



Guidelines for Private ECCD Centres

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FOREWORD

The most important period in the life span of an individual is the period from conception up to the first 6 years, as growth and development during this period lays the foundation for future development. Growth during the first three years of life is very rapid and it is also the period of greatest sensitivity to environmental influences.

In these early years, brain development is critical and most susceptible to both positive and negative influences. The loving care and nurture children receive in their first years – or the lack of these critical experiences - leaves lasting imprints on young minds. Although learning takes place all throughout life, during early childhood the brain is taking shape with a speed that will never be equalled again.

Early Childhood Care and Development is an integral part of education and represents the first essential step in achieving the goals of basic education and any efforts towards enhancing the quality of education in general. Care and education in this period of life considerably influences learning capacity and value orientations of children. Research evidence suggests that quality early childhood services can make a difference to critically important issues such as learning under-achievement, class repetition, school dropouts, drug abuse and rising crime among young people. It is in this critical period that children should be provided stimulation and experience that would contribute to their holistic development.

Learning to understand oneself and the world around constitute an important aspect of learning at this stage. However, the idea is not to push children before they are developmentally ready to do what they need to do. Children do not need to be forced to learn; they are motivated by their own desire to make sense of their world. Knowledge is not something that is given to children as though they were empty vessels to be filled. Children acquire knowledge about the physical and social worlds in which they live through playful interaction with objects and people. Therefore, the care and education provided in the ECCD centre is essentially learning through play and developing learning skills.

1. GENERAL GUIDELINES

1.1. Purpose of ECCD Centres

The purpose of the guidelines is to provide proprietors and heads of Private ECCD centres with information and knowledge required for the establishment and operation of early childhood centres.

1.2. Objectives of ECCD Centres

All Private ECCD Centres should be operated with the objectives to provide care and stimulation to young children, above 3 years and below 6 years of age, following developmentally appropriate principles and practices within the Bhutanese cultural context.

Programmes shall be based on the concept of holistic development. By applying the holistic approach, centres are expected to carry out activities designed not only to prepare children's readiness for learning at school, but also to teach them social values and skills to lead a happy and harmonious life in society.

1.3. Thrust Areas

All Early Private ECCD Centres are required to design and carry out activities to ensure children's safety and to promote their health and development. A young child's development can be categorized into the following areas as per early learning and development standards of Bhutan:

1.3.1. Physical Well Being, Health and Motor Development

Physical Well-Being, Health, and Motor Development, consists of five sub-domains:

- Motor Development
- Physical Development
- Health and Personal Care
- Nutrition and Feeding
- Safety

1.3.2. Emotional and social development

Social and emotional development involves the acquisition of a set of skills. Key amongst them are the ability to:

- identify and understand one's own feelings,
- accurately read and comprehend emotional states in others,
- manage strong emotions and their expression in a constructive manner,
- regulate one's own behavior,
- develop empathy for others, and
- establish and sustain relationships.

1.3.3. Language / communication: Communication, Language and Literacy is made up of the following aspects:

- **Language for Communication** – is about how children become communicators. Learning to listen and speak emerges out of non-verbal communication, which includes facial expression, eye contact and hand gesture. These skills develop as children interact with others, listen to and use language, extend their vocabulary and experience stories, songs, poems and rhymes.
- **Language for Thinking** – is about how children learn to use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences and how they use talk to clarify their thinking and ideas or to refer to events they have observed or are curious about.
- **Linking Sounds and Letters** – is about how children develop the ability to distinguish between sounds and become familiar with rhyme, rhythm and alliteration. They develop understanding of the correspondence between spoken and written sounds and learn to link sounds and letters and use their knowledge to read and write simple words by sounding out and blending.
- **Reading** – is about children understanding and enjoying stories, books and rhymes, recognizing that print carries meaning, both fiction and fact, and reading a range of familiar words and simple sentences.
- **Writing** – is about how children build an understanding of the relationship between the spoken and written word and how through making marks, drawing and personal writing children ascribe meaning to text and attempt to write for various purposes.
- **Handwriting** – is about the ways in which children's random marks, lines and drawings develop and form the basis of recognizable letters.

1.3.4. Approaches Toward Learning

All children, regardless of innate abilities or the presence of disabilities are able to learn and be successful. How a child acquires and understands knowledge and applies that

knowledge in meaningful ways depends upon the child's unique approach to learning. How a child approaches learning is influenced by the following:

- openness to and curiosity about new tasks and challenges,
- willingness to take initiative,
- ability for task persistence and attentiveness,
- reflection and interpretation of experiences, imagination, creativity and problem solving skills,
- individual temperament, and
- family and community support for curiosity and children's autonomy.

Each young child's approaches toward learning are unique. Cultural background and experiences contribute to a child's approach to tasks. A well-planned learning environment, carefully designed activities, and positive teacher/child interactions support children's willingness to explore their environment, try new experiences and gain persistence in completing projects. Adults must insure that every child has the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills to a new level of mastery.

1.3.5. Cognition and General Knowledge

Cognition is how we learn, know, and remember. It involves the thinking skills that children use to make sense of all the general knowledge that they acquire. Among the most basic cognitive skills are perception, attention, imitation, and memory.

General knowledge has two components. One component is details about the world in which we live, such as, "The sky has clouds." An important part of process knowledge that contributes to learning is the idea that a process conducted twice in the same way will have the same result.

Cognitive skills and general knowledge are building blocks for school readiness. Cognitive development, along with language and social emotional development, predicts academic outcomes. Readiness checklists include many items that educators and family members may think of as a single skill, such as naming colors.

1.3.6. Spiritual, Moral and Cultural Development: Spiritual development can be promoted through;

- Fostering high self-esteem by encouraging children to take risks or face challenges in their learning within a secure and positive environment.

- Appreciation for work of the child's imagination and provide opportunities for them to use their own creativity and imagination;
- Offering opportunities for aesthetic experience in art, music, dance, and literature.
- Making time for quiet reflection which may lead to children coming to the threshold of prayer.
- Developing good listening skills in the children, showing that it is not always possible to provide an absolute answer.

Moral development is concerned with:

- Developing the child's awareness and understanding of the moral code of the communities in which they live
- Helping the child to realize that to enjoy rights we have to accept responsibilities.
- Developing the child's understanding of why rules are necessary.
- Developing the child's self-discipline so that rules are observed as a point of principle and not out of fear
- Giving the child the knowledge and ability to question and to reason so that they are capable of deciding on the most appropriate action after considering the consequences of an action.
- Developing the skills necessary to explain their own behaviour.
- Valuing physical well being, privacy, feelings, beliefs and rights of others.

Children need to be stressed on the importance of

- Telling the truth
- Keeping promises
- Respecting the rights and property of others
- Being considerate to one another
- Caring for those who are less fortunate
- Accepting responsibility for one's own actions
- Self discipline

Cultural Development

Cultural Development can be promoted through:

- Exposing children to a wealth of stimuli from their own culture and those of others. This can be taught through celebration of festivals, art and Music. Visits to the neighbourhood will support learning of their culture.
- Encouraging participation in and appreciation of the wealth of cultural traditions and the beliefs associated with these

- Encouraging tolerance and appreciation of the beliefs, value and customs of different cultures.

2. STAFF

2.1. General: All staff members should be of good character and possess adequate knowledge and education, training experience, and skills to perform essential functions of the job as Facilitators at the centre.

2.2. Each staff member should:

- Demonstrate the ability to love and talk with children
- Demonstrate the ability to perform essential job functions;
- Recognize and act to correct hazards to physical safety, both indoors and outdoors;
- Demonstrate good judgment to ensure children's health and safety

2.3. Restrictions

2.3.1. The centre is restricted from knowingly employing a person who has pending charges, has entered a plea of guilty or has been convicted of;

- Any criminal activity involving violence against a person;
- Child abuse, neglect or exploitation;
- Possession, sale or distribution of illegal drugs;
- Sexual misconduct;
- An act of gross irresponsibility or disregard for the safety of others or a pattern of criminal activity.

2.3.2. Any staff whose health or behaviour could endanger the health, safety, or well being of children is prohibited from the centre premises and contact with children in care of the centre.

2.3.3. Any staff under the effect of alcohol, illegal drugs, or medication that impairs functioning is prohibited from providing childcare services.

2.3.4. The number of children in one group should be limited to 15 in order to facilitate staff- child interaction and constructive activity among children. Each group of 15 should be assigned with one Facilitator.

2.3.5. Each qualified Facilitator must be assisted by a staff aid.

2.4. Staff Responsibilities

2.4.1. The Proprietor

The proprietor of the centre is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the centre meets the minimum requirements in all respects.
- Hiring quality staff.
- Ensuring that the staff- children ratio of 1:15 is strictly adhered to.
- Obtaining and documenting 2 references including one from the applicant's most recent employer, prior to employment of staff, where applicable.
- Taking necessary actions in case of staff misconduct.
- Providing training opportunities for staff members, especially those who have no previous experience of working with young children.
- Maintaining the quality of care and education as per the minimum requirements.

2.4.2. The Head of the Centre

The Head of the centre is responsible for:

- Ensuring the safety, health and well being of children during the hours of operation:
- Supervising staff.
- Maintaining communication with the proprietor including, reporting cases of staff misconduct.
- Being present at least 80 percent of operating hours for the day to day operation of the centre.
- Assisting the proprietor in selecting and hiring staff.
- Appointing a staff member to take responsibilities for the operation of the centre in his/ her absence and posting that person's name in a conspicuous place.
- Reporting suspected child abuse, neglect or informing the proprietor of the centre.
- Maintaining communication with parents.
- Contacting parents when any change or abnormality is found in a child's behaviour.
- Providing parents with information about sound child care practices.
- Planning and carrying out meeting and events to involve parents in the management and operation of the centre.

2.4.3. The Facilitators

Facilitators, staff who provide care and facilitate children's learning at the centre, are responsible for:

- Providing nurturing care for children.
- Facilitating children's play and learning.
- Planning and implementing daily schedules and learning programmes.
- Creating conducive learning environments.
- Ensuring that children are safe and have an sense of security at all times.
- Observing children's behaviour and reporting any change or abnormality found in children's behaviour to the head of the centre.
- Preparing and documenting records of children's learning and development.
- Reporting suspected child abuse, neglect or exploitation to the head of the centre.
- Reporting any case of accidents and injuries, while in her care, to the Head of the centre and parents.

3. PHYSICAL FACILITIES AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

3.1. Location

3.1.1. The centre should be away from industries and factories that produce noise, smoke and pollution. This is to ensure children's safety, security and health.

3.1.2. The main entrance / exit should not be located on the main road to avoid traffic accidents and congestions.

3.2. Buildings

3.2.1. The centre's buildings should ideally be self-owned. However, in case it is on lease, the lease should be valid for minimum duration of five years starting from the first year of the operation of the centre.

3.2.2. The buildings can be up to three levels. However, only the ground and first floors can be used for the operation of the centre. The top floor can be utilized as office for the centre, or residence of staff.

3.3. Water and Sanitation

3.3.1. Safe drinking water must be available during the hours of operation of the centre.

3.3.2. Toileting and hand washing facilities should:

- Be located in the same building
- Be easily accessible to children and staff. A minimum of one toilet and one sink should be available for every 15 children.
- Have operable flushing toilets and hand sinks in good state.
- Be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition with adequate ventilation.
- Contain toilet paper within easy reach of children.
- Have hand sinks with safe water;
- Be equipped with soap for hand –washing, clean towels, and waste containers within easy access of children.

3.4. Indoor Space

3.4.1. The centre must have structurally sound interior and exterior in good state: for example, walls and ceilings are free from holes and peeling paper and paint.

3.4.2. The centre must have a minimum indoor play space of **1.5** square metres of floor area per child for routine use. The areas not counted in determining the indoor play space are:

- Bathrooms, kitchens and hallways;
- Office, staffroom and work rooms;
- Rooms used for the care of sick children;
- Rooms/space for children's rest and nap;
- Storage, closets and supply rooms; and basement areas.

3.4.3. There should be a room available for every group of 15 children. If a large room needs to be used by more than one group, a proper partition should be established.

3.4.4. No room should be routinely occupied by more children than can be comfortably accommodated.

3.4.5. Each room should have at least one window to receive natural lighting and ventilation.

3.4.6. Lighting levels should be kept bright enough to accommodate activities with comfort and to allow the Facilitators to see children's facial features at all times. Rooms should not be painted in dark colors, such as black. Graffiti, if painted on walls could be traditional Bhutanese art rather than cartoon and fairy tale characters.

3.4.7. There should be a room or space in which children who become sick can be separated from other children and take a rest until any proper action is taken. The room/ space should be equipped with a minimum of three sets of clean mat, sheet, and blanket for every 15 children.

3.4.8. There should be a room or space for children to comfortably rest and /or nap. Clean mats, sheets and blankets should be available. The room can be the same as the one for sick children, as long as the room is not overcrowded.

3.4.9. There should be a safe place to keep children's personal belongings.

3.4.10. Railings should be put on stairways of three or more steps both inside and outside.

3.4.11. Floors must be kept free of broken tile, torn carpet, and holes.

3.4.12. Floors must be maintained clean free of broken glass or other hazards.

3.4.13. Rooms for children should always be kept warm with safe and proper heating or cooling system.

3.5. Outdoor Space

3.5.1. The centre must have a minimum outdoor play space of **50 square metres** for every group of 15 children for routine use by children.

3.5.2. There should be sufficient trees to give shades to and grassy areas for children's safe play. Trees, plants and flowers should be well maintained.

3.5.3. The centre's overall compound should be enclosed by a fence.

3.6. Learning and Psycho-social Environment

Learning within the centre should take place with respect to each child's capabilities, careful guidance and promotion of a sense of autonomy, self confidence and initiative as children at this age not only make progress in cognitive, psycho-motor and language areas, but also continue to expand their repertoire of social and moral behaviour and personality characteristics. The centre should have the following:

3.6.1. The overall environment should make children be able to experience a sense of joy, safety, love and acceptance, and freedom that is necessary for them to learn actively.

3.6.2. Children and parents should greeted cordially and spoken to as appropriate, both at arrival and departure.

3.6.3. The environment should be free from threats such as those posed by a cane, giving instructions in a loud and harsh voice or expecting complete silence.

3.6.4. Individual differences in needs, interests and behaviours exhibited by children are understood and respected.

3.6.5. Children are provided freedom and opportunities to engage in activities preferred and chosen by them.

3.6.6. Children are provided with activities that can be mastered with a certain amount of effort and subsequently experience the joy of success.

3.6.7. Children are helped to move away from depending on others to attend to simple tasks such as washing hands and feet, putting on clothes and shoes, etc., and encouraged to do things by themselves willingly, joyfully and with a sense of dignity.

3.6.8. Children are encouraged to express and develop their individual talents.

3.6.9. On appropriate occasions, children's works are appreciated, encouraged and given recognition so as to build up their self confidence, self-respect and sense of achievement.

- 3.6.10. In disciplining children, criticism and punishment are avoided and children's attention is diverted away from the problem to an acceptable form of behaviour.
- 3.6.11. Self discipline that arises as a result of engaging in self-motivated and entertaining activities is encouraged.
- 3.6.12. Ample opportunity is provided for children to play together, help each other, share resources and respect ideas and needs expressed by other children.
- 3.6.13. Children are encouraged to address each other cordially, to express their ideas and engage in child-to-child conversation.
- 3.6.14. Children are helped to get accustomed to having their meals in a way that fulfills not only their nutritional requirements but also builds up good eating habits and manners.
- 3.6.15. Children are encouraged to participate in activities in a way that brings out the need for cleanliness, orderliness and safety.
- 3.6.16. Children are encouraged to build up a sense of ownership, belongingness and mutual responsibility.
- 3.6.17. Facilitators/ caregivers are aware of matters concerning children's safety and well being.
- 3.6.18. Facilitators/ caregivers do not engage in comparing children in the presence of other children or parents.
- 3.6.19. Facilitators/ caregivers evaluate, appreciate and encourage efforts made by each individual child.
- 3.6.20. Parents are made to feel free to offer assistance in daily activities such as preparing and organizing learning materials, telling stories to children, teaching songs and rhymes.
- 3.6.21. Children have opportunities to attend and observe family events and local festivals and learn about their tradition and culture through them.
- 3.6.22. Children are taken for outings to familiarize with the local environment and its resources and workings, if it is safe and convenient to do.

4. SAFETY MEASURES

4.1. General

4.1.1. The centre must ensure that there is always staff to supervise children, to ensure children's safety. Children must never be left unsupervised.

4.1.2. Dangerous objects should be kept out of children's reach; For instance, kerosene, medicines, knives, open fires, immersion rods, electric sockets, bukhari, and alcohol.

4.1.3. Drains, septic tanks, manholes and ditches in the centre's compound should be covered.

4.1.4. There should be no electrical poles in the compound.

4.1.5. The centre should have at least one fire extinguisher and/or water hoses.

4.1.7. The centre must have at least two exits to the outside that are located in different parts of each building.

4.1.6. Exits must never be blocked by equipment, furniture, or other objects.

4.2. Supervision of Children:

4.2.1. The centre must ensure that:

- All children are supervised at all times
- Every child is assigned to a staff member who is aware of the details of his/her habits/ interest, and special needs, if any.
- Children are not allowed in the kitchen except as part of a planned, supervised learning activity.
- When the centre provides or arranges activities off the premises, a staff member is with each group of children and appropriate staff ratio maintained.
- At nap time when children are resting quietly, at least one staff person is within sight and hearing of children.

4.2.2. Staff members are required to:

- Be able to provide immediate intervention if needed.
- Know the whereabouts of each child at all times and the nature of his or her activities; and provide supervision when children are playing outside.

4.3. Emergency Preparedness.

4.3.1. An operable direct – line telephone should be available and located within the facility.

4.3.2. The name, address (detailed location of the centre) and telephone number of the centre and a List of emergency phone numbers should be posted by the telephone, including the fire, police, ambulance and emergency medical services.

4.3.3. A written plan for reporting, protecting from outside threats, and evacuating in case of fire, earthquake, or any other natural or man-made disaster that can create structural damage to the facility or pose health hazards to children and staff should be prepared and placed on the wall.

4.3.4. A plan on each floor and in each classroom showing prime and alternate evacuation routes from each area of the building and relocation plans should be developed and placed on the wall.

4.3.5. The centre must practice evacuation and emergency procedures every month.

4.4. Hazards

4.4.1. Medication, cleaning materials, detergents, aerosol cans, pesticides, health and beauty aids, poisons, and other toxic materials must be clearly labeled, properly stored and inaccessible to children.

4.4.2. Alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs are strictly prohibited within the centre's compound.

4.4.3. Gas cylinders should be closed and secured, if there are any.

4.4.5. Temporary wiring or extension cords should never be used on a permanent basis.

4.4.6. Electrical cords should be inaccessible to children.

4.4.7. Electrical outlets that are not in use should be covered with safety devices, unless they are not within reach of children or are in areas not used by children.

4.4.8. Pesticides or other toxic chemicals must be used in strict compliance with label instruction and be applied when children are not present.

4.4.9. Containers or buckets of standing liquid should be inaccessible to children unless used as a part of a planned and supervised activity.

4.5. Animals

If animals are kept on the premises, the centre has to:

- Advise parents of the presence of animals;
- Make sure that they do not show evidence of carrying diseases, are friendly towards children, and do not present a threat to the health, safety and well being-being of children;
- Make sure that dogs and cats are vaccinated for rabies by licensed agencies and are free of fleas, ticks, and worms.
- Ensure that animals are restricted from areas where food is stored; prepared , or served;
- Make sure that areas of confinements , such as cages and pens, are cleaned of excrements daily;
- Ensure that animals litter boxes are not located in kitchens or areas accessible to children;
- Make sure that out door play areas are cleaned of excrement daily or more often as needed.

4.6. Water Activities

4.6.1. The centre must obtain a written, signed permission from parents for all children participating in swimming activities and kept at the centre.

4.6.2. Any activity that involves water should be supervised constantly. This includes supervision of children in dressing areas.

5. MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

5.1. General

A variety of materials and equipment should be accessible to all children on a daily basis. All materials and equipment should be:

- Complete , sturdy, and in good working condition;
- Maintained in a safe and sanitary condition;
- Of appropriate size and type to meet children’s developmental needs;
- Provided in quantities proportionate to the number of children.

5.2. Furniture

5.2.1. Properly sized and adequate number of chairs should be available for all children at the centre, furniture is used.

5.2.2. Square or round tables of adequate height for children should be available. One table should be able to accommodate a group of 4-6- children to work comfortably. There should be enough tables to accommodate all children.

5.2.3. Carpets should be laid out on floors inside the building(s) for children to sit down during storytelling and other activities. It should be kept clean.

5.3. Indoor Space and Materials

5.3.1. General

- Indoor play materials should be made available to support each child’s physical, cognitive/ mental/ social, and language/ communication development under Facilitator’s supervision and guidance.
- The proprietor, in coordination with the head of the centre, should reevaluate equipment as enrollments increases. When the number of children increases, additional equipments should be provided in accordance with the ratios and developmental levels of children.
- Indoor climbing equipment over four feet high should have impact absorbing mats in fall zones that extend minimum of six feet in all directions.
- Facilitators must monitor play equipment for potential hazards; for example, splinter, loose parts and sharp edges.

- All indoor learning areas should have a variety of learning centres; For examples, areas for dramatic play, block, books, art, and science.

5.3.2. Materials

- All indoor play materials should be stored in boxes and kept secure when they are not in use.
- Books should be kept on bookshelves of which height should be within children’s reach.
- The list below is a reference of indoor play materials for Early Childhood Care and Education centres. The centre should have adequate number/sets for children admitted at the centre.

| INDOOR PLAY MATERIALS | No of sets required for a group of 10-15 Children |
|---|---|
| Sets of building block(minimum of 20 pieces) | 2 |
| Items for table activities, such as mating games, lotto, string, beads. | 10-15 |
| Puzzles | 6 |
| Small hand- held toys, such as cars, trucks, airplanes, boats. | 8 |
| Art supplies, such as paper, play dough, variety of non- toxic paints, crayons, markers, large easel- size brushes, paste, scissors, tapes, various textured materials. | 10-15 |
| Dolls with accessories and household items | 3 |
| Puppets | 2 |
| Books, age- appropriate. | 30 |
| Science items, such as an aquarium, magnets, magnifying glass, plants, leaves, rocks | 3 |
| Records, tapes, or CDs. | 4 |
| Tape/ CD player | 1 |
| Rhythm instruments in classroom | 4 |

5.4. Outdoor Space and Materials

5.4.1. Outdoor play space should be situated to:

- Permit children to reach it safely
- Provide a shaded area during scheduled outdoor play times;
- Allow supervision of areas where children cannot be easily seen.

5.4.2. Space should be enclosed by a building or fence with at least one exit which is away from the building. The fence should:

- Begin at ground level;
- Be at least 48 inches high;
- Be maintained in a stable, secure, upright and good condition, and poses no risk to children.

5.4.3. Outdoor play space should be maintained:

- In safe and clean condition
- Free of hazards
- Free from weeds, tall trees, untrimmed shrubs, standing water, and litter, to prevent vermin and insect infestation.

5.4.4. Gates must be kept closed while children are outside.

5.4.5. Safety

- Children should play outdoor daily when weather conditions do not pose a significant health risk.
- Before physical activity, children should be well hydrated and encouraged to drink water during the activity.
- Equipment must be sturdy, safe construction, easy to clean, free of hazards, and kept in good repair.
- Equipment should not have angles or openings greater than three and one-half inches and less than nine inches that could entrap any part of a child's body or head.
- Equipment should be installed, maintained, and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Unless portable by design, equipment should be securely anchored, and anchors pose no hazard to children.
- Swing seats should be constructed of durable, lightweight, relatively pliable materials; for example, nylon webbing, rubber, or plastic.
- If used, climbers, swings, slides, or revolving equipment should have impact absorbing surfaces, such as loose materials, under them and throughout the fall zones.

5.5.6. Outdoor Play Equipment

- Equipment provided should be age – appropriate.
- For every group of 15 children, the centre should have the following equipment and outdoor play materials
 - ✓ Slides 2
 - ✓ Swings 2
 - ✓ Seesaw 2
 - ✓ Sandpit 1
 - ✓ Balls 3
 - ✓ Items for sand and water play 2 sets
 - ✓ Other outdoor equipments

6. HEALTH AND HYGIENE

6.1. Health Records

When applying for admission, parents must submit the child's immunization record, a list of special health needs, and the name of the child's physicians, if any.

6.2. Immunizations

Each child admitted to the centre must meet applicable immunization requirement specified by the Ministry of Health. A copy of the Immunization Card should be submitted by parents at the time of admission and kept on file at the centre.

6.3. Checkups

6.3.1. The centre should coordinate with the Health Services to carry out health checkups: at the time of admission and every six months thereafter.

6.3.2. Individual health cards to record results of children's checkups should be available. The centre should develop the card and keep it at the centre, including a child's weight, height, any observations made by the health professional, dates of checkup and the name and designation of the health professional.

6.4. Hygiene Practices

6.4.1. Facilitators and Caregivers must attend promptly to children's personal hygiene needs.

6.4.2. Facilitators and Caregivers should thoroughly wash their hands with soap and warm, running water:

- Before handling food
- Before eating
- After toileting
- After touching or cleaning up body fluids, including wiping noses;
- After handling or feeding pets;
- After handling play dough;
- After playing outdoors; and
- Before wiping their noses.

6.4.3. A child's wet or soiled clothing should be changed immediately, placed in a bag to be sent home. Parents should provide clean extra clothing to the centre.

6.4.4. Toys and items that are in contact with children's mouth should be washed and sanitized after each child's use or as needed; and if contaminated by other body fluids, toys and equipment should be set aside to be washed and sanitized.

6.4.5. Garbage should never be kept more than 24 hours in the centre's compound.

6.5. Disease Control

6.5.1. The centre must have a clear written policy regarding sick children and inform parents of the policy at the time of admission.

6.5.2. Each child must be carefully observed by staff members for symptoms of illness or infestation.

6.5.3. Any child showing symptoms of illness or infestation should be separated from the group, and parents must be notified.

6.5.4. The local health services should be notified upon discovery of any case of hepatitis, meningitis, Shigellosis, Measles, rubella, whooping cough, tuberculosis and other contagious disease in any person associated with the centre. If the centre has concerns about the health of a child, the local health service must be contacted.

6.5.6. Disposable, nonporous gloves should be used to clean up blood, vomit, or body fluids that may contain blood. Disposable gloves must be discarded in a closed container immediately after use, and staff must wash their hands.

6.5.7. A commercial sanitizer or a bleach solution of one tablespoon of bleach to one gallon of warm water, made fresh daily, should be used to sanitize surfaces whenever needed.

6.5.8. Parents should be notified as soon as possible of children's exposure to contagious illnesses or infections.

6.5.9. Staff with symptoms of a communicable disease or illness should not be permitted in the centre.

6.6. Medication

6.6.1. The centre should handle medication only for children with chronic problem upon parents' written authorization for centre staff to administer each medication.

6.6.2. Upon the authorization, the parents of a child with chronic medical problem should provide medication in the original container labeled with the child's full name, and doctor's directions, including dosage to the centre.

6.6.3. Staff must administer medication according to the label or written doctor's directions and only to the child for whom it is intended.

6.6.4. To avoid duplication, each dosage administered must be recorded on individual medication logs by designated staff medication logs are readily available to parents.

6.6.5. All medication must be inaccessible to children and stored in a manner which prevents contamination of food.

6.7. Injuries

6.7.1. The centre must notify parents as soon as possible of any known cuts, burns, animal bites, or injuries that may need evacuation by a physicians and prepare a report of injuries that occurred at the centre and keep records.

6.7.2. Readily available first aid kits must be maintained in the centre. First aid kits must be restocked as needed. At a minimum, the first aid kit should contain:

- Adhesive tape;
- Antiseptic solution or wipes;
- Cotton balls
- Adhesive bandages (various sizes)
- Scissors
- Sterile gauze pads;
- Syrup of ipecac;
- Thermometer;
- Tweezers; and
- Waterproof disposable gloves.

6.8. Food

6.8.1. The centre should have snack time in the morning. Parents are responsible to send healthy foods and drinks with children, if food and snacks are not provided at the centre.

6.8.2. Staff should administer what food is brought, and talk about healthy eating habits and importance of nutrition to children and parents. Children should be allowed to eat at ease.

6.8.3. Children remaining in the centre over a four – hour period should have lunch at the centre.

- Option 1: Pack lunch prepared and sent by parents.
- Option 2: Lunch provided by the centre. The centre must ensure food safety and healthy food items, and obtain parents' authorization in writing.

6.8.4. Food must be kept in cool temperature, inaccessible to children or any animals.

6.9. Rest and Nap

6.9.1. Any child regardless of time spent at the centre can take a rest when he/she needs it. The child can stay in a room/ space designated for children to comfortably rest and / or nap. The room can be the same as the one for sick children.

6.9.2. Staff must ensure to make a child in need of rest warm and comfortable, using a clean mat, sheet and blanket in the designated rooms/space.

6.9.3. Children remaining in the centre over four hours may need nap in the afternoon, though it should not be forced. The centre must possess enough mats, sheets and blankets for all children staying at the centre more than 4 hours a day.

6.9.4. At least one staff member should be within sight and hearing of children in rest and during nap times.

7. ADMISSION AND DOCUMENTATION

7.1. Admission age

7.1.1. The eligible age range for admission to a daycare centre is 3 years and above, and, below the age of six at the time of entry.

7.1.2. The centre must not have any school aged child or any child less than 3 years enrolled at any time.

7.2. Application

7.2.1. The centre should prepare its own application Form and make it available to interested parents. There should be no additional charges for application forms.

7.2.2. The centre shall only admit children above age 3 and below 6 years.

7.2.2. The centre may enroll children with special needs as long as there are proper facilities and qualified staff to support the needs of such children.

7.3. Fees

7.3.1. The Fee for children shall be proposed by the centre and approved by the Ministry of Education.

7.3.2. The fee shall be inclusive of the cost of admission, tuition, materials, stationery, books, snacks and food. No additional charges shall be made.

7.3.3. The fee for half day and full day care and education services may be fixed and charged differently.

7.3.4. The cost of transport services may be fixed and charged separately, if transport services such as buses and van are provided.

7.4. Records

7.4.1. Children's record must be obtained at the time of admission for each child.

7.4.2. Children records should be kept and updated at the centre, available to staff during all hours of operation.

7.4.3. A child's record form should be prepared by the centre. The form should contain:

- The child's name, date of birth, name of parent(s), home address, parents(s)' places of employment, and telephone numbers;
- The name and telephone number of a responsible person to contact in an emergency if parents(s) cannot be located promptly;
- Name of the person(s) permitted to pick up the child;
- Health information and immunization records;
- Individual special needs to extend voluntarily disclosed by the parent, such as behaviour and communication.
- Date of acceptance and withdrawal from the child care centre.
- Learning Portfolios should be separately recorded and filed.

7.5. Staff Records

7.5.1. Staff records should be completed by individuals and handed to the proprietor of the centre at the time of employment.

7.5.2. The records should be updated and maintained at the centre.

7.5.3. A staff record form should be developed by the centre. The form should contain:

- Name, birth date, address, telephone number,
- Education;
- Employment History;
- 2 references, including one from previous employer if any, and the name, address, telephone number, and dates of employment; and a statement regarding criminal history;

7.5.4. At the time of employment, the proprietor should collect information about the staff, including:

- Criminal history, if any;
- Medical checkup results, certified by a doctor.
- Any physical or mental health issues regarding staff's ability to perform normal duties because of a possible physical, mental, or emotional problems should be noted; and
- Documentation of orientation and training.

8. PROGRAMME

8.1. General

8.1.1. The curriculum of the Early Childhood Care and Education centres shall be based on the developmental domains of and not on subject areas.

8.1.2. The curriculum and programmes should seek to enhance the holistic development of children.

8.1.3. The Curriculum Guide framed by the Ministry of Education and the National Early Learning and Development Standards should be followed.

8.1.4. The centre must develop Annual Plans and weekly lesson plans, ensuring that children learn through play and exploration through immediately/ locally relevant themes and topics.

8.1.5. The weekly plans developed by the staff, and reviewed and approved by the head of the centre should be available for parents and Regulatory Officials, on demand.

8.2. Role of the Facilitators in the Programme

8.2.1. Staff must plan and provide experiences that meet children's needs and stimulates learning in all developmental areas.

8.2.2. Each child should be viewed by staff as a unique person with an individual pattern of growth and development.

8.2.3. Children are provided opportunities to work individually or in small, informal groups most of the day and permitted to choose staff- directed or self – selected activities or not to participate.

8.2.4. Television and videos, if used, should be age- appropriate and used with discretion and selectivity.

8.2.5. A variety of activities should be chosen, including time for indoor and outdoor play, rest periods, and meals.

8.2.6. In order to have appropriate and desirable interaction with children, staff should:

- Actively seek meaningful conversation with children and talk about events of importance;
- be available and responsive to children for example, encouraging them to share experience, ideas, and feelings, and listening to them with attention and respect; and describe problems situations to encourage children to evaluate a problem rather than imposing an adult solution.

9. MANAGEMENT

9.1. Management Board.

The centre should form a Centre Management Board (CMB) to ensure the management of the operating of the centre. The Board shall meet as and when needed.

9.1.1. The responsibilities of the CMB should be:

- ensuring proper implementation of the government policy and guidelines;
- ensuring quality of services provided;
- recommending the intake capacity of students and admission modality;
- approving the Annual Plan; and
- Reviewing the progress and performance of the centre.

9.1.2. The CMB should consist of:

- President: Proprietor of the centre
- Member Secretary: Head of the centre
- Members:
 - Parents' representatives (one parent from every 15 children);
 - Staff representatives (1 from every 3 caregivers);
 - DEO/Representative from the Education Ministry.

9.2. Parents' Participation

- The Daycare Centre should regularly communicate with parents verbally and in writing to inform them of day- to- day happenings, changes in a child's physical or emotional state, or information regarding any known cuts, burns, or injuries that may require evaluation by a physician.
- The centre should organise a series of meeting with parents, either individual or in a group in order to involve parents in the operation and management of the centre.
- Parents are required to have representation in the centre Management Board.
- Apart from the programme for the children, parents should also have opportunities to learn about child development and care, to complement and support the experience and learning of older children enrolled at the centre. The sessions for the parents, conducted on a monthly basis or as per convenience, should also be initiated by the Centre, using the Parenting Education Manual prescribed by the Ministry of Education.

9.3. Behaviour and Discipline

9.3.1. Discipline should be constructive and appropriate to a child's age. Therefore, Staff members should:

- Recognize and encourage positive behaviour.
- Teach by example and use fair and consistent rules.
- Supervise with a loving attitude with understanding and firmness.
- Give clear directions and provide guidance appropriate to the child's level's of understanding.
- Redirect children by providing alternatives when behaviour is unacceptable.
- Encourage children to control their own behaviour, cooperate with others and solve problems by talking things out.
- Explain rules and undesirable behaviour, including the reason why.
- Ask children reasons when they do something wrong or inappropriