

# Childminding - Moving On



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## Introduction

The four Dublin City and County Childcare Committees are delighted to produce this Booklet to assist you in providing a quality Childminding service.

As the title indicates this section of the Voluntary Notification Support Pack is a step forward. Having looked at the role and skills of the childminder, the legal aspects of Childminding and the benefits of Voluntary Notification, etc., it is now time to take the next step. It is envisaged these guidelines will provide you with the necessary tools to put together a comprehensive list of policies, thus demonstrating to parents, colleagues and other Childcare services that childminding is a valuable and skilled form of childcare.

In this booklet you will find a checklist for writing policies, as well as some sample policies. These will assist you in writing policies that you could use in your own Childminding service. It is intended that all childminders will put their own perspective on the policies thus making them specific to the service they offer children and parents.

Congratulations and well done on reaching this stage. Should you decide to proceed and become a childminder, it is worth remembering that approximately 80% of Childcare is provided by Childminders.

## Policies and Procedures

Policies are simply your approach or the guiding principles for your childminding service. Written policies put these guidelines into words.

Procedures, on the other hand, are the practical side of policies. These are the actions set in place to deal with and to implement your policy.

By putting your policies and procedures down in writing, you make clear to parents why you run your service as you do. This can help to avoid misunderstandings between parents and childminders. Also, thinking about what you want to write in your policies and procedures can help you to decide how you want to organise your childminding.

Having these written policies and procedures on particular issues made available to parents from the outset of the childminding arrangement, can help ensure there are no misunderstandings.

It is to your advantage to have written policies and procedures in place. It portrays to parents that you have a quality, well-run childminding service.

### Policy writing checklist

Checklist	Tick ✓
• Have you thought about what is suggested in the Voluntary Notification guidelines?	
• Is the language you used clear and easy to understand?	
• Have you included a policy review date?	
• Have you copies of all your policies?	
• Have you signed and dated each policy?	
• Have you asked the parent to sign and date each copy?	
• Have you looked at policies of other Childminders and support agencies?	
• Have you shown your policies to others before deciding on the final version?	
• Is everyone connected to the Childminding service aware of the policies?	

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### The following is a list of sample policies to support Voluntary Notification:

- **Confidentiality Policy**
- **Health and Safety Policies (sick child, nutrition, hygiene)**
- **Child Protection Policy**
- **Fire Safety Policy**
- **Positive Behaviour Policy**
- **Partnership with Parents Policy**
- **Equal Opportunities Policy**

The contents of the above list can vary and, depending on the age group of the children in your service, may need to be expanded.

The following are some samples of policies and procedures which all Childminders can change to meet their needs.

# Sample Confidentiality Policy

All information on children and their families is regarded as confidential.

I will not discuss with anyone else anything told to me in confidence, unless the information given concerns a child protection issue.

**Procedures:**

- I operate a policy of open access and as a parent you have a right to see your child's file.
- You do not, however, have the right to view any other child's file.
- Information will only be shared if the parents give their permission or there appears to be a child protection issue.
- All details will be kept confidential and records will be kept in a safe place.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Childminder's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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### Sample Health and Safety Policy

As a childminder I will ensure that your child is in a safe environment while in my care. I will encourage and promote healthy eating habits and lifestyle.

**Procedures:**

- I have and will maintain an up-to-date knowledge and understanding of safety issues relevant to childcare
- I will adhere to good hygiene practices
- I will be a good role model
- I will regularly carry out a hazard/accident analysis of my home and replace/repair worn or broken furniture or equipment\*
- I will check equipment regularly
- I will teach children how to play safely
- I understand the importance of preventative health measures
- I will complete a First Aid course, and have a fully equipped First Aid box \*\*
- I will keep an accident record book
- All dangerous substances will be stored in a safe place out of reach of children
- I will have readily available all emergency numbers
- I will inform you of all accidents no matter how minor they may seem to be
- Any child suffering from sickness and/or diarrhoea must be clear for 24 hours before returning to the childminding setting.
- Children will be accepted if taking medication provided the medicine administration form is completed and signed\*\*\*

\*See sample Safety Checklist in this pack

\*\*See sample First Aid kit in this pack

\*\*\* See sample Medicine Administration form in this pack

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Childminder's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Sample Child Protection Policy

For a childminder, the welfare of the children always comes first, in accordance with the National Guidelines for Child Protection 'Children First' and 'Our Duty to Care', the principles of good practice for the protection of children and young people.

