidentiality must be maintained at all times.

5.11 Monitoring The Quality Of The Programme

The success of a setting depends, in part, on the ways in which the strengths and weaknesses of the programme are supervised. Supervision includes monitoring, planning and assessment.

*5.11.1 **Informal Monitoring** - Much of the monitoring in ECCE settings may be informal. Staff may work together in the same room and will be generally aware of what others are doing. There may be regular, informal meetings in which all members of staff discuss children's responses to the activities provided and in which they plan the next phase of work. Joint work of this nature helps to ensure consistency in planning, delivery and assessment.*

5.11.2 Individual members of staff must be given feedback by the principal on their quality of work.

*5.11.3 **Formal Monitoring** - A more formal approach should also be used when the principal of the setting regularly collects and appraises activity teaching plans and records to see how consistent they are in quality. The formal approach may include annual appraisal, or regular supervision sessions, in which the principal of the setting has a discussion with an individual member of staff about his or her work and training needs.*

5.11.4 Targets/standards of performance for teachers should be set as an outcome of the decisions.

5.11.5 Appraisal may include a formal observation of the work of members of staff.

5.12 Extra Curricula Activities

5.12.1 It must be noted that parents must give written consent for any extra curricula activities for which children have to leave the setting e.g. swimming (in a pool). The adult/child ratio for these lessons must be 1 adult: 1 child (adults should be qualified in first aid and life saving). All other safety precautions for use of the pool by young children must be met.

5.12.2 Principals/teachers should request copies of policy on safety precautions from the swimming instructors/pool owners. They should share these with parents/guardians and also keep them on record.

6. RECORD KEEPING

6.1 Children's Records

6.1.1 Children's individual records must include:

- The name, address, telephone number, date of birth and gender of each child attending the setting
- Position in the family and the number of children in the family (age and gender).
- The name, address and telephone number, of the child's parent (s)/ guardian (s)
- The name, address and telephone number of the parent(s)/ guardian (s) work place(s) where applicable.
- The name and telephone number of an additional emergency contact person.
- The name and address(es) of other adults authorised to collect the child.
- The name, address and telephone number of the child's doctor.
- Details of religion
- Details of any specific needs in relation to language, physical needs and development.
- Notes on children's progress across the curriculum (see section 4.1.4)
- Details of a child's dietary requirements
- The child's starting date
- Signed consent from parent(s)/guardian(s) for fieldtrips and to seek emergency medical treatment.
- *Daily attendance record kept in Attendance Register.*
- *The consent of parents/guardians is required before children may be photographed or interviewed.*

- 6.1.2** Details of immunisations, allergies and relevant medical information concerning the child must be provided by the parent/guardian(s). The ECS should ensure that parents/guardian(s) are prompted at regular intervals to update the information provided, and where necessary, to present supporting information from a medical practitioner.
- 6.1.3** A daily attendance register must be kept of all children enrolled at the ECS.
- 6.1.4** *If the ECS provider consents to administer medicine, a record must be made of all medicines given with signed consent from parents/guardian (s).*

6.2 **Staff Records**

- 6.2.1** Individual records must be kept on all staff employed at the setting. These must include:
- The staff member's name, address, telephone number, age, nationality and marital status
 - Details of all relevant qualifications and experience
 - An emergency contact number
 - The staff member's starting date
 - The staff member's job description
 - Personnel information. e.g. references, salaries, NIS, Health Surcharge etc.
- 6.2.2** Each staff member should have access to his/her records when needed.
- 6.2.3** For volunteers and students, a record must be kept of their name, address and telephone number.
- 6.2.4** The name and telephone number of the registered provider responsible for maintenance of premises will need to be easily accessible.
- 6.2.5** A record of relevant information of persons living on the premises.
- 6.2.6** Supervision and training records need to be kept and updated regularly for the staff, volunteers and students.
- 6.2.7** A daily staff attendance register and time sheet must be kept.

6.3 Accident/incident record keeping

6.3.1 All accidents/incidents involving children and adults must be recorded detailing:

- Date, time and place
- Name of injured person
- Circumstances of accident/incident
- Nature of injury sustained
- Action taken and by whom
- Confirmation of notification to parents/guardians
- *Procedures for handling emergencies should be available to parents.*

6.3.2 The Ministry of Education Early Childhood Unit, the NCECCE, **and** the Ministry of Health must be notified immediately of any:

- Outbreak of notifiable diseases, including food poisoning;
- Serious accident or injury to staff or child; or
- Sudden death.

Notice must be done in triplicate and must include the information mentioned in 6.3.1. A copy must be kept at the centre, and two must be submitted to the Education District Office within forty-eight (48) hours.

6.3.3 Accident/incident records relating to any incident in which a child has received an injury should be kept for the registered provider's own protection, until there is no risk of claim against the registered provider and/or their insurance.

6.4 Miscellaneous Records

6.4.1 A copy of the Certificate of Registration/Licence must be displayed at all times.

6.4.2 A record of fire drills and tests for safety equipment must be kept in a book retained solely for this purpose. A Drill Plan must be displayed and evacuation routes should be clearly defined.

6.4.3 Menu records must be kept, if applicable.

6.4.4 There must be evidence of a written tenancy agreement (if applicable).

6.4.5 Records of any other important information e.g. Safety precautions for use of swimming pools should be kept.

6.5 Access to Records

- 6.5.1** Parents/educators/caregivers/guardians must be made aware of their rights of access to their records and how to exercise that right.

6.6 Insurance

- 6.6.1** Appropriate motor insurance must be effective if either staff vehicles or vehicles belonging to the setting are used.

6.7 Complaints and Suggestions

- 6.7.1** Every ECS establishment must have a written formal complaints procedure explaining how complaints from users and representatives will be investigated, redressed and recorded. This must be made available to all users.

- 6.7.2** This procedure must contain a statement to the effect that if the complainant remains dissatisfied, he/she can take their complaint to the Ministry of Education - Early Childhood Care and Education Unit. Telephone numbers must be given on the written procedure.

6.8 Financial Records

- 6.8.1** Where the administrator at the centre is different from the ECS provider, fees taken from parents/guardians for individual children must be recorded by the administrator.

