



Jakość
od początku

QUALITY FROM THE BEGINNING

care and Education Standards
for Children Below Three Years of Age

edited by
Moniki Rościszewskiej-Woźniak




fundacja
rozwoju dzieci

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GLOSSARY

- **Setting** – Any type of early years provision (day care childminders, nurseries, children’s clubs, etc.).
- **Management team** – The management team consists of the head of the setting and other adults (owners, founders, etc.) who have an impact on the setting’s operations.
- **Personnel** – All practitioners, the head of the setting and other adults who have contact with children in their work, including those who have occasional contact (caretakers, kitchen personnel, etc.).
- **Staff** – Personnel whose primary job is to work with children.
- **Practitioners** – Adults who regularly work with groups of children as professionals. We deliberately do not call them childminders, because (as we see it) they have many different roles as carers, teachers and educators.
- **Parents** – By “parents” we mean any adults who are children’s legal guardians.
- **Volunteers** – Children’s parents or other family members who voluntarily assume certain roles assigned in consultation with the head of the setting.
- **Play** – Research shows that structured play is the most effective way of learning for children, but we use this word sparingly in our guide because of its belittling and flippant connotations in common usage (“he did nothing but played all day”).
- **Training** – Any professional development tools that are intended to enhance staff members’ knowledge, competencies and skills in a specific area.
- **Garden** – An outdoor area for children’s activities.

Introduction

This guide, entitled *Quality from the Beginning. Care and Education Standards for Children Below Three Years of Age*, addresses a number of issues related to early childhood education and care, including (i) parental mistrust of extra-family day care provisions; (ii) ignorance of employers, professionals and officials, who do not know how to improve the quality of new services for young children; and (iii) insufficient public awareness that children, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, learn better in good quality early years settings.

The young brain builds and evolves from day to day and is extremely flexible, so children with developmental problems, as well as those who simply need to boost their potential, can benefit enormously from attending early childhood education and care services. There is just one condition—these services must be of the highest quality because if they are not, they can cause severe harm to children by locking the door to development. It is therefore essential that all education and care settings for children under three years of age should strive to reach the highest standards.

Realizing the gravity of the matter, we have decided to define our own understanding of high-quality early childhood education and care (ECEC). We have created detailed quality standards in 10 areas to enable ECEC professionals to rely on specific indicators. These standards are meant to be a tool for ECEC personnel, facilitating self-improvement and self-evaluation; to serve as a means of support not surveillance; to help improve efficiency rather than prove deficiency. At the heart of our standards lies the vision of the child as a unique person—one who has the right to individual choices, discoveries, answers, decisions, consequences and mistakes. The task of parents, teachers and childminders is to provide space for children's explorations to make them feel that the process of exploring the world is both enjoyable and rewarding. And of course, any services offered to children should respect the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

To compile this guide, we used worldwide insights and up-to-date research findings. These *Care and Education Standards for Children Below Three Years of Age* are the creation of experts. The team, headed by Monika Rościszewska-Woźniak, had as its members: leaders of the Foundation for Child Development (Teresa Ogrodzińska, Dominik Kmita, Ewa Rościszewska and Magdalena Woźniak-Frymus), Barbara Czubak (head of the Education, Culture, Sports and Social Affairs Division in the Jastków Municipality), Blanka Adamczuk (head of Integrated Kindergarten No. 247 in Warsaw), Bożena Kurelska (head of a public nursery in 2004-2018 and trainer), Ewa Iwińska (founder and head of two Warsaw nurseries “Pomelo” and “Avocado”), Kamila Wichrowska (academic researcher at the Faculty of Education, University of Warsaw), Krzysztof Rutkowski (coach at Familylab Poland), Monika Ebert (expert in functional nursery space at Sunny Clock), Olga Wysłowska (academic researcher at the Faculty of Education, University of Warsaw), Paulina Irisik (dietitian and childhood nutritionist), Tahmina Rajabova (ECEC consultant in Tajikistan), Tanja Olszańska (trainer at the Scherer Leadership Center), Teresa Kot (mayor of the Jastków Municipality), and Ula Malko (psychologist and mediator at the Bliiskie Miejsce [Familiar Place] Centre for Family Support).

The guide is available online (www.najmlodsi.org.pl), so it can be expanded to include additional material: photos, videos, good practices, document templates, research reports, helpful links, etc. We strongly encourage you to use this guide.

The Foundation's Team

1

Foundations and Values



Any ECEC setting should operate under a clearly-defined set of standards that are easy to understand by personnel and parents. Despite individual differences and attitudes, all those who work in a setting should adhere to a shared system of values regarding childcare and other related matters. Clear and unambiguous guidelines adopted by ECEC settings will help parents to choose the best place, where both children and adults can feel at home. The fundamental principle is that all ECEC employees must respect the children's non-negotiable rights described in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

STANDARD 1.1.

The setting has a written policy describing its key operating principles

A. THE VISION OF THE CHILD

The vision of the child should define at least the following:

- staff members' understanding of children's well-being
- what, according to staff members, makes every child unique
- how to support children's individual development within group contexts
- how to create enabling environments to foster children's relationships with peers

B. THE MISSION OF THE SETTING

The mission statement of the setting should define at least the following:

- the role of the setting for the children, families and teachers
- the main three (or more) priority areas for the setting and the reasons why they have priority
- the philosophy of parental involvement

C. THE VISION OF THE PRACTITIONER

The vision of the practitioner should define at least the following:

- the role of practitioners for children
- the tasks of practitioners that are particularly important
- how practitioners' personal traits impact their work with children and what emotions they consciously share with children
- how practitioners ensure their professional development

STANDARD 1.2.

The setting provides written examples of how applicable children's rights are respected in practice

- A. STAFF MEMBERS RESPECT CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO FREE EXPRESSION OF EMOTIONS AND NEEDS
- B. STAFF MEMBERS RESPECT CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO DEVELOP AT THEIR OWN PACE
- C. STAFF MEMBERS RESPECT CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO GET HELP WHEN COPING WITH DIFFICULT SITUATIONS
- D. STAFF MEMBERS RESPECT CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO EXPLORE, EXPERIMENT AND ENJOY DIVERSE EXPERIENCES
- E. STAFF MEMBERS RESPECT CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO SECRECY
- F. STAFF MEMBERS RESPECT CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO INFORMATION
- G. STAFF MEMBERS RESPECT CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO EXPRESS THEIR OPINIONS
- H. STAFF MEMBERS RESPECT CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO MAKE AUTONOMOUS DECISIONS
- I. STAFF MEMBERS RESPECT CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO EAT AND DRINK WHEN HUNGRY AND THIRSTY
- J. STAFF MEMBERS RESPECT CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO PRIVACY
- K. STAFF MEMBERS RESPECT CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO SLEEP OR REST WHEN TIRED

2

Staff Competencies



Individual competencies of those working in an ECEC setting are critically important for the quality of early childhood education and care. To build meaningful relationships with children and to be effective in implementing an education and care programme, they need to ensure their own personal development—developing not only knowledge and skills, but also an understanding of emotions and needs, and the ability to label and express them. Training and supervision must take place during staff working hours, but not during their contact time with children. We would recommend reducing mandatory contact time to seven hours a day for full-time staff.