It is the policy of this childminding service to refer to these guidelines and principles when dealing with issues which may cause concern.

This policy is used in conjunction with the Partnership with Parents Policy, the Positive Behaviour Management Policy and the Confidentiality Policy of this childminding service.

At all times, I will encourage and ensure effective communication with the child's parents/guardians on all matters which may affect the child's wellbeing.

## Dealing with Disclosures

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse:

- I will stay calm, listen to the child and reassure him/her.
- I will not ask leading questions, I will not promise to keep secrets.
- I will record in the child's own words any disclosure and discuss this with the parents/guardians, *unless to do so could further endanger the child.*
- If needs be, I will then follow the reporting procedures outlined below.

## Reporting Procedure

If there is a reason to be concerned about a child in relation to a suspicion of abuse, I will take the following steps:

- Record and date the concern or suspicion of abuse in a file, which is to be kept confidential and stored separately. I will then discuss this with the child's parents/guardians, *unless this could endanger the child further.*
- Observe and keep a record if there are any further causes for concern.
- Without naming anyone, ring the Duty social Worker for advice. *Phone no.:*
- If advised to do so, make a formal complaint on the Standard Reporting Form provided and forward to the Duty Social worker in the child's area.
- In emergency situations, contact the local Garda Station.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Childminder's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



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### Sample Fire Safety Policy

It is the policy of this Childminding service to keep all children safe from fire.

**Procedures:**

- I will adhere to all recommendations in the Department of the Environment's, Fire Safety in Pre-Schools Booklet.\*
- I will take all reasonable precautions to prevent the outbreak of fire.
- I have the following fire safety equipment in place and check it regularly:
  1. Smoke Alarms on each floor level
  2. Fire Blanket
  3. Fire extinguisher
- There is a no-smoking policy in my home
- I operate good house-keeping policies and thereby reduce the risk of fire.
- All means of escape are kept free from obstruction.
- I have developed a fire drill for my home. I have also informed all replacement childminders of the fire drill.\*\*
- I will practice my fire drill with all the children in my care.

\* see Bibliography in this section for further information.

\*\* See sample fire drill in this pack

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Childminder's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Sample Positive Behaviour Policy

As a Childminder, I fully respect the role of the parents in disciplining their child. While the child is in my care I will ensure that he/she is nurtured and cherished in order to ensure he/she reaches his/her full potential. Any behaviour that needs to be addressed will be done in a way that demonstrates respect for the child and his/her stage of development.

### Procedures :

- I will praise children for positive behaviour.
- I will explain the rules. For example, we don't push because someone might fall and get hurt. I will provide clear limits and boundaries to a child's behaviour.
- I will use positive statements.
- I will distract a child rather than confronting him/her about the behaviour.
- I will talk about the problem as this may help older children to express their feelings calmly.
- Any behaviour that needs to be changed will be changed in a way that demonstrates respect for the child and his/her stage of development.
- I will use substitution, which will allow your child to continue the behaviour in a different place or with a different implement. For example, your child may be given the choice to continue hammering but not with something that is liable to break. Or he/she may be told that he/she can play ball but not inside.
- I will provide experiences, that the child finds interesting.
- I will show a child that I care for him/her despite lapses in his/her behaviour.
- I will always supervise your child while he/she is in my care. This will help avoid misunderstandings and unwanted behaviour taking place.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Childminder's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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### Sample Partnership with Parents Policy

I believe that all children in my care will benefit most when parents and I work in partnership. Parents are at all times welcome in my home to see how their child is progressing.

**Procedures:**

- I will have regular discussions with the parent in relation to their child's well being.
- Parents will be invited to come into my home and see how their child is progressing.
- When appropriate I will ask parents if they would like to become involved in some activities that I will be carrying out with the children.
- I recognise that parents are the primary caregivers and acknowledge their role.
- Parents will be kept up to date of any relevant changes in home or working arrangements. I also request that parents inform me of any relevant changes.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Childminder's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Sample Equal Opportunities Policy

This Childminding service actively promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practices for all children, and their families in my care.

**Procedures:**

- I will make sure that I treat all children with equal concern and respect.
- I will ensure that all equipment, reading material, etc., reflects the belief of equality of opportunity for all.
- I will ensure that stereotyping or discrimination is not allowed to go unchecked.
- I will respect difference and promote a positive attitude to others.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Childminder's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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### Garda Vetting

There is a requirement under the **Child Care (Pre-school Services) (no2) Regulations 2006 and Child Care (Pre-school Services) (no 2) (Amendment) Regulations 2006** that all staff, students and volunteers who have access to children should be Garda Vetted.

Childminders who are required by law to notify the HSE are bound by the above regulations along with all other pre-school service providers.

Childminders who are not required by law to notify the HSE may voluntarily notify the existence of the service, if they wish.

The Barnardos Vetting Service has been funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. It is assisting in the processing of Garda Vetting applications and providing training for a number of childcare providers who are not directly registered with the Central Vetting Unit and who are not members of the National Children's Nurseries Association or the Irish Pre-school Playgroups Association.

**(Members of the IPPA and NCNA should access vetting through their own association.)**

The Barnardos Vetting Service will process vetting applications free of charge for staff, volunteers and students in pre-school services who are not members of the IPPA or the NCNA.

It will also provide access to training throughout the Republic of Ireland free of charge for any pre-school service (childminder, nursery, Montessori, crèche, etc.) that is not a member of the Irish Pre-School Play Association or the National Children's Nurseries Association.

It is currently taking enquiries from childcare providers (childminders, creches, nurseries, etc.) and has been rolling out the training programme and processing the vetting applications on a national basis.

Individual childminders wishing to avail of the Barnardos Vetting Service should in the first instance contact Barnardos as per the contact details below and the next steps will be explained.

Suzanne Tompkin / Liam O'Mahony:

Telephone: 021 4547060 Email: [vetting@barnardos.ie](mailto:vetting@barnardos.ie)

Post: Barnardos Vetting Service  
The Bowling Green  
White Street  
Cork

Following registration with the Barnardos Vetting Service, they will then be invited by Barnardos to attend the next available training session in their locality at which the legislation and the process will be explained and the Vetting Application Form issued.

Alternatively, in instances where training is being provided in conjunction with Childcare Committees they will be notified of the event by the regional childcare committee through their normal communications links.

There is no charge to child care providers for either accessing the Barnardos Vetting Service training or for processing vetting applications.

# Check list of Documents Required for Voluntary Notification

## Written Policy and Procedure List:

- Confidentiality Policy
- Health and Safety Policies (sick child, nutrition, hygiene)
- Safety Statement
- Child Protection Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Positive Discipline Policy
- Partnership with Parents Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy

## Records:

- Daily Attendance Record
- Child Information Record
- Daily Routine Record
- Menu Plan
- Accident and Incident forms
- Medicine Administration/Consent Form
- Consent for Medical Treatment

## Back-up Information Required:

- Written References X 2
- Copy of First-Aid certificate
- Appropriate insurance cover
- Copy of fire safety procedures, including an evacuation plan
- Letter supporting Garda Vetting

***At all times during the Self-Evaluation process, the Childminding Advisory Officer with the City/County Childcare Committees is available to offer support and assistance in preparing and developing the recordkeeping, policies and other back-up information required to be a Voluntary Notified Childminder.***

## Contact List

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### City/County Childcare Committees

#### Dublin City Childcare Committee Ltd.

Office 2.13 Distillers Building  
Smithfield  
Dublin 7

Tel: 01 873 3696  
Fax: 01 873 4488  
Email: [info@dccc.ie](mailto:info@dccc.ie)  
Web: [www.childcareonline.ie](http://www.childcareonline.ie)

#### Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Childcare Committee

5A Woodpark  
Sallynoggin  
Co. Dublin

Tel: 01 2368030  
Fax: 01-236 8012  
Email: [info@dlrcountychildcare.ie](mailto:info@dlrcountychildcare.ie)  
Web: [www.dlrcountychildcare.ie](http://www.dlrcountychildcare.ie)

#### Fingal County Childcare Committee

Abco Kovex Building  
Swords Business Park  
Swords  
Fingal  
Co Dublin

Tel: 01 807 7660  
Fax: 01-807 7669  
Email: [info@fingalcountychildcare.ie](mailto:info@fingalcountychildcare.ie)  
Web: [www.fingalcountychildcare.ie](http://www.fingalcountychildcare.ie)

#### South County Dublin Childcare Committee

Civic Offices  
Ninth Lock Road  
Clondalkin  
Dublin 22

Tel: 01-4570122  
Fax: 01-457 0322  
Email: [info@southdublinchildcare.ie](mailto:info@southdublinchildcare.ie)  
Web: [www.southdublinchildcare.ie](http://www.southdublinchildcare.ie)

### Local Childcare Resource Services

#### Dublin North West

Dublin North West Local Childcare Resource Service  
Ballymun Whitehall Area Partnership  
North Mall

Ballymun Town Centre  
Dublin 11  
Tel: 01 8423612  
Fax: 01 8427004  
Email: [childcareinfo@ballymun.org](mailto:childcareinfo@ballymun.org)

#### Dublin North Central

North Central Local Childcare Resource Service  
Northside Partnership  
Coolock Development Centre

Bunratty Drive  
Coolock  
Dublin 17  
Tel: 01 8485630  
Fax: 01 8485661  
Email: [info@childcarebureau.ie](mailto:info@childcarebureau.ie)

#### Dublin South Central

South Central Local Childcare Resource Service  
Ballyfermot/Chapelizod Partnership  
4 Drumfinn Park

Ballyfermot  
Dublin 10  
Tel: 01 6235612  
Fax: 01 6230922  
Email: [childcare@ballyfermotpartnership.ie](mailto:childcare@ballyfermotpartnership.ie)

#### Dublin South East

South East Local Childcare Resource Service  
Rathmines Pembroke Community Partnership  
11 Wynnefield Road

Rathmines  
Dublin 6  
Tel: 01 4965558  
Fax: 01 4965590  
Email: [teresa@rpcp.ie](mailto:teresa@rpcp.ie)

**Dublin Central**

Central Local Childcare Resource Service  
Tolka Area Partnership  
27/28 Annamoe Terrace  
Cabra  
Dublin 7  
Tel: 01 8683806  
Fax: 01 8686134  
Email: crs@tap.ie

**Pre-School Officers****Dublin North**

Teresa Farrell  
The Cottage  
2 Church Road  
Swords  
Co. Dublin  
Tel: 01 8402835  
Teresa.farrell3@hse.ie

**Dublin North West**

Maire Farrell  
Community Services  
Rathdown Road  
Dublin 7  
Tel: 01 8825164  
Maire.farrell@nahb.ie

**Dublin North Central**

Carmel Murrin  
Community Services  
Rathdown Road  
Dublin 7  
Tel: 01 8825164  
Carmel.murrin@nahb.ie

**Dublin West**

Michelle Corcoran  
Cherry Orchard  
Ballyfermot  
Dublin 10

**South Dublin (South County Dublin and Wicklow)**

Loughlinstown Health Centre  
Loughlinstown Drive  
Loughlinstown  
Dublin 18  
Catherine Fenton  
Tel: 01 2822122  
catherine.fenton@maild.hse.ie

**South Dublin**

Deirdre Kelleher  
The Maltings Business Park  
54-55 Marrowbone Lane  
Dublin 8  
Tel: 01 454 4733

**Local Health Offices****Dublin North City**

Cromcastle Road  
Coolock  
Dublin 5  
Tel: 01 816 4200

**Dublin North Central**

Ballymun Health Centre  
Dublin 9  
Tel: 01 846 7000

**Dublin North West**

Rathdown Road  
Dublin 7  
Tel: 01 882 5000

**Dublin South City**

21-25 Lord Edward Street  
Dublin 2  
Tel: 01 648 6500

**Dublin South East**

Vergemount Hall  
Clonskeagh  
Dublin 6  
Tel: 01 268 0500



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### Dublin South West

Old County Road  
Crumlin  
Dublin 12  
Tel: 01 268 0300

### Dublin West

Cherry Orchard Hospital  
Ballyfermont  
Dublin 10  
Tel: 01 620 6300

### Dun Laoghaire

Tivoli Road  
Dun Laoghaire  
Co. Dublin  
Tel: 01 236 5200

## Local Revenue Offices

<http://www.revenue.ie>

### Fingal

Block D  
Ashtown Gate  
Navan Road  
Dublin 15  
Tel: 01-8277000

### Dun Laoghaire/ Rathdown

Lansdowne House  
Lansdowne Road  
Dublin 4  
Tel: 01 632 9400

### City Centre

9/15 Upper O'Connell Street  
Dublin 1  
Tel: 01-865 5000

### South City

85-93 Lower Mount Street  
Dublin 2  
Tel: 01-647 4000

### North City

9/15 Upper O'Connell Street  
Dublin 1  
Tel: 01-865 5000

### South County

Plaza Complex  
Belgard Road  
Tallaght  
Dublin 24  
Tel: 01-647 0700

## Parent Resources

### Barnardos

Christchurch Square  
Dublin 8  
Tel: +353 (01) 453 0355  
Email: [info@barnardos.ie](mailto:info@barnardos.ie)  
Web: <http://www.barnardos.ie>

### IPPA, the Early Childhood Organisation

Unit 4  
Broomhill Business Complex  
Broomhill Road  
Tallaght  
Dublin 24  
Tel: 01 4630010  
Email: [info@ippa.ie](mailto:info@ippa.ie)  
Web: <http://www.ippa.ie>

## Childminder Resources

### Childminding Ireland, The National Childminding Association of Ireland Ltd.

9 Bulford Business Campus  
Kilcoole  
Co. Wicklow  
Tel: 01 287 8466  
Email: [info@childminding.ie](mailto:info@childminding.ie)  
Web: <http://childminding.ie>

### National Children's Nurseries Association

Unit 12C  
Bluebell Business Park  
Old Naas Road  
Bluebell  
Dublin 12  
Tel: 00353 01 460 1138  
Email: [info@ncna.ie](mailto:info@ncna.ie)  
Web: <http://www.ncna.ie>

### **National Qualifications Association of Ireland**

5th Floor Jervis House  
Jervis Street  
Dublin 1  
Tel: +353 1 887 1500  
Email: [info@nqai.ie](mailto:info@nqai.ie)  
Web: <http://www.nqai.ie>

### **Forbairt Naionrai Teoranta**

7 Cearnóg Mhuirfean  
Baile Átha Cliath 2  
Tel: 01 477 3151  
Email: [eolas@naionrai.ie](mailto:eolas@naionrai.ie)  
Web: <http://www.naionrai.ie>

## **Other Resources**

### **POBAL**

Holbrook House  
Holles Street  
Dublin 2  
Tel: 01-2400700  
Email: [enquiries@pobal.ie](mailto:enquiries@pobal.ie)  
Web: <http://www.pobal.ie>

### **Food Safety Authority of Ireland**

Abbey Court  
Lower Abbey Street  
Dublin 1  
Tel: + 353 1 817 1300  
Email: [info@fsai.ie](mailto:info@fsai.ie)  
Web: <http://www.fsai.ie>

### **Department of Children and Youth Affairs**

43 Mespil Road  
Dublin 4  
Tel: +353 1 6473000  
Fax: +353 1 6473101  
E-mail: [omc@dcya.gov.ie](mailto:omc@dcya.gov.ie)  
Web: [www.dcya.ie](http://www.dcya.ie)

## **Citizens Information Board**

Web: <http://citizeninformation.ie>  
Tel: 1890 777 121

### **City Centre**

13A Upper O'Connell Street  
Dublin 1  
Co. Dublin  
Tel: +353 1 809 0633  
Email: [Citycentre1@citinfo.ie](mailto:Citycentre1@citinfo.ie)

### **Swords**

Unit 26  
The Plaza  
Main Street  
Fingal  
Swords  
Co. Dublin  
Tel: +353 1 840 6877  
Email: [Swords@citinfo.ie](mailto:Swords@citinfo.ie)

### **Dun Laoghaire**

85/86 Patrick Street  
Dun Laoghaire  
Co. Dublin  
Tel: +353 1 284 4544  
Email: [dunlaoghaire@citinfo.ie](mailto:dunlaoghaire@citinfo.ie)

### **Dublin North West**

7 Main Street  
Finglas  
Dublin 11  
Co. Dublin  
Tel: +353 1 864 3326  
Email: [finglas@citinfo.ie](mailto:finglas@citinfo.ie)

## **Health and Safety Authority**

The Metropolitan Building  
James Joyce Street  
Dublin 1  
Tel: 1890 289 389  
Email: [wcu@hsa.ie](mailto:wcu@hsa.ie)  
Web: <http://www.hsa.ie/eng/>

### Bibliography

Dept. of Environment and Local Government. (1999) *Fire Safety in Pre-Schools*. Dublin: Dept. of Environment and Local Government. Available online from:  
<http://www.environ.ie/en/Publications/LocalGovernment/FireandEmergencyServices/FileDownload,1027,en.pdf>

Fingal County Childcare Committee. (2007)(2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.) *Opening A Childcare Service*. Dublin: Fingal County Childcare Committee

Hobart, C., and Frankel, J. (1996)(2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.) *A Practical Guide to Working with Young Children*. Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes

Galway County Childcare Committee. (2007) *Childminders Support Pack*. Galway: Galway County Childcare Committee

French, G. (2003)(2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.) *Supporting Quality: Guidelines for Best Practice in Early Childhood*. Dublin: Barnardos Publishing.

Hobart, C., and Frankel, J. (2003). *Childminding - A Guide to Good Practice*. Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes

## Notes

Notes



**Dublin City**

CHILDCARE COMMITTEE LTD

COISTE CÚRAM LEANAÍ CHATHAIR DUBLIN

**Dublin City Childcare Committee Ltd.**

Office 2.13 Distillers Building  
Smithfield  
Dublin 7

Tel: 01 873 3696  
Fax: 01 873 4488  
Email: [info@dccc.ie](mailto:info@dccc.ie)  
Web: [www.childcareonline.ie](http://www.childcareonline.ie)



**Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown  
County Childcare Committee**

**Dún Laoghaire Rathdown  
County Childcare Committee Ltd.**

5a Woodpark  
Sallynoggin  
Co. Dublin

Tel: 01 236 8030  
Fax: 01 236 8012  
Email: [info@dlrcountychildcare.ie](mailto:info@dlrcountychildcare.ie)  
Web: [www.dlrcountychildcare.ie](http://www.dlrcountychildcare.ie)



**FINGAL COUNTY  
CHILDCARE COMMITTEE**

COISTE CÚRAM LEANAÍ CHONTAE FINE GALL

**Fingal County Childcare Committee Ltd.**

Abco Kovex Building  
Swords Business Park  
Swords  
Fingal  
Co Dublin

Tel: 01 807 7660  
Fax: 01 807 7669  
Email: [info@fingalcountychildcare.ie](mailto:info@fingalcountychildcare.ie)  
Web: [www.fingalcountychildcare.ie](http://www.fingalcountychildcare.ie)



**south dublin county  
CHILDCARE  
COMMITTEE**

**South Dublin County Childcare Committee Ltd.**

C6 Clondalkin Civic Offices  
Ninth Lock Road  
Clondalkin  
Dublin 22

Tel: 01 457 0122  
Fax: 01 457 0322  
Email: [info@southdublinchildcare.ie](mailto:info@southdublinchildcare.ie)  
Web: [www.southdublinchildcare.ie](http://www.southdublinchildcare.ie)



Ofíóg an Aire Leanaí  
agus Gnóthaí Óige  
Office of the Minister for  
Children and Youth Affairs



**pobal**  
supporting communities