- 6.8.2** Basic bookkeeping of income, expenditure, transactions, records of bank deposit and withdrawals, bills received and payments made, records of donations and fundraising receipts must be maintained on a day-to-day basis by the administrator. *Receipts should be issued to parents.*

- 6.8.3** Day to day transactions and financial record keeping must be monitored and approved by the registered provider.

6.9 Programme Development Records

- 6.9.1** The Ministry of Education will require programme development records to be kept in each Centre, in which ECCE Officers should record the progress being made against the overall standards agreed for the service. ECS providers will be required to report on an annual basis on all aspects of programme development as a condition of their Licence (see Appendix B # 2).

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY

7.1 Health and Safety Policy:

- 7.1.1** The registered provider must have a written Health and Safety Policy complying with the Health and Safety provisions of the Public Health Ordinance for the setting. The provider must ensure that all members of staff read and understand the policy.
- 7.1.2** A manual must be provided containing clear operating instructions for the plant, specifying comprehensive planned maintenance and monitoring procedures, including duties, responsibilities and liabilities for staff.
- 7.1.3** The registered provider/administrator must ensure that there are adequate supplies of appropriate protective clothing available to staff at all times. In particular, disposable gloves must be used for tasks involving possible contact with body fluids.
- 7.1.4** All electrical equipment (anything which can be plugged into an electrical socket outlet, whether fixed or mobile) must be inspected.
These regulations apply to all equipment within the setting, including staff property.
- 7.1.5** All cleaning and corrosive materials must be properly labelled and kept in a locked cupboard.
- 7.1.6** It is the responsibility of the registered provider/administrator to ensure that manufacturers' instructions (Hazard Data Sheets) are readily available *on all chemicals used in the settings*.
- 7.1.7** No items may be stored under stairs or in places accessible to the children.
- 7.1.8** The Health and Safety Policy must cover how to care for those with communicable diseases (HIV/AIDS, Meningitis B and Hepatitis B). It must also cover issues arising when an employee is known to have a transmittable disease.

7.2 Emergency Protocol

- 7.2.1** All settings must have clear written procedures in the event of any emergency. Should a serious accident/illness requiring urgent medical attention occur, staff must adhere to the following procedure:
 - One person to stay with the injured child.
 - One person to telephone for an ambulance and the child's parent(s); it may be appropriate to transport the child directly to the hospital.
 - At least one person, preferably more, to take care of the other children.

- If the ambulance arrives before the child's parent(s) the person who has been looking after the child should accompany him/her in the ambulance if at all possible.
- 7.2.2 All accidents/incidents must be recorded in an Accident/Incident Book stating the time and the nature of the accident/incident and the action taken.
- 7.2.3 In case of any accident, seek medical attention immediately.
- 7.2.4 Accidents that do not require medical treatment must be reported to parents/guardians **on the day** they occur.
- 7.2.5 Copies of all emergency numbers must be prominently displayed in the setting.

7.3 **First Aid**

- 7.3.1 A fully equipped First Aid Box must be provided which is clearly labelled and readily visible and available, but not accessible to the children.
- 7.3.2 All members of staff must be trained and qualified to administer first aid by the St John's Ambulance, Red Cross or equivalent agency. *One trained member of staff should always be present on site when children are present.*

7.4 **Hygiene Practices**

- 7.4.1 Educators/caregivers must be rigorous in their hand washing procedures and in their use of disposable plastic gloves to protect against a range of minor to more serious infections. Body fluids and body products must be regarded as potentially infectious and the same control of infection procedures should be used for everyone. The following universal precautions for dealing with blood and body fluid spillages are suggested:
 - At all times be "skin-care conscious". Check for cuts/breaks in your skin and always ensure that you have a waterproof dressing adequately covering the break. (Staff who have an eczema condition on their hands must always wear gloves.)
 - **Always** use disposable gloves when dressing cuts, wounds, etc. or when cleaning up spillages of blood. Disposable cloths should be used for cleaning such spillages.
 - Spillage of blood/body fluids must be cleaned up promptly by pouring full strength bleach on spillage of blood/body fluids then mop. For carpets or fabrics use full strength disinfectant, then clean.
 - Disposal of materials soiled by body fluids and blood should be by the use of plastic bags and special refuse collection.
 - **Always** wash hands thoroughly in warm, soapy water after dressing an injury and disposing of gloves, cloths, etc.
 - **Always** have appropriate adult supervision at lunch and snack time.
 - Each child must have his/her own soap and towel especially at bath time.

7.5 Medicines and Illness

7.5.1 When medicines are provided by parents/guardians in connection with recurrent conditions-affecting their child, these should only be given at the setting as follows:

With written consent from parents/ guardians with clear, precise instructions including specific time and dosage.

With a record kept of what was given, when and by whom.

With safe storage.

7.5.2 If a child becomes unwell at the setting, his/her parents/guardians must be contacted and the child given extra care and attention in a quiet place.

7.5.3 Expiration dates should be regularly checked e.g. in First Aids Kits.

7.5.4 If a staff member or a child has a contagious illness, he/she should remain at home until declared medically certified to return.

7.5.5 The Ministry of Health must be contacted about suspected food related outbreaks. Settings can obtain advice from the Ministry of Health on any health matters.

7.6. Fire Precautions

7.6.1 The Fire Officer will make recommendations regarding necessary fire exits and safety equipment and these must be strictly observed.

7.6.2 There must be an alarm system or means of raising an alarm.

7.6.3 The registered provider/guardian must ensure that all staff and users are aware of the procedures to be adopted in the event of fire. Therefore, fire drills must be carried out regularly so that all children and staff are familiar with the evacuation procedure.

7.6.4 Soft furnishings must be kept away from any possibility of contact with fire. As far as possible, new purchases of soft furnishings should be fire retardant.

7.6.5 All fire fighting equipment must be checked annually and the administrator should ensure that checks are arranged with the Fire Department in a timely manner.

7.6.6 All electrical fittings near water sources, e.g. washbasins must comply with the recommendations of the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission.

7.6.7 Escape routes and fire exits must be labelled and kept free from obstructions, in accordance with Fire Services Regulations.

7.6.8 Fixed electrical wiring must be inspected in accordance with Electrical Inspectorate Regulations, compliance with relevant Statutory Regulations and approval from the Electrical Inspectorate (T&TEC) and Fire Services.

7.7 **Safety Precautions**

7.7.1 Glass doors and windows at low level must be fitted with safety glass or covered with Safety film.

7.7.2 Staircases must be of a safe design with suitably constructed banisters. Stair gates may be required. *Stairs shall be kept unobstructed at all times.*

7.7.3 Electrical outlets should be located at least 4 feet (approx. 1.2m) or more above the floor and must be fitted with child resistant covers.

7.7.4 Children's access to the kitchen must be restricted.

7.7.5 All dangerous substances and equipment must be inaccessible to children, i.e. medicines, household cleaners, bleach, knives, etc. Members of staff should have somewhere safe to store their personal possessions as these may contain some dangerous items.

7.7.6 *Soft drinks bottles must not be used to store harmful substances.*

7.7.7 First floor windows must be fitted with opening restrictors.

7.7.8 Doors should open outwards and door handles must be raised where necessary. Bathroom and toilets used by children should not have locks on the doors.

7.7.9 All finishes on floor, walls, furniture and apparatus with which children can come into contact must be devoid of all chemical components which can injure children.

7.7.10 Wet areas e.g. kitchenettes and toilets etc. should have a non-skid floor finish to prevent pre-schoolers from falling and injuring themselves.

7.7.11 Wooden floor should be properly sanded to prevent splinters from injuring the children.

7.7.12 Mats must be used on carpeted areas during rest periods.

7.8 **Substance Abuse**

7.8.1 Smoking and intoxicants (alcohol, illegal drugs) will not be permitted in the setting.

7.9 Pet Hygiene

- 7.9.1** Pets that are brought for specific learning experiences are to be kept healthy and safe without being a hygiene risk to children. *Pets must be kept in cages while children are present.*
- 7.9.2** Pets are not allowed in the kitchen.

8. THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

8.1 Premises

- 8.1.1** The registered premises must be under the sole control of the registered provider.
- 8.1.2** *The premises must be used exclusively for ECCE purposes, except in cases of emergency (National Disaster) when Government/Government assisted centres constructed by the state could be used.*
- 8.1.3** In residential/business property, any other accommodation must be occupied by persons connected with the setting or it must be self-contained. Separate entrances will be required *and there must be at least two entrances/exits.*
- 8.1.4** All external and internal building work, decorating, fittings, etc. are to be completed before children are admitted. This includes any work required by the WASA, the Electricity Commission, Fire Services and the Local Health Authority *and Town and Country Planning*. All work must conform to the necessary Building Regulations. In the event that work has to be undertaken whilst the Centre is open for children, the administrator should ensure the welfare and safety of the children.
- 8.1.5** The premises must be maintained in a good state of structural repair in order to ensure the safety of those using them. *The premises should be kept free of rodents, insects and other pests and free from any condition conducive to rodents, insect and other pest life.* As far as possible, the premises should be aesthetically pleasing.
- 8.1.6** External areas of the premises must be safe, secure (i.e. minimal dust and dirt, functioning drainage, secure enclosure) and partially shaded.
- 8.1.7** The premises must be kept clean, light and furnished in a child-centred manner.
- 8.1.8** New centres must be constructed so that they are fully accessible throughout for those with special needs and disabilities.
- 8.1.9** An easily readable sign should display the name of the centre.

- 8.1.10 There should be separate facilities for quiet and noisy play (where applicable).
- 8.1.11 There must be a separate room for infants with individual nappy changing and food preparation areas close by.
- 8.1.12 There should be an office, facilities for storage of personal items and separate toilet facilities for staff.
- 8.1.13 There should be access to outdoor play space and preferably, this should include a grassed area. In a facility where there are children *under three*, there must be a toddler’s play area.
- 8.1.14 Children must not be able to leave the premises unsupervised. External doors and windows, and any exits from the outdoor play space must be childproof.
- 8.1.15 There must be safe and secure methods of checking who enters the setting.
- 8.1.16 The building must be adequately secured when not occupied.
- 8.1.17 There must be a specific place for children to put their bags.
- 8.1.18 There must be appropriate and secure storage available for supplies, cleaning materials, outdoor equipment and buggies/pushchairs.
- 8.1.19 The physical environment, internal and external, must be kept clean on a daily basis.
- 8.1.20 *The building must be sanitized (at least) once yearly by an authorized company.*

8.2 Space Guidelines

8.2.1 The following minimum space must be provided:

Age of Children	Amount of free space per child:
birth – 2 years	2.7 sq. metres (25 sq. ft.)
2 – 3 years	2.1 sq. metres (20 sq. ft.)
3 – 5 years	1.6 sq. metres (15 sq. ft.)

The number of children that can be cared for on the premises will be agreed to based on the floor space available.

- 8.2.2 **Free space** is defined as clear, usable play space and is usually calculated as the total floor area minus one-third for fittings and storage units, unless there are none in the area in question. This calculation is discretionary.
- 8.2.3 When children with special needs are attending, these space standards would be negotiated on an individual basis.

8.2.4 It is preferable that ground floor accommodation is provided for children in the setting, but where this is not feasible, individual children must always be accompanied up and down the stairs.

8.2.5 *All corridors, stairways and other exits should be kept unobstructed at all times.*

8.3 **Ventilation and Lighting**

8.3.1. All rooms used by children must have *proper and sufficient ventilation by natural and artificial means.*

8.3.2 Usable areas *shall be adequately lighted by natural or artificial means and shall be free from glare.*

8.3.3 The lighting system must provide good lighting throughout. *All lighting shall be evenly distributed including toilets, stairs and corridors.*

8.4 **Bathroom Facilities**

8.4.1 There should be one flushing toilet for every fifteen children, supplied with running water, preferably low level with partitioning for privacy. *Facilities for children should be child sized. There should be separate provision for adults on the compound.*

8.4.2 Adequate number of potties must be available for children under three, preferably one for every three toddlers. *Potties should be used only in the bathroom. They must be washed and disinfected after each use in a separate utility sink.*

8.4.3 There must be one hand basin for every fifteen children and appropriate hand drying arrangements. A communal towel is not acceptable.

8.4.4 There must be an adequate supply of running water and liquid soap for hand washing *within easy reach of the children.*

8.4.5 There must be adequate storage for creams/lotions and space for clothes etc.

8.4.6 A shower area must be provided for children's use. *If tooth brushes, combs, wash cloths are provided, each child shall have these for his/her exclusive use and they must be labelled and properly stored.*

8.4.7 *No door to a bathroom used by children should have a lock on it so as to be locked from the inside.*

8.5 Kitchen Facilities

Premises providing food (other than simply drinks and biscuits) must be registered with the Ministry of Health, under the Public Health Ordinance. New premises must register at least 28 days prior to opening. All kitchens must meet the requirements of the Public Health Ordinance.

8.5.1 Each kitchen area shall be provided with at least the following equipment:

- A stove
- A refrigerator
- A kitchen sink
- A hand wash sink provided with soap, and disposable paper towels, or other suitable hand drying facilities and pedal type bin.
- Adequate work surfaces that must be smooth, impervious and capable of being easily cleaned. Laminate type finishes with edging strip or stainless steel, are preferred.
- Separate colour coded cutting boards and utensils for preparing raw and cooked foods
- Sufficient crockery and cutlery which is in good condition
- Adequate storage for cold, frozen and dry foods.
- Pedal-type garbage bins with fitted lids.

8.5.2 A written schedule must be provided to include the following:

- All surfaces to be cleaned
- The frequency of cleaning
- The material and method used for cleaning
- The staff responsible for cleaning

8.5.3 Educators and other Food handlers must wear clean, washable aprons/lab coats and hair covering whilst preparing food. This protective clothing must be stored separately from normal clothing.

8.5.4 Smoking is prohibited in any area where food is stored, handled or prepared.

8.5.5 Members of staff who prepare meals for children must have attended an appropriate training course in Food Hygiene and Food Preparation. *These person(s) must have a valid Food Badge (see Appendix G) from the Ministry of Health.*

8.5.6 Food handlers must inform their employer (registered/provider/supervisor) at once if they, or any of their immediate family is suffering from diarrhoea and/or vomiting, and they should not prepare meals until given medical clearance. Kitchen staff must also inform their employer if they are suffering from septic cuts or sores, unexplained rashes,

8.5.7 Food should be stored in clean covered containers.

8.6 Laundry Facilities

8.6.1 A laundry area must be provided if laundry is washed on the premises. *A readily accessible receptacle with secure lid and removable plastic liner should be provided for the disposal of diapers.*

8.6.2 Laundry equipment must be located in such a position that soiled articles, clothing and linen are not carried through areas where food is stored, prepared, cooked or being eaten.

8.6.3 *Bleach must always be used when dealing with soiled clothing.*

8.6.4 A wash sink with water, soap, and towel must be provided within the laundry area.

8.7 Water, Utilities and Maintenance Guidelines (See Appendix L)

8.7.1 Procedures to control pest infestations, including mosquitoes, roaches and rats, must be implemented safely.

8.7.2 Garbage must be securely covered and stored in an animal tamper proof facility. Garbage should be disposed of in plastic bags before being placed in the garbage facility.

8.7.3 Garbage facilities and storage areas should be washed daily and disinfected twice weekly.

8.7.4 Water should be available on site either by direct source or collected daily for use and treated safely.

8.7.5 Compliance with relevant statutory Regulations Approval from Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA).

APPENDIX A

**APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION
OF AN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE**

Application No _____ **Date** _____

ECCE Provider's Full Name, Address and Telephone Number	(Write in block capitals)
Name of Centre (if any)	
Type of Centre	<input type="checkbox"/> Government Assisted <input type="checkbox"/> Private
Address	
Telephone Number	
Fax Number	
E-mail address	
State whether ECCE Provider is the Owner or tenant of the premises	

1. Number of rooms. _____
2. Average number of children to be served in each room _____
3. An area (if any) allotted as a playground. Yes [] No []
4. Operating hours . _____

I certify that the information above is true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature of Applicant

APPENDIX B

1. REGISTRATION PROTOCOL

The ECS standards containing all registration requirements will be provided for reference. Enquirers will be given general advice and advised to read the Standards.

Initial application enquiries should be made directly to the Ministry of Education, Early Childhood Care and Education Unit, Trinidad, or The Division of Education, Sport and Youth Affairs, Tobago.

Where a registered provider proposes to set up more than one establishment, a separate registration will be necessary for each setting.

A Registration Notice will be issued within three months after application.

OFFENCES FOR REGISTRATION

It is an offence to provide an ECS for children under the age of 6, on any premises without being registered by the Government. *There will be prescribed penalties.*

2. LICENSING PROTOCOL

The ECS standards containing all inspection and licensing requirements are available for reference. Enquirers will be given general advice and advised to read the Standards.

Upon application a package including the application form will be provided.

Upon receipt of the application form and correct remittance, contact will be made by an officer to arrange a 'site visit'. An assessment will be made on the visit of the premises and their suitability for the proposed venture will be ascertained.

If the registered provider is not working at the centre, the registered provider and the teacher in charge of the centre will be interviewed to assess their suitability by means of discussion, observation and general assessment.

All areas of improvement/amendment will also be given in writing with timescales for completion.

The number of children that may be cared for on the premises will be agreed to, depending on the available (play) space, the proposed staffing arrangements and any restrictions imposed by the Planning Department.

There must be compliance with relevant statutory Regulations approval from the following Government Agencies:

1. Water and Sewage Authority (WASA)
2. Electrical Inspectorate (T&TEC)
3. Fire Services
4. Local Health Authority
5. *Town and Country Planning or any other authorized Agency*

Authorised officers of the Ministry of Education will visit the setting at any time in addition to inspection visits.

Any person who intentionally obstructs an authorised officer in the exercise of his/her duty will be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a prescribed penalty.

When all checks have been satisfactorily cleared and requirements met, the Licensing of the applicant as a provider of the specified numbers and age ranges of children at the particular premises will be endorsed on behalf of the Government. The registered provider will then receive a license to operate indicating their suitability for the purposes of early childhood services.

The Government has prescribed a fee for each licensing inspection due every three years. Failure to pay within 28 days of the inspection taking place may result in cancellation of registration and rescinding of licensing certification.

The fee for licensing is \$ 100.00 T.T.

When all the minimum standards are met the Licence will be issued.

REFUSAL TO LICENSE

The regulations empower the government to refuse licensing if the applicant is deemed not fit to look after children, and/or someone living or working on the premises is not fit to be in the proximity of young children, and/or the premises or the equipment in which ECS are to be provided are unsuitable.

An appeal can be made against any proposal by the Ministry of Education on behalf of the Government to refuse Licensing.

INSPECTION FOR ISSUING OF LICENCE

The Government has a legal duty to inspect ECS settings to ensure standards are met and maintained. The inspection will be conducted by a person authorised by the Government and will include inspection of:

- Staffing
- Child care practice
- Quality of care and education for the appropriate age group(s)
- Records
- Health and safety practices/procedures
- Physical environment

User views may be sought by means of a parent/*principal/teacher* questionnaire.

A draft report of the inspection, with requirements and recommendations, will be sent to each registered provider and/or *principal*.

A follow-up meeting will be arranged between an officer of the Ministry of Education and the registered provider/*principal* when the report is discussed, amendments agreed and timescales for the requirements and recommendations set.

The final inspection report is an open document that may be obtained from the ECCE Unit by users, prospective users or interested parties. Any sensitive information will be held in a confidential appendix.

An unannounced inspection visit completes the inspection cycle and once the requirements are successfully met a license is issued.

CANCELLATION OF LICENCE

The Education Act empowers the Government to cancel registration/licence in the following circumstances:

- The care being given to any individual child is considered seriously inadequate, having regard to the needs of the child concerned. This may include reference to the child's religious persuasion, cultural and linguistic background amongst other matters.
- The person has contravened or failed to comply with a requirement imposed on their registration/licence.
- Failure to pay the fee.

- Where the condition of the premises makes them unfit to be used for looking after children, unless there is a requirement to carry out repairs, alterations or additions to the premises and the imposed time limit to carry out repairs, alterations or additions to the premises and the imposed time limit to carry out those works has not yet expired.

An appeal can be made against any proposal by the Ministry of Education/NCECCE on behalf of the Government to cancel registration/licence. (See the Appeals section).

In an emergency, where the children are considered at risk of significant harm the Government has power under the Acts to apply to the Court.

- To cancel a person's registration/licence
- To vary an imposed requirement
- To remove or impose a requirement

Where Government does so apply to the court, the registered/licenced person will be informed.

APPEALS

Under the proposed legislation the Government of Trinidad and Tobago can:

- Refuse Licence
- Cancel Licence
- Refuse consent to a person disqualified from *obtaining Licence*
- Impose, remove or vary any Licence requirement
- Refuse to grant application for variation for removal of a requirement.

The Ministry of Education is required first to notify the applicant or registered person of its intention and the reasons for it, and give the *ECS* provider 14 days in which to lodge an objection in writing.

The applicant or registered person will then be afforded an opportunity to make objection to the Ministry of Education. Having heard the applicant's objections, the Ministry of Education will give the applicant written notice of the decision made.

OFFENCES FOR LICENCING

It is an offence to provide an ECS or be involved in the provision of an ECS whilst disqualified. On conviction, this offence carries a penalty. It is an offence to fail to comply with or contravene a Licensing requirement. On conviction this offence carries a penalty.

APPENDIX C

PROTOCOL FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS TO APPLY FOR A VARIANCE TO THE LICENSING AND INSPECTION STANDARDS

A variance is an exception to a standard. It can be a permanent exception agreed in a particular set of circumstances. This protocol does not cover disagreement about the setting of timescales in order to achieve standards.

Application for variances to a standard will not be accepted in the following circumstances:

- If the standard is directly linked to a legislative requirement.
- If the variance requested would involve the Ministry of Education condoning the delivery of poor physical or emotional care to an individual service user or group of service users.

Any request for a variance to a standard must be made on the appropriate form by the service provider.

Each request for a variance must be on a separate form.

The request must clearly state what type of variance is being applied for and the reasons.

The application will initially go to the Ministry of Education for decision.

If agreed, all variances will be reviewed annually during the process of inspection.

Variances will in no instance compromise the welfare or physical, emotional safety of the child.

APPENDIX D

APPLICATION FOR A VARIANCE FROM STANDARDS

NAME OF EARLY CHILDHOOD SETTING _____

CENTRE ADDRESS _____

POSTAL ADDRESS _____

TEL.	E-MAIL	FAX
_____	_____	_____

NAME OF REGISTERED PROVIDER _____

NAME OF ADMINISTRATOR _____

REGISTERED AS A: _____

AGE RANGE OF USER GROUP _____

STANDARD TO WHICH A VARIANCE IS APPLIED FOR:

Please state:

Section: _____

Page: _____

Title: _____

Number: _____

APPLICANT'S NAME _____

POSITION _____

DATE OF APPLICATION _____

REASONS FOR THIS APPLICATION _____

Signature of Applicant: _____ **Date:** _____

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

RECOMMENDED BY: _____

NAME

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

APPENDIX E

www.awareparenting.com

P.O. Box 206, Goleta, CA 93116, U.S.A.

(805) 968-1868 (phone and fax)

e-mail: info@awareparenting.com



Twenty Alternatives to Punishment

by
[Aletha Solter, Ph.D.](#)

(French version: [Vingt Alternatives à la Punition](#))

Copyright © 1996 by Aletha Solter. For more information about this approach to parenting, see [The Aware Baby](#), [Helping Young Children Flourish](#), and [Tears and Tantrums](#) by Aletha Solter, Ph.D.

1. LOOK FOR UNDERLYING NEEDS.

example: Give your child something to play with while waiting in line.

2. GIVE INFORMATION AND REASONS.

example: If your child colors on the wall, explain why we color on paper only.

3. LOOK FOR UNDERLYING FEELINGS.

Acknowledge, accept & listen to feelings.

example: If your child hits his baby sister, encourage him to express his anger and jealousy in harmless ways. He may need to cry or rage.

4. CHANGE THE ENVIRONMENT.

This is sometimes easier than trying to change the child.

example: If your child repeatedly takes things out of the kitchen cupboards, put a childproof lock on them.

5. FIND ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVES.

Redirect your child's behavior.

example: If you do not want your child to build a fort in the dining room, don't just say no. Tell her where she *can* build one.

6. DEMONSTRATE HOW YOU WANT YOUR CHILD TO BEHAVE.

example: If your child pulls a cat's tail, *show* her how to pet a cat. Do not rely on words alone.

7. GIVE CHOICES RATHER THAN COMMANDS.

Decision-making empowers children; commands invite a power struggle.

example: "Would you like to brush your teeth before or after putting your pajamas on?"

8. MAKE SMALL CONCESSIONS.

example: "I'll let you skip brushing your teeth tonight because you are so tired."

9. PROVIDE FOR A PERIOD OF PREPARATION.

example: If you are counting on company for dinner, tell your child how you expect him to behave. Be specific. Role-playing can help prepare children for potentially difficult situations.

10. LET NATURAL CONSEQUENCES OCCUR (when appropriate).
Don't rescue too much.
example: A child who does not hang up her bathing suit and towel may find them still wet the next day.
11. COMMUNICATE YOUR OWN FEELINGS.
Let children know how their behavior affects you.
example: "I get so tired of cleaning up crumbs in the living room."
12. USE ACTIONS WHEN NECESSARY.
example: If your child insists on running across streets on your walks together, hold his hand tightly (while explaining the dangers).
13. HOLD YOUR CHILD.
Children who are acting aggressively or obnoxiously can benefit from holding, in a loving and supportive way, that allows them to channel their pent-up feelings into healing tears.
14. REMOVE YOUR CHILD FROM THE SITUATION, AND *STAY WITH HER*.
Use the time for listening, sharing feelings, holding, and conflict-resolution.
15. DO IT TOGETHER, BE PLAYFUL.
Many conflict situations can be turned into games.
examples: "Let's pretend we're the seven dwarfs while we clean up," "Let's take turns brushing each other's teeth."
16. DEFUSE THE SITUATION WITH LAUGHTER.
example: If your child is mad at you, invite him to express his anger in a playful pillow fight with you. Play your part by surrendering dramatically. Laughter helps resolve anger and feelings of powerlessness.
17. MAKE A DEAL, NEGOTIATE.
example: If you're ready to leave the playground and your child is having fun, reach an agreement on the number of times she may go down the slide before leaving.
18. DO MUTUAL CONFLICT-RESOLUTION.
Discuss ongoing conflicts with your children, state your own needs, and ask for their help in finding solutions. Determine rules together. Hold family meetings.
19. REVISE YOUR EXPECTATIONS.
Young children have intense feelings and needs, and are naturally loud, curious, messy, willful, impatient, demanding, creative, forgetful, fearful, self-centered, and full of energy. Try to accept them as they are.
20. TAKE A PARENTAL TIME-OUT.
Leave the room, and do whatever is needed to regain your sense of composure and good judgment (example: call a friend, cry, meditate, take a shower).

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 [Aware Parenting Insititute](#)  [top of page](#)

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APPENDIX F

PROPOSED CAREER PATH FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD STAFF

The career path for early childhood educators allows for progression from Early Childhood Auxiliary or Teacher Assistant to Early Childhood Administrator/Teacher. What follows is the proposed career path with academic and professional requirements.

Auxiliary Assistant - ECCE

Minimum three (3) subjects. English compulsory, computer literacy and foundation level exposure to ECCE theory and/or practice.

Early Childhood Care and Education Teacher Assistant

Five (5) CXC or five (5) 'O' Levels (English, Mathematics, and any other three subjects) and professional certification as stipulated by the Ministry of Education.

Early Childhood Care and Education Teacher

Same as ECCE Teacher and Bachelor's Degree ECCE or Bachelor's Degree in Education with ECCE specialization and at least five (5) years experience as a Teacher.

Early Childhood Care and Education Administrator -Teacher

Bachelor's Degree ECCE or Bachelor's Degree in Education with ECCE specialization and at least eight (8) years experience as an ECCE Teacher.

Other approved, proposed positions and required qualifications in the field of ECCE are:

- *ECCE Curriculum Programme Facilitator
B.ed Degree in ECCE and at least five (5) years in ECCE*
- *ECCE Quality Assurance Officers
Professional Certification and training ECCE standard*
- *ECCE Family/Community Officer
Degree with components of social work and/or guidance counseling)*
- *Four (4) Coordinators at Head Office Level (Administration, Curriculum, Quality Assurance and Family/Community) with higher degrees and diplomas in the respective areas*

- *Director and Assistant Director*
Minimum recognized 'Masters' Degree with extensive experience in both ECCE and Administration in the field.

APPENDIX G

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

10-12 Independence Square

Port-of-of-Spain, Trinidad & Tobago

GUIDELINES FOR REGISTRATION AND THE ISSUE OF FOOD BADGES

IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

The Food Badge is issued to a food handler as evidence that he/she has been registered a **fit** person to sell food.

The Registration of a Food Handler is required by S156 (1) (h) Public Health Ordinance

Ch. 12 No:4.

Fitness in this sense has two connotations:

- 1) The person is not suffering from any communicable disease which can be transmitted from a person to another through the handling of food.
- 2) The person is (trained) educated in safe food handling practices ensuring that food is prepared, stored and offered for sale under conditions which would result in a product safe for human consumption.

OBJECTIVE OF REGISTRATION:

To ensure that those who have been given the Authority to prepare and offer food for sale for human consumption has attained the required standard of "fitness"

PROCEDURE:

Food Handlers are required to:

- 1) Obtain a Medical Certificate from a Practising Medical Practitioner (special criteria's attached).
- 2) Pay to the bank a fee as prescribed by the Municipal Corporation.
- 3) Attend a lecture/demonstration, at an appointed time and date by Public Health Inspector, Country Medical Officer's of Health Department.

- LECTURES INCLUDE:**
- Principles of H.A.C.C.P
 - Personal Hygiene
 - Vector and Vermin Control
 - General Food Safety
 - Questions from participants
 - Attire in the food business
 - The relationship of diseases to food handling
- 4) On completion of Nos. 1, 2 and 3 above he/she would be given the food badge (See No. 5 for Itinerant Vendors).
 - 5) Itinerant Vendors would satisfy Nos. 1, 2 and 3 above. In addition, their place of preparation and sale is inspected.

This inspection is necessary since foods prepared under unsatisfactory conditions are more likely to be unfit for human consumption.

Any food preparation premises found unsuitable would be brought to the required standard. Vendors whose premises cannot meet those standards will **not** be registered as an Itinerant Vendor.

VENDORS

- Medical Certificates
- Pay at Bank
- Cost of Badge
- Lecture/Demonstration
(By Public Health Inspector II)
- Badge Issued

ITINERANT VENDORS

- (Medical Certificates and I.V. Application Form)
- Pay at Bank
- (Cost of Badge)
- Lecture/Demonstration
- (By Public Health Inspector
- Inspection of Premises

(Preparation and Sale)

- Issue of Badge

TIME TO PROCESS

Approximate one (1) week

Approximate two (2) weeks

- 6) Food Badges are signed by the Public Health Inspectors, who delivers the Lecture and the Country Medical Officer of Health.

REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

FOOD HANDLING MEDICAL EXAMINATION CERTIFICATE

Name.....Sex: Male/Female Date of Birth.....

Name Address:

.....

Family History: Tick where appropriate..... (1) Typhoid Yes () No ()
2) Tuberculosis Yes () No () (3) Jaundice Yes () No ()
4) Chronic Cough Yes () No () (5) Other:.....

Personal History: Tick where appropriate: (1) Typhoid Yes () No ()
2) Tuberculosis Yes () No () (3) Jaundice Yes () No ()
4) Chronic Cough Yes () No () (5) Diarrhea Yes () No ()

Other:

7) Hospitalization Yes () No () If yes to 7, give details – dates, place
reason etc.....

.....

Examination: Circle appropriate Letter – S - Satisfactory : U - Unsatisfactory

Hair - S/U Eyes – S/U – Nose – S/U Mouth – S/U Throat – S/U Skin – S/U

Hands - S/U Hands S/U - Nails – S/U Feet - S/U General Appearance - S/U

Comments:

.....

Referral:

Investigations:.....

Date Examined:

Date ExaminedRecommended/Not Recommended

.....

.....

Official Stamp

Signature

For Official Use:

.....

.....

.....

APPENDIX H

CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER'S GUIDANCE FOR THE PREVENTION OF TRANSMISSION OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Immunization has been and is a proven and successful way for the prevention of vaccine - preventable, communicable diseases.

- ◆ Child Care providers should be current for all immunizations routinely recommended for adults by the Expanded Programme on Immunization Ministry of Health viz.
 - Hepatitis B
 - Measles, Mumps, Rubella
 - Yellow Fever
 - Adult Diphtheria tetanus (Td)

- ◆ Mandatory testing for Tuberculosis (TB) is required. Childcare providers should be cleared for Tuberculosis by Mantoux testing, Sputum and X-ray.

- ◆ Care providers must be aware of the methods of disease transmission and the immunization schedule/requirements for school entry for children.

- ◆ Regular hand washing by children and caregivers must be practiced and use of disposable hand towels is encouraged.

- ◆ Surveillance of communicable diseases.

Any suspected case of a communicable disease must be reported immediately to the nearest Health Centre or County Medical Officer of Health's office where guidelines and follow up care will be initiated.

APPENDIX I

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES – FIRST AID PROTOCOL

Your First Aid box should contain:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Minimum quantity</u>
Accident record book	
Assorted sterile hypoallergenic plasters	20
Sterile eye pads	4
Individually wrapped triangular bandages	3
Melolin sterile dressings – small	5
Melolin sterile dressings – large	1
Micro pore tape	
Tube gauze (01) and applicator (for fingers and toes)	
Small packet of sterile gauze (for cleaning up)	
Disposable gloves	
Small plastic bag e.g. freezer bags for burns, disposal of used dressings, taking samples to hospital	
Scissors – blunt ended	
Tweezers	

Please ensure all your members of staff are made aware of any allergies to the above products.

The contents of your First Aid box should be checked regularly.

It is important to record all accidents to children and notify parents/guardians.

If you have any difficulty in obtaining the above items, please consult your pharmacist for advice on equivalent items.

APPENDIX J

CHILD PROTECTION – A GUIDE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICE PROVIDERS

It is important when considering the possibility of child abuse to respond appropriately. ECS Providers can play an important role in protecting and helping children. However, it is equally important that all factors are considered before further action is taken.

The main forms of abuse are:

Physical abuse

This occurs when adults deliberately injure or hurt a child by hitting (with their hands, stick or strap), shaking, squeezing, burning with a cigarette or holding the child against a fire or biting. If a child has been given alcohol or inappropriate drugs or poison, this is also classified as physical abuse.

Attempted drowning (adults have been known to hold a child's head under the water for periods of time as a form of punishment) or suffocation is also forms of physical abuse.

Sexual abuse

This is when adults who use these children to satisfy their own sexual needs abuse boys and girls. This includes not only sexual intercourse, but also fondling, oral sex, anal intercourse and masturbation. Child pornography and prostitution are also included as well as showing children pornographic magazines or videos.

Emotional abuse

Persistent coldness, hostility or rejection by a parent or caregiver will damage the child emotionally. Being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted can have an adverse effect on the child's development.

Neglect

This is when the child's basic needs are not being met perhaps through lack of food or inappropriate clothing. Children may also be constantly left unattended. Failure or refusal by adults to give their children love and affection is also emotional abuse.

What are the signs of abuse?

It is impossible to be certain that child abuse has taken place. The check list below is not exhaustive, and is only an indication that abuse might have taken place.

Some signs of abuse:

- Unexplained failure to thrive
- Loss of weight
- Burn marks, especially cigarette burns or marks that would be caused by prolonged contact with an object
- Bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if these are on parts of the body not normally injured in accidents, e.g. trunk, lower back, inner thigh.
- Bite marks- especially adult size
- An inappropriately dressed or ill-kempt child
- Dirty children
- Sexually explicit behaviour (e.g. playing games and showing awareness which is inappropriate for the child's age)
- Continual masturbation, aggressive and inappropriate sex play
- The child only seems happy with you
- Does not trust adults, particularly those who are close
- "Tummy pains" with no medical reason
- Eating problems, including over-eating, loss of appetite
- Disturbed sleep, nightmares, bedwetting
- Running away from home, suicide attempts, self inflicted wounds
- Reverting to younger behaviour, depression, withdrawal
- Relationship between adults and children which are secretive and exclude others

Once again it is important to stress that the above signs do not necessarily indicate that a child is being abused. However, if you are concerned then you will need to take further steps to protect the child.

What should you do if you suspect abuse?

Firstly, if you as an ECS provider are concerned about a child's behaviour or an injury, you should ask the parents/guardians for an explanation. If you are not satisfied with the explanation given then you should approach a childcare professional. If the child needs urgent medical treatment, then you should seek immediate help.

If you suspect child sexual abuse or serious physical abuse, you must contact a childcare professional to discuss your concerns before raising them with the child's parents/guardians. This may be a difficult decision for you and it may conflict with your aim of working in partnership with parents/guardians. For some investigations it is important that parents/guardians/caregivers/teachers are not pre-warned of concerns as this may provide an opportunity to 'agree to a story' with the child before an investigation. You may quite possibly though need to clarify matters with a parent before confirming or removing any provisional suspicions you may have of sexual abuse.

The laws relating to abuse

An Act to amend the Sexual Offences Act, 1986 was passed in 2000 (Act No. 31). Section 31 (1) of this Act places a duty on a guardian or a caregiver having reasonable grounds to suspect a sexual offence to have taken place, shall report those grounds to a police officer.

APPENDIX K

SPECIFICATIONS ON FURNITURE

ITEMS	NO. REQ'D	SPECIFICATIONS
Library shelving	2	Made from solid soft wood with open shelves Outside measurement approx 8" depthx36" Wide x 42" High
Easel, Utility Tray	4	Made of 5/8", 2 ply ply-wood with hard board easel panels 24"x24" safe TM edges, all corners with a minimum of 1/2" radius. Utility Tray: Approx. 23" x 22
Circular Table	10	Table top made of ply-wood covered with plastic laminate (bright colours) and thumb-nose with soft wood frame. Top Approx. 48"D x 22"H
Chairs	50	Made from solid dowel-pinned hardwood Seat Approx. 13 1/2 "D x 12"H with rail space for child safety
Cubby Hole Unit Twin Type on Castors	6	Made of plywood and soft wood edging with variable size opening for multiple storage. Outside measurement 23"D x 48"W x 30"H.\nNB Omit dividers on one side of unit
Storage Cupboard on Castors	2	Ply-wood finish with lockable doors on castors. Approx. 15"D x 48"W x 36H"
Mirror	1	13"Wx48"H with an unbreakable chrome-plated mirror
Cot	50	2" thick x 3' wide x 4' long. Foam covered with leatherette canvas or stackable, fire resistant vinyl cots
File Cabinet	1	

NB: A list will be provided in the Licensing kit upon application for a Licence.

APPENDIX L

GENERAL POLICY FOR CERTIFICATION OF PRIVATE CENTRES IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Source – Trinidad and Tobago Water and Sewerage Authority

The following procedures are considered before certification is granted to private centres.

1. Applicants must contact a Licensed Sanitary Constructor to apply for certification on their behalf.

A written report of the existing status of the plumbing or proposed systems as well as a plumbing systems' design drawing must accompany the application at the time of submission to the Authority's Plumbing Inspectorate Department.

The report must also state:

- i. The type of centre.
- ii. The number of students presently attending.
- iii. The maximum number of students the school can accommodate.

2. Inspection of the existing premises are conducted to ensure that the following exists:

- a) Minimum separate facilities for male and female students.
- b) Minimum separate facilities for both male and female members of staff.
- c) Facilities for maintenance of the plumbing system.
- d) Minimum facilities for school population must satisfy the National Plumbing Code of Trinidad and Tobago - Table II - Minimum facilities for plumbing systems (schools).

3. All existing and proposed plumbing systems, whether in sewerred or non-sewerred areas anywhere in Trinidad and Tobago must satisfy the requirements of the National Plumbing Code of Trinidad and Tobago and other standards approved by the Water and Sewerage Authority.

4. Upon successful investigation, inspections and tests of the systems, a Completion Certificate shall be issued to the owner via the Licensed Sanitary Constructor for the operation of the facilities.
5. Charges for checking, inspections and tests will be incurred for the services rendered.
6. Certification is valid for three (3) years, after which the Authority shall notify the owner in writing to apply for re-inspection and test of the facilities to ensure Code integrity.

Should you require any further information we can be contacted at our Head Office, Farm Road, Valsayn, St. Joseph at telephone number 662-2302 extensions 4057 or 3185.

ACRONYMS

CCDC	-	Caribbean Child Development Centre
CRC	-	Convention on the Rights of the Child
ECCE	-	Early Childhood Care and Education
EC	-	Early Childhood
ECD	-	Early Childhood Development
ECS	-	Early Childhood Services
EMA	-	Environmental Management Authority
NCECCE	-	National Council for Early Childhood Care and Education
TTUTA	-	Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers' Association
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Fund

GLOSSARY

Administrator/Supervisors/Manager - The person responsible for the day-to-day management of the centre.

Caregiver - One of the persons *who may be* responsible for the supervision of a group of children in the centre.

Child Centred Approach - A Child Centred Approach is one in which children are encouraged to construct their own interpretation of experiences and factual knowledge at a pace, and in contexts that are relevant to their individual aptitude, abilities and interest that lead them to improve their perception, knowledge and understanding.

The focus is on the needs of the children rather than adults. Emphasis is placed on the children's active involvement in learning as the preferred method of education, recognizing that this is the process by which children learn best. Therefore in the learning/teaching process it is ensured that young children are involved as active participants in their own learning and development as opposed to being passive recipients of knowledge through teacher-directed learning, rote learning, drills and use of worksheets.

Child-sized *Must be of an appropriate size/height for all children to use without assistance.*

Day Care Centres and Nurseries

- These are centres providing for infants and toddlers from *birth to three (3)*.

Developmentally Appropriate

- That which is suitable and fitting to the development of children who differ from each other by rates of growth and individual differences. It also refers to learning experiences that are relevant to and respectful of the social and cultural aspects of the children and their families.

Early Childhood Care and Education Centre

- All facilities offering learning, support, care and development for children ages *3 and 4+*. This definition is also used to describe Preschool and Kindergarten.

Early Childhood Services

- All settings offering informal programmes to children under six, and include: ECCE Centres, Day Care Centres, Pre-Schools, Nursery Schools, Kindergartens and Nurseries.

Fit

- Declared emotionally stable and physically capable by a registered medical doctor. The teacher/caregiver must also be academically qualified (see Appendix E).

Integrated Curriculum

- Refers to the coordination of the various areas of study, making for continuous and harmonious learning. Most often an integrated curriculum is designed around a specific theme or project.

Registered Provider

- The person under whose name the *Early Childhood Service* has been registered.