STANDARD 2.1.

Staff regulations contribute to high-quality work with children

A. STAFF MEMBERS KNOW, UNDERSTAND AND RESPECT THE MISSION OF THE SETTING, THE VISION OF THE CHILD AND THE VISION OF THE PRACTITIONER

Staff members:

- are familiar with the policies, procedures and regulations adopted by the setting
- share/respect the code of ethics and communication standards adopted by the setting

B. STAFF MEMBERS KNOW THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE SETTING

Staff members:

- know their responsibilities, know who is responsible for what
- know the limitations of their responsibilities
- know the daily operating standards adopted by the setting

C. STAFF MEMBERS CONTINUOUSLY ENHANCE THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Staff members:

- participate in training provided by external experts for a minimum of 10 hours a year
- regularly share observations of children's behaviour and progress with other colleagues and, if necessary, with external specialists
- participate in regular meetings of the ECEC team
- reflect on their own daily performance
- are aware of the latest research findings and scientific evidence-based practices
- share new knowledge with colleagues and parents in the setting

- attend individual supervision sessions during working hours (to discuss their work, emotions, needs, skills, etc.)
- are aware of their own emotions and needs, can label and express them

STANDARD 2.2.

Care and education practices are built on staff members' close attachments to children

A. STAFF MEMBERS FORM CLOSE, SECURE AND WARM ATTACHMENTS TO CHILDREN

Staff members:

- ensure that children are listened to by adults and other children
- have good affectionate contact with children, smile a lot and show that they enjoy being with children
- show interest in what children say and do
- use nonverbal messages to interact with children (e.g. nodding, eyebrow raising to show surprise, smiling)
- call children by first names
- seek eye contact when talking to a child (without forcing to reciprocate)
- try to be at children's level when talking to them, e.g. by crouching or sitting down
- keep an eye on what is going on in the room; name what they can see
- adapt their behaviour—tone of voice, facial expression, level of enthusiasm—in response to what children communicate
- are attentive to children's current needs
- are ready to help if a child needs assistance

B. STAFF MEMBERS PROMOTE CHILDREN'S AUTONOMY

Staff members:

- provide an enabling environment for children to make their own decisions
- allow children to make mistakes; encourage them to resolve/rectify those mistakes by themselves, if they are ready for it
- accept that children express their emotions
- remind children verbally or nonverbally (by gesturing or using graphic signs) of the next item on the daily agenda

STANDARD 2.3.

Staff members support children's all-round development

A. STAFF MEMBERS SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES

Staff members:

- caution the child if an action is going to be taken about him/her, and wait for the child to respond (verbally or nonverbally) to make sure that the child understands the situation
- are sensitive to difficult moments (fatigue, overstimulation, etc.) experienced by children and support them by arranging changes to their surroundings, modifying the tone of voice and adjusting interactions appropriately
- respect the child's wish to stop the interaction and wait until the child communicates readiness to resume contact
- identify and label emotional reactions of children and themselves
- encourage the development of children's self-control by modelling (verbally and nonverbally) various strategies to cope with difficult emotions
- keep children informed about any changes to daily routines throughout the day

- a member of staff who is leaving, says goodbye to the children
- use a personal language (with I-messages) and avoid impersonal forms (such as "it isn't allowed", "it's necessary", "that just isn't done", etc.)
- use humour, creating and sharing fun; show the children that humour helps to handle difficult emotions

B. STAFF MEMBERS SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S SOCIAL COMPETENCIES

Staff members:

- respond to children's interest in other children, and foster their relationships with peers
- encourage children to form relationships with peers
- arrange open-view surroundings for children to see what other group members are doing
- use their knowledge of children's interests and temperaments to involve them in play
- notice and talk about children's socialization attempts and collaborative efforts
- provide guidance to children on how to work together
- help children to resolve conflicts by suggesting different approaches to difficult situations
- know that hitting, biting, pushing are unintentional forms of behaviour in young children and the most accessible way to respond to an emergency; children are not blamed but encouraged to try other approaches
- provide guidance for children on how they can behave in certain situations, and what they should not do
- establish group behaviour standards and explain their meaning to children
- let children decide who they want to play with, and stay close
- serve as models of social interactions and describe what the children are doing when playing together with them

C. STAFF MEMBERS SUPPORT CHILDREN'S CREATIVITY AND EXPERIMENTATION

Staff members:

- encourage children's independent exploration of their surroundings; help children out if they encounter difficulties
- let young babies examine a variety of objects, including their own hands, legs and faces
- let young babies explore the space around them by carrying them to different places
- support children in learning how to make choices by limiting the variety of choices, giving children time to respond and allowing them to change their minds
- allow children to use things in different ways
- show how to experiment with objects
- let children play with things of their choice for as long as they are interested
- encourage children to move to music and to play instruments
- create opportunities for children's artistic expression
- show functional and innovative ways of using artefacts or toys; encourage children to discover their own ways

D. STAFF MEMBERS SUPPORT CHILDREN'S COGNITIVE COMPETENCIES

Staff members:

- participate in children's activities to help expand and deepen their interest
- participate in children's activities in response to their request without assuming the leading role
- support young babies' development of skills by mimicking their gestures, facial expressions and sounds
- initiate, participate in and model imitation games in response to children's ideas

- expand and enrich children's play by bringing new props and asking questions about the next steps
- encourage children to persevere at tasks by providing new challenges and supporting them when they feel discouraged
- draw children's attention to characteristic features of animate and inanimate things
- use a variety of strategies to help children resolve a task (by simplifying the task, giving verbal and visual clues, etc.)
- comment on children's task-resolving strategies, appreciating their efforts
- use words that describe characteristic features of objects, helping children to understand categories such as colour, quantity, shape, size, empty-full, etc.
- use spatial terms (under, over, behind, in the middle, outside)
- direct children's attention to processes, helping them learn to think in terms of cause and effect
- talk to children about what happened some time ago, creating a link to what is happening now
- explain why something happened, using descriptive language and asking questions
- encourage children to predict outcomes, and to explain and understand situations, by asking questions and talking about consequences
- promote simultaneous, associative and collaborative play
- introduce props to simulate everyday objects or let children play with real artefacts
- look for stories in children's literature that reflect children's current interests to create a link between play and real-life skills

E. STAFF MEMBERS SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES

Staff members:

- watch for and respond to verbal messages and nonverbal clues from children
- use open as well as closed questions that can be answered in short by a child
- wait for the child to respond (verbally or nonverbally) before going to the next question or comment
- model more complex statements for children in response to their initiative
- use diverse forms of expression (questions, statements, exclamations, etc.)
- use extended questions and conversation-initiating questions to spark children's interest and involvement
- explain and give reasons to help children understand a variety of natural phenomena
- expand children's language and vocabulary, using words that describe different natural phenomena, situations or objects, and linking them with words that the children know
- use full sentences, where possible
- keep up conversation, keeping the child's attention focused longer on the topic
- engage children in conversations about shared universal experiences and children's individual experiences
- pronounce syllables clearly, modulating voice to boost children's involvement in conversation
- use different words from different categories (objects, actions, emotions, functions)
- encourage children repeatedly to read books and look at pictures together
- encourage children to turn pages when reading books together, to ask and answer questions, to join in rhymes and to repeat memorized passages

- show and describe pictures in books, encouraging children to talk about what they see
- encourage children to leaf through books by themselves
- tell stories to children
- explain the meaning of new words, using gestures and mimics
- are conscious of the need to simplify, to modulate voice and to use short utterances when interacting with children who cannot talk yet or are just learning to talk
- can adjust the complexity of their utterances to children's developmental levels without lapsing too often into childish language

F. STAFF MEMBERS SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S MOVEMENT COMPETENCIES

Staff members:

- support young babies in learning to gain control of their bodies and in learning to walk
- interact with children in physical activities, doing the same as they do (rolling, crawling, etc.)
- pay attention and remain alert, but do not stop children from trying new physical activities
- create conditions for children to tackle new challenges related to movement and learning new motor skills
- allow children to repeat and practise specific skills for as long as they are interested
- provide opportunities for children to practise strength and agility exercises
- allow children to exercise their arms, hands and fingers
- allow children to practice hand-eye coordination when eating, putting on clothes or doing other daily activities

STANDARD 2.4.

Staff members work with other adults for children's best interests

A. STAFF MEMBERS WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AS DESCRIBED IN AREA 7: PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

Staff members:

- share observations of children's behaviour and progress with parents, not only at scheduled meetings, but also on children's arrival in or departure from the setting
- include information provided by parents when planning tasks for children

B. STAFF MEMBERS ARE KEEN TO SHARE INFORMATION/ KNOWLEDGE ABOUT CHILDREN WITH OTHER SPECIALISTS WITHIN AND OUTSIDE THE SETTING

Staff members:

- regard specialists (psychologists, physiotherapists, speech therapists and musicians) who work for the setting as a source of knowledge about children and their needs; make use of specialist guidance
- specialists have opportunities to share their wide expertise to help specific children
- talk to specialists about children's current interests and behaviour
- share regularly among themselves observations of children's behaviour and progress
- arrange in-house meetings at the setting to share information about their work with children

3

Pedagogical Approach



Every child should be able to engage in absorbing activities (such as play) that inspire them to discover, create and assign meaning to things, alone or with other children or with supportive adults. At the same time, every child should be able to decide how much they want to be involved. The setting should have an educational curriculum that correlates with children's interests, stages of development and current dispositions. It is necessary to ensure that children's surroundings are safe and secure and provide for good human interactions.

STANDARD 3.1.

The pedagogical approach encompasses all areas of children's development

A. THE SETTING SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S MOTOR SKILLS

- children have enough space to move about freely (slithering, crawling, running, climbing, spinning, etc.)
- there is time for exercise every day
- objects are at hand to encourage the development of fine motor skills (manipulating, matching, inserting, removing, gripping, twisting, etc.)

B. THE SETTING SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE COMPETENCIES

- staff members use many situations throughout the day to initiate verbal communication with children
- staff members display books in ways that encourage children to use them: handle, leaf through and talk about books
- there are spaces in every room accessible to children that encourage talking about and reading/listening to books

C. THE SETTING SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES

- staff members give children time to feel emotions
- staff members have a common written procedure of how to support children in handling difficult emotions
- staff members can identify and label emotions
- staff members make sure that the sequence of daily routines is predictable to children, and provide information about any changes to daily routines so that children do not feel bewildered

D. THE SETTING SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S SOCIAL COMPETENCIES

- staff members actively listen to children when interacting with them
- children have opportunities to decide whether they want to share things with other children
- children have opportunities to help other children
- children have opportunities to resolve conflicts with peers independently
- children are helped to resolve conflicts if they cannot manage to do it on their own
- children are encouraged to try different roles
- children are encouraged to form relationships with other children
- staff members have a common written procedure of how to support children in handling conflicts between them

E. THE SETTING SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S COGNITIVE COMPETENCIES

- children have opportunities to handle difficulty/novelty in relations with objects/other children
- children have time and opportunities for experimenting and learning from mistakes
- children have access to materials that stimulate their curiosity about the world
- children have access to everyday objects and natural materials
- children have opportunities to explore the immediate surroundings of the setting
- children have opportunities to observe seasonal changes in nature

F. THE SETTING SUPPORTS CHILDREN'S CREATIVITY

- staff members encourage children to look for creative solutions in everyday situations
- children have opportunities (time, space and staff's approval) to tackle new challenges
- children's creative resources do not include ready-made stencils (line drawings, colouring books or colouring pages to add colour)
- children have opportunities to dance and sing
- children have access to musical instruments and transformable materials throughout the day
- children have opportunities to draw/paint on formats larger than A3 (297x420 mm)
- children have opportunities to become familiar with various forms of art (painting, sculpture, etc.)
- children have opportunities to listen to high-quality music (in terms of both sound-recording technology and artistic performance)
- children have access to books and albums
- children have spaces for creative activities both inside the building and outside in the garden

STANDARD 3.2.

The pedagogical approach defines the necessary requirements for children's all-round development

A. ACTIVITIES ARE PROVIDED BY CREATING ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS (MENTAL, SOCIAL AND MATERIAL)

- children have opportunities to do things alone or in small groups or as a larger group

- children have access to a variety of dedicated play areas
- play areas are often provided with new materials, toys and artefacts
- play areas are rearranged to meet children's changing interests

B. ACTIVITIES OFFERED TO CHILDREN ADDRESS THEIR CURRENT NEEDS AND INTERESTS

- children decide what, how and how long they want to play
- staff members do not force any child to participate in organized activities
- activities are based on children's direct experience and on play
- activities last for as long as children are interested
- organized activities reflect children's current interests or inspire them to enhance their knowledge and skills
- additional activities offered by the setting are available to all children in the group
- children's participation in additional activities is voluntary

C. STAFF MEMBERS OBSERVE AND DOCUMENT CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

- the setting has an established procedure for documenting children's activities and progress
- children are photographed/filmed during play and other everyday activities¹
- photographs are printed (if possible) and displayed in the room for children to look at and talk about them
- observations and notes documenting children's activities can be made available to parents
- observations do not include assessments or interpretations

1 parents should give their consent before a child is photographed/filmed (they should be informed about the purpose); any materials produced in this way should be kept confidential; children should be able to say no to being photographed/filmed

4

Everyday Situations



Everyday situations are activities that occur repeatedly as part of daily routines. They help children to organize their world, build their identity, develop social and emotional competencies, and inspire active community involvement. Everyday situations create the organizational culture and educational climate of the setting. The way the setting is organized plays a crucial role in the development of young children, as it impacts the key physiological and emotional needs of that age group, determines the quality of children's experiences, defines their sense of security and influences their developmental progress.

STANDARD 4.1.

Children can take as much time as they personally need to say hello or goodbye

- A. A FAMILIAR MEMBER OF STAFF GREETES AND SAYS GOODBYE TO EVERY CHILD PERSONALLY ON ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE
- a familiar member of staff greets and says goodbye to every child, calling the child by name and keeping eye contact
 - staff members give children time to say goodbye to their group before escorting them out to their parents
- B. HOW LONG AND IN WHAT WAYS CHILDREN SAY GOODBYE TO THEIR PARENTS/ESCORTS IN THE MORNING DEPENDS ON THEIR CURRENT NEEDS
- staff members do not hurry children's parents/escorts who are saying goodbye
 - staff members let parents/escorts know that saying goodbye should be done without haste
 - staff members respect children's personal rituals of saying goodbye to their parents/escorts
 - children can bring personal objects that make the parting easier for them
 - staff members provide support to parents/escorts who find it hard to part

STANDARD 4.2.

Children can take various forms of rest as needed

- A. STAFF MEMBERS ARE AWARE OF CHILDREN'S INDIVIDUAL NEEDS AND ROUTINES RELATED TO SLEEP AND REST
- staff members ask parents for information about children's individual needs and routines related to sleep and rest
 - staff members keep observing children's needs for rest and relaxation
- B. STAFF MEMBERS TRY TO ADAPT DAILY PATTERNS OF REST AND ACTIVITY TO THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN
- staff members offer various ways of rest to children
 - staff members ensure a calm and quiet atmosphere to help children fall asleep and wake up, keeping incentives to a minimum
 - alternative care is arranged for children who do not need sleep at rest time
 - children do not have to change into pyjamas at rest time
 - children can choose how they want to relax
 - children can handle their favourite toys at rest time

STANDARD 4.3.

Hygienic practices comply with children's individual needs

A. STAFF MEMBERS RESPECT CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO MANAGE THEIR OWN HYGIENE

- a nappy change requires the child's co-operation and consent
- staff members remind children to use the toilet or potty, but it is the children who decide which option they want to use
- staff members respect children's right to assistance or privacy during toileting
- children need not ask adults' permission to use the toilet or wash their hands

B. STAFF MEMBERS ARE AWARE OF CHILDREN'S HYGIENE SKILLS

- staff members share information with parents regarding children's hygiene skills and need for assistance in hygienic practices
- staff members support children's independence in hygienic practices as appropriate for their level of development

C. STAFF MEMBERS SUPPORT CHILDREN'S GROWING UNDERSTANDING OF HYGIENIC PRACTICES

- staff members never reward or punish children in any way for responding to bladder or bowel urges (using the potty or wetting the nappy)
- children do not risk scoffing or displeasure from adults when they fail to communicate the need to use the potty or toilet
- staff members change children's nappies without haste, gently and attentively, to avoid causing pain or irritation
- staff members do not express annoyance during children's hygienic practices, either verbally or nonverbally

- staff members have contact with the child during a nappy change
- staff members constantly share information about the best ways to support children's growing hygiene skills
- staff members help children to develop a hand-washing habit

STANDARD 4.4.

Children's participation in tidying-up is seen as a developmental opportunity

A. SPACE ARRANGEMENT MAKES IT EASY TO TIDY UP INDOOR AND OUTDOOR AREAS

- the indoor environment is organized to ensure that children have easy access to toys and can easily put them away
- every toy has its own designated place
- children have access to cleaning utensils, both indoors and outdoors in the garden

B. STAFF MEMBERS INVOLVE CHILDREN IN TIDYING-UP

- staff members ensure that tidy-up time occurs regularly every day
- staff members initiate tidying-up and encourage children to join in
- staff members do not make it mandatory for children to be involved in tidying-up

5

Nutrition



Food and drinks are children’s basic physiological needs, so understandably every setting regards nutrition as a key requirement. The proposed nutritional standards fall into two categories for two age groups, as children’s nutritional needs change considerably over time. We also separately discuss the environments in which meals should be eaten—a quiet and relaxed atmosphere is fundamental to children’s good emotional, social and cognitive development.

STANDARD 5.1.

Infant nutrition advice is based on the official guidelines for feeding healthy infants¹ and the feeding chart for babies younger than 1 year old. Last updated in 2016.

A. BABIES ARE GIVEN THE SAME MILK AS THEY GET AT HOME

- staff members talk to parents about the importance of breastfeeding, encouraging mothers to express milk or to drop in for a breastfeeding session during the day
- the amount of milk in young babies' diet is adjusted to their age and needs
- the setting ensures privacy for breastfeeding mothers
- breast milk is stored in the fridge and given to breastfed babies as indicated by parents
- babies who are fed on modified milk are given the milk formula chosen by their parents
- babies younger than one year old are not given milk from cows or other animals as a single meal

B. THE SETTING HAS AGREED PROCEDURES FOR INTRODUCING BABIES TO VARIOUS FOODS

- babies are mostly given products that they already eat at home. New products are introduced in small amounts under close supervision and in consultation with parents
- staff members ask parents about children's current diet and nutritional needs
- the setting displays menus for parents to read

C. FOOD AND DRINKS GIVEN TO BABIES ARE NOT ADDITIONALLY SWEETENED OR SALTED

- babies younger than one year old are not given honey, sugar, sweeteners or syrups (such as agave, maple, glucose-fructose or rice syrup)
- babies younger than one year old are not given salt, or mixtures of spices with salt, or sodium glutamate with their meals
- babies are not given ready-made foods containing the above-mentioned ingredients
- apart from milk, babies are only given water to drink

¹ See: „Zasady żywienia zdrowych niemowląt” Zalecenia Polskiego Towarzystwa Gastroenterologii, Hepatologii i Żywienia Dzieci. Szajewska i in. 2014, [Guidelines for Feeding Healthy Infants, published by the Polish Society for Paediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition, Szajewska et al., 2014] https://ptp.edu.pl/files/Standardy_Medyczne_2014_Zalecenia_ywienia_.pdf

STANDARD 5.2.

Diets of children aged 1-3 years are based on the current Human Nutrition Standards²

A. CHILDREN'S MENUS ARE BASED ON THE FOOD RATION MODEL³

- menus use products from all five basic food groups in the right amounts and frequencies. Group Six (sugar and sweets) may or may not be included
- each meal contains vegetables and/or fruit

B. MEALS OFFERED TO CHILDREN ARE PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH HEALTHY NUTRITION STANDARDS

- meals are enhanced with natural additives, herbs and ingredients (seeds, dried fruits, etc.)
- salt and sugar intakes are kept to a minimum
- meals are prepared using the following methods: traditional cooking, steaming, roasting, braising and non-fat frying

C. FOOD OFFERED TO CHILDREN IS ATTRACTIVE TO EAT

- meals vary in taste and colour
- meals have attractive presentation
- colourful fruit and vegetables are served with meals
- the same vegetables are served in a variety of forms

D. CHILDREN ARE NOT KEPT THIRSTY DURING THE DAY

- children are mostly given water to drink; drinking water is always within easy reach, including in the garden area
- containers with drinking water are placed within children's sight; staff members offer drinking water to children from time to time

- children can drink daily not more than 120 ml of strained fruit juice (pasteurized and unsweetened) (this daily intake includes fruit eaten whole; staff should always remember that whole fruit and water are always the preferred choice)
- children are not served sweetened or carbonated drinks

E. THE SETTING OFFERS SPECIAL DIETS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NUTRITIONAL NEEDS

- staff members make sure that meals offered to children with special needs are also attractive, nutritious and tasty
- parents may choose the option of providing meals by themselves
- the setting may ask for a medical certificate to prove the need to provide an elimination diet

F. THE NUMBER OF MEALS OFFERED DAILY DEPENDS ON NUTRITIONAL STANDARDS AND CHILDREN'S NEEDS

- staff and parents decide together which meals the child will have in the setting, depending on the length of daily stay
- meals can be stored for children who arrive late or sleep during mealtimes
- snacks can be offered to children who stay in the setting until the end of the day

² www.izz.waw.pl

³ See: Healthy Nutrition Standards recommended by Instytut Żywności i Żywienia, <http://www.imid.med.pl/images/do-pobrania/poradnik.pdf>

STANDARD 5.3.

Meals are organized as appropriate for children's needs

A. STAFF MEMBERS LET CHILDREN DECIDE WHETHER, WHAT, HOW MUCH AND HOW THEY WANT TO EAT

- children do not have to be seated at the table if they do not need food
- children can take as much time as they need to eat
- children who have finished eating can leave the table without waiting for other children
- there is an area in the dining room, for example a floor rug, where children can leaf through books or engage in other activities
- children are neither rewarded for eating nor punished for not eating
- staff members realize that children may not want to eat something
- staff members do not ignore verbal or nonverbal messages from children regarding the need for food or the amounts consumed
- staff members do not insist that children should eat everything on their plates
- children may use bibs and their own drinking cups if they want to
- children may use spoons/forks or hands to eat
- there is enough food for children to have another helping

B. STAFF MEMBERS PROMOTE CHILDREN'S INDEPENDENCE IN EATING

- staff members encourage children, including babies, to eat food by themselves
- children who have mastered a secure sitting-up position are allowed to eat meals unaided and are encouraged to do so by personnel

- children who cannot eat without help are assisted by staff members, who feed them with a spoon or fork
- children who cannot eat without help are fed one-on-one
- all meals are served in ways that promote eating without help
- children help themselves to food, if developmentally appropriate
- children who take too much food are not forced to eat all of it
- plates and spoons/forks are appropriate for children's developmental stage
- all children have easy access to spoons and forks

C. MEALS CONTRIBUTE TO CHILDREN-STAFF INTERACTION

- children can talk to other children seated at the table and to personnel
- staff members have their meals with children at tables, where possible
- children are encouraged to help setting the table and cleaning up after meals

D. CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT FOOD THROUGH A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES

- staff members offer various foods to children, explaining their names and ingredients
- staff members talk to children about healthy and unhealthy eating
- children can grow herbs (vegetables) outdoors in the garden or indoors in pots
- staff members let children join in the preparation of simple food and drinks

STANDARD 5.4.

Staff members work with parents to ensure good childhood nutrition

A. STAFF MEMBERS OBSERVE CHILDREN'S EATING BEHAVIOURS AND SHARE THEIR OBSERVATIONS WITH PARENTS IF THEY SEE ANY ALARMING SYMPTOMS

- staff members know which eating behaviours can be alarming in children
- staff members refer parents to specialists, if necessary

B. STAFF AND PARENTS TAKE JOINT DECISIONS ABOUT CHILDREN'S NUTRITIONAL NEEDS

- weekly menus (with allergens identified) are planned earlier and made available to parents
- staff members ask parents about their children's eating behaviours, including preferred foods, mealtimes, habits and rituals, possible eating difficulties and eating skills
- joint decisions taken by staff and parents about nutrition are based on principles of healthy eating and obesity prevention

C. THE SETTING PROMOTES HEALTHY EATING

- staff members encourage parents to adopt healthy eating standards at home
- the setting promotes healthy recipes and ideas via various communication channels
- parents have access to many resources about healthy eating

6

Transition



A child's transition to an ECEC setting is a key phase in his or her life. Research shows that transitions are stressful. The transitioning process has an effect on children's cortisol (stress hormone) levels, which in turn have an impact on children's mental well-being and functioning in the group. An awkward transition can even create a health hazard. It is therefore vital to support children in the process by giving them as much time and attention as they need. Children may also need similar support at the next stage—when transitioning to the next level within the setting.

STANDARD 6.1.

Children's transition process is arranged around their individual needs and interests

A. THE SETTING PLANS THE TRANSITION PROCESS FOR NEW CHILDREN TO ATTEND TO EACH OF THEM INDIVIDUALLY

- transition does not occur for all new children at the same time
- staff members implement individual transition programmes for every child
- children's length of stay in the setting is gradually extended

B. PARENTS OR OTHER FAMILIAR ADULTS ACCOMPANY THE CHILD DURING TRANSITION

- staff members learn children's communication codes from parents¹
- the setting's policy/contract contains a requirement for a familiar adult to accompany the child during transition

C. THE SETTING ACTIVELY FACILITATES CHILDREN'S TRANSITION

- staff members provide opportunities for children to interact and play with their siblings or familiar peers
- difficult situations are avoided²
- staff members learn children's habits and needs with everyday activities (e.g. eating, sleeping, toileting, dressing, playing)
- every child has contact with the same adults, who gradually build relationships with and eventually become responsible for the care of the child in the setting

D. STAFF MEMBERS CAREFULLY BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN, RESPECTING THEIR NEEDS

- staff members accompany children in ways that are acceptable to them
- children are not carried in arms if they do not want to
- staff members do not stand in the way of children who are moving towards their parents
- if a child shuns contact, staff members withdraw and wait for another opportunity

E. STAFF MEMBERS CAN TELL WHEN CHILDREN'S TRANSITION PROCESS IS COMPLETE, AND THEY ARE READY TO PART WITH THEIR PARENTS

- staff members recognize the behavioural symptoms that indicate successful transition, for example:
 - children are not overstressed, not even for a while, when parents say goodbye and leave
 - children do not spend all their time with parents; they play with other children, too
 - children initiate interaction with staff members (by showing toys, keeping eye contact, initiating contact, allowing to be touched and lifted, etc.)
 - children join the group without showing signs of stress or tension
 - even if children cry a little when saying goodbye to parents, they calm down within minutes with the help of staff
 - children look comfortable and relaxed in the group
 - children join in play activities
- if the child's transition is successful, staff members encourage parents to terminate the transition process

¹ for example, how children communicate that they are thirsty/hungry, what they like to be called, what pacifies them

² for example, by suggesting that parents could collect their child earlier if the child won't sleep in the setting

F. STAFF MEMBERS PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO CHILDREN DURING TRANSITION FROM ONE GROUP TO ANOTHER

- children's transition from one group to another, or into the care of another adult, is talked through with their parents
- every child is accompanied by a familiar member of staff or by another child during transition from one group to another
- there is a place waiting in the new group before a child is transferred
- children who are transferred from one group to another have opportunities to visit the new group in the days preceding the transition

STANDARD 6.2.

Parents are involved in the transition process

A. STAFF MEMBERS EXPLAIN TO PARENTS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TRANSITION PROCESS TO CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- staff members help parents to become familiar with the standards, programmes and procedures of the setting before their child starts to attend
- staff members inform parents, at the beginning of the transition period, that transition can be emotionally difficult for them
- transition workshops are arranged for parents

B. STAFF MEMBERS SUPPORT PARENTS IN DIFFICULT SITUATIONS DURING TRANSITION

- staff members know how to support parents who find it hard to say goodbye to their children
- staff members know how to support parents who are not certain if their children feel good in the setting.

7

Partnership with Parents



Parental involvement relies on partnership, which must be founded on the understanding of the key role of parents and family in children's lives. Therefore, parents and staff must communicate in an atmosphere of openness and trust. Staff members should support parents in their parenting tasks and respect their views on how the setting is managed,

STANDARD 7.1.

Staff members ensure a good atmosphere of parental involvement

A. THE SETTING IS OPEN TO THE PRESENCE OF PARENTS

- there are standards to follow for parents who want to be present in the setting
- parents who enter a children's room must comply with hygiene and cleanliness standards
- parents may come to visit their children in the setting
- staff members personally greet and say goodbye to children's adult escorts
- being open to parents is written in the setting's mission statement

B. STAFF MEMBERS KEEP REGULAR CONTACT WITH PARENTS

- staff members organize group meetings with parents –regularly or as needed (including at parents' request)
- parents are informed about scheduled meetings at least a month in advance
- staff members arrange individual conversations with parents to discuss their children's progress at least once a year
- staff members arrange individual conversations with parents at their request
- the setting has a procedure for informing parents about their children's alarming behaviour
- parents are kept up-to-date on the activities offered to their children (via noticeboard and e-mail messages, etc.)

C. THE SETTING PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTS TO ENHANCE KNOWLEDGE AND IMPROVE PARENTAL SKILLS

- staff members encourage parents to participate in early years development workshops and meetings in and outside the setting

- staff members provide information and materials for parents to strengthen their parenting skills

D. THE SETTING PROVIDES VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTS

- staff members provide opportunities for parents to become involved in children's everyday activities
- the setting offers training to volunteers or keeps an up-to-date list of training courses available in the neighbourhood

STANDARD 7.2.

Parents have a say in how the setting is managed

A. THE SETTING HAS STANDARDS TO ENSURE PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

- partnership standards define joint-decision areas: it is clear what parents can be consulted about (if final decisions are taken by staff) and what they can decide about together with staff
- standards are defined for parents who want to use the setting's indoor premises and its garden

B. PARENTS HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO BE INVOLVED IN THE SETTING'S ACTIVITIES

- staff members encourage active parental participation in the setting's activities
- parents' suggestions are discussed at group meetings in addition to other topics

C. THE SETTING FACILITATES MUTUAL CONTACT BETWEEN PARENTS

- the setting provides a meeting place for the Parents' Council or parents' groups
- information provided by parents can be displayed on notice boards

8

Premises and Equipment



The premises must be arranged in ways that correspond to the pedagogical approach adopted by the setting. The indoor and outdoor environment needs to be safe and organized in the optimum manner to support children's development. It is a good idea to provide spaces that will allow children to operate independently as well as together with peers and adults, in line with their current needs and interests. Space arrangements should be kept simple and free of distractions.

STANDARD 8.1.

The premises and equipment are appropriate for children's needs

A. THE PREMISES ARE ARRANGED TO ACCOMMODATE CHILDREN'S NEED FOR REST

- every playroom has a place where children can rest when they want to
- the garden provides facilities (hammocks, blankets, deckchairs) where children can relax

B. THE PREMISES FACILITATE CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES

- the playroom is divided into several zones equipped with a variety of toys and materials where children can engage in diverse activities as appropriate for their ages and developmental needs
- the premises can be easily re-arranged to address children's current interests
- the premises are arranged to enable children to paint/draw on large surfaces
- the premises are arranged to enable children to play with water
- playroom design elements that are not indented for children are out of children's reach

C. THE PREMISES ARE ARRANGED TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S INDEPENDENCE

- containers with small toys and educational resources are labelled in ways that are understandable to children
- shelves are labelled to show children where to put away things
- the playroom provides a place for children to put their drinking cups aside; the place is accessible to children all day long

- children's own belongings are labelled so that children and staff can identify them
- the setting provides a place to display children's work at the height of their eyes
- every child has his/her own place in the cloakroom to keep a change of clothes
- children have easy access to liquid soap, towels, tissues and bins
- children have opportunities to learn how to put on their own shoes and outdoor coats in the cloakroom
- the setting provides a place where children can put away their own plates after meals

D. EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES ARE DIVERSE AND APPROPRIATE FOR CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS AND CURRENT INTERESTS

- all day long children have access to resources that promote the development of fine and large motor skills
- activity zones are provided with real objects and natural materials
- all equipment is safe and undamaged

E. CHILDREN CAN WATCH THEMSELVES IN A VARIETY OF SITUATIONS

- there is a full-length mirror in the playroom for children to see their full silhouettes
- there is a blank wall in the playroom for shadow play
- the setting displays photographs of children taken during various activities

F. THE PREMISES PROVIDE PRIVACY FOR HYGIENIC PRACTICES

- children can have privacy during intimate cleansing, bathing and nappy changing
- privacy is ensured for children who can use the toilet

G. THERE ARE TECHNICAL FACILITIES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S DIVERSE ACTIVITIES

- the setting provides a place for drying children's wet clothes
- children have special clothes for "wet play"
- there is a storage room for currently unused educational resources

STANDARD 8.2.

THE PREMISES ARE ARRANGED TO CREATE AN ATTRACTIVE AND PLEASANT ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS

A. ROOM COLOURS AND DECORATIONS HELP TO CREATE A QUIET ATMOSPHERE

- rooms are painted with bright soft pastel colours
- excessive wall decorations and extra eye-catching items are avoided
- floors and curtains have a uniform colour scheme (patterns are avoided)

B. THE SETTING MINIMIZES ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE DUE TO ROOM ACOUSTICS AND EQUIPMENT OPERATION

- music is not used as background noise
- the premises contain items that reduce room acoustics (cushions, curtains, perforated tiles, etc.)

C. LIGHTING LEVELS CAN BE ADJUSTED TO VARIOUS ACTIVITIES OF CHILDREN

- rooms have systems to adjust lighting (wall lights, spotlights, dimmers, etc.)
- staff members can use portable lamps

D. STAFF MEMBERS TAKE CARE TO ENSURE GOOD QUALITY OF INDOOR AIR

- rooms are regularly aired
- air ducts are free of obstructions
- chemical air fresheners are not used
- mechanical air purifiers are used when air pollution levels are high

E. THE PREMISES ARE ARRANGED TO ACCOMMODATE ADULTS' NEEDS

- the setting provides a place where adults can sit and talk without children being present
- the setting provides designated places where staff members can leave their personal things
- the bathroom contains lockers for staff
- the setting provides a place where parents can leave their outdoor clothes

STANDARD 8.3.

All children are given opportunities to play in the garden

A. OUTDOOR GARDEN FACILITIES ENABLE CHILDREN TO PURSUE A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES

- as a minimum, the garden has a small hut or shelter for children and a lockable sandpit
- the garden has shaded areas
- drinking water is within easy reach of children in the garden
- garden facilities (ramps, balance boards, crawl tunnels) are provided to develop children's large motor skills
- children can play with water, sand, loose materials, pebbles, sticks, etc.
- non-walking children can move freely in the garden, for example by crawling
- children can run, climb, dig and rake leaves
- children can watch plants, birds and other animals

B. NATURAL FEATURES ARE PRESERVED IN SOME SECTIONS OF THE GARDEN

- the garden has a section that is overgrown with grass
- the garden has a section with unlevel ground (with pits and slopes for climbing)

9

Safety and Preventive Healthcare



Children's healthcare requires action to prevent disease and ensure safety and security in the setting. To this end, preventive healthcare procedures must be established, and immediate steps must be taken to respond to situations where children's and staff members' health is at risk. Staff must also protect children from abuse.

STANDARD 9.1.

Staff members take steps to prevent accidents and know what to do when accidents happen

A. ACCIDENT PREVENTION MEASURES ARE PART OF DAILY ACTIVITIES INVOLVING CHILDREN

- appropriate staff:child ratios are maintained at all times of the day
- parents are aware that they must inform staff members in writing about any issues that are relevant to the safety of children and staff
- staff members make sure that children have no access to hazardous objects, such as hot drinks
- staff members supervise the use of potentially dangerous tools by children

B. STAFF MEMBERS ENSURE THAT THE PREMISES ARE SAFE FOR CHILDREN

- cleaning detergents and other hazardous substances are inaccessible to children
- all electrical sockets are either secured or out of reach of children
- windows are easy to open in emergency situations, but have systems to protect children from stepping or falling out
- curtains/blinds have cords that are out of reach of children
- radiators have protective covers
- furniture corners have protectors
- all heating appliances have temperatures below 50°C
- the water temperature in the bathroom accessible to children is controlled and below 40°C
- rooms accessible to children have an optimum temperature of about 20°C

- rooms accessible to children are protected against overheating both in summer and winter
- children have no access to the kitchen unsupervised
- damaged equipment or resources are promptly removed from children's reach
- keys to emergency doors are accessible to every member of personnel
- rooms accessible to children are supplied with high-quality air

C. THE GARDEN IS ARRANGED TO ENSURE SAFE USE BY CHILDREN

- outdoor security measures prevent children from leaving the setting unattended
- outdoor areas are regularly checked for the presence of dangerous objects

D. ACCIDENT AND FIRE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES ARE IN PLACE

- staff members are trained to provide first aid to children
- additional first aid training is provided at staff's request
- the setting has a written procedure to address accidents involving children or staff members
- staff members know the procedures and know what to do in emergency situations that put children's lives and health at risk
- the setting provides a readily-accessible telephone; staff members have access to the list of emergency phone numbers and parent contact numbers
- a properly equipped first aid box is easily accessible to all members of personnel
- the setting has a written fire emergency procedure

STANDARD 9.2.

The setting complies with preventive healthcare standards

A. THE SETTING ENSURES COMPLIANCE WITH DISEASE PREVENTION STANDARDS

- members of staff do not report for work if their medical condition creates a risk to the health of children and adults in the setting
- the setting accepts only children with up-to-date mandatory vaccination certificates
- the setting has a procedure for situations where a child falls ill; the child's well-being is the primary objective
- parents are provided with a list of medical symptoms that exclude children from attending the setting

B. STAFF MEMBERS ARE FAMILIAR WITH PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE PRACTICES AND SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH PARENTS

- parents have access to books on childhood nutrition, obesity prevention, hygiene and vaccinations
- meetings are organized for staff and parents to discuss childhood preventive healthcare
- staff members talk to parents about appropriate clothes for children, especially about avoiding overheating
- the setting has a procedure for dealing with parasitic diseases

C. THE SETTING ATTENDS TO CHILDREN'S SPECIAL HEALTHCARE NEEDS

- the setting creates individual attendance programmes for children with special healthcare needs in consultation with parents to address children's capabilities
- medication is given to children with special healthcare needs as prescribed by doctors following a written request from parents

D. CHILDREN SPEND TIME OUTDOORS EVERY DAY WHEN SMOG LEVELS ARE NOT TOO HIGH

- children have appropriate clothes to go outside in any kind of weather
- staff members check smog levels before going out; if the level is above the permissible limit, children stay indoors
- children have the right clothes for the current weather conditions
- staff members make sure that children have head and skin protection on very hot days

STANDARD 9.3.

The setting protects children from abuse

A. THE SETTING HAS PROCEDURES FOR THE PRESENCE OF ADULT NON-STAFF MEMBERS ON THE PREMISES

- procedures are in place for collecting children from the setting
- parent contact details are regularly updated
- adult non-staff members entering the setting are screened for security

B. STAFF MEMBERS ARE AWARE OF AND COMPLY WITH PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION AND CHILD IMAGE PROTECTION STANDARDS

- children's photographs can be posted or distributed online only with parents' written consent
- staff members talk to parents about risks involved in posting children's images online
- the setting complies with applicable standards of personal data protection
- staff members do not talk about children or parents in the presence of third persons

C. THE SETTING HAS A POLICY TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM ABUSE

- personnel employment procedures make it obligatory for candidates to provide a disclosure of their criminal record involving sexual offences and violent crime
- staff members' respond to children's behaviour without physical, mental or emotional violence
- staff members are aware of their responsibility for protecting children's rights

D. THE SETTING EDUCATES STAFF MEMBERS AND PARENTS ABOUT CHILD PROTECTION

- staff members and parents have easy access to contact details of child protection agencies and emergency services
- the setting has educational resources available to parents about non-violent parenting and about child protection from violence and abuse
- staff members inform parents about educational opportunities available to improve their parenting skills

10

Management



This area deals with creating appropriate conditions for the management of the setting, which involve ECEC professionalization and continued growth for both the head of the setting and the rest of staff. The responsibility for quality assurance and promotion in the outside world lies with the head (management team, owner) of the setting. Their dedication, openness, consistency and readiness to embrace change will have the greatest impact on the continuing quality improvement of the service.

STANDARD 10.1.

The head of the setting has a vision for the management and growth of the setting; this vision is translated into practice by all members of staff

A. THE HEAD OF THE SETTING HAS MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES AND SKILLS

- learns all the time to enhance his/her managerial expertise and skills
- knows current legislation on ECEC management
- has an established procedure for ECEC management evaluation, accommodating the perspectives of personnel and parents
- has an individual development plan
- has a written job description, outlining his/her competences and responsibilities

B. STAFF MEMBERS AND THE HEAD OF THE SETTING ARE GUIDED BY COMMON VALUES STEMMING FROM THE SETTING'S MISSION, VISION OF THE CHILD AND VISION OF THE PRACTITIONER

- recruitment processes underscore personality traits that help to build good relationships with children
- staff members are aware what behaviour is absolutely unacceptable¹

C. THE SETTING CONDUCTS SERVICE QUALITY EVALUATIONS

- evaluation includes the perspectives of personnel, parents and management
- staff evaluation includes employee self-evaluation

¹ it is a good idea to discuss with the whole team (and perhaps also to write down) what behaviour/words/expressions should never be used in contacts with children and parents

STANDARD 10.2.

Personnel management contributes to employee development and effectiveness

A. THE HEAD OF THE SETTING ORGANIZES AND SUPPORTS THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

- the setting has created competence profiles for adults working with children, complying with the setting's mission, vision of the child and vision of the practitioner
- staff training sessions and performance reviews (supervisions) take place during staff working hours, but not during their contact time with children
- the head of the setting encourages employees to use their own ideas and to share inspirations
- the head of the setting adjusts employees' tasks as their competences increase
- the setting has a support system and induction procedures for new employees
- staff members are encouraged to participate in external training (with logistic or financial assistance)

B. THE SETTING HAS AN AGREED SYSTEM FOR IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING ISSUES

- there are clear rules defining who should be notified of specific issues, and how
- the head of the setting is flexible in addressing sudden staffing changes
- the head of the setting makes sure to adjust tasks to staff members' preferences and abilities

C. THE SETTING MAINTAINS A SYSTEM FOR MONITORING, EVALUATING AND PROMOTING EMPLOYEE ACHIEVEMENTS

- employees know what they are expected to do
- employees get feedback on their performance
- the head of the setting can pinpoint employees' strengths

D. EMPLOYEES AND THE HEAD OF THE SETTING HAVE AGREED COMMUNICATION AND CO-OPERATION STANDARDS

- the head of the setting ensures that applicable policies and procedures are available to staff members and parents
- employees are aware of decision-making standards; they know which decisions can be taken jointly
- regular meetings involving the head of the setting and staff members are scheduled during working hours

STANDARD 10.3.

The head of the setting supports and promotes parental and community involvement

A. THE HEAD OF THE SETTING ENCOURAGES AND CREATES OPPURTINITIES FOR PERSONAL CONTACT WITH PARENTS

The head of the setting:

- makes a point of meeting parents of all children
- talks to parents of new children about how the setting operates
- informs parents how to make individual appointments
- makes an effort to learn about children's family situations

B. THE SETTING HAS ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING PROBLEMS IN RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTS

- parents know what issues should be reported to the head of the setting and what issues are addressed by staff
- the head of the setting uses efficient conflict-solving tools to resolve conflicts between parents and staff

C. THE HEAD OF THE SETTING WORKS WITH THE PARENTS' COUNCIL (IF APPLICABLE)

- standards for working with the Parents' Council are defined in a separate written policy and known to all employees and parents
- the head of the setting supports the activities of the Parents' Council

D. THE HEAD OF THE SETTING WORKS TO ENSURE THE SETTING'S GOOD REPUTATION

- the head of the setting works to ensure that information about the setting is disseminated among parents and members of the local community
- the setting works with other institutions (cultural, social, research institutions, etc.)
- the head of the setting monitors all publicly available information about the setting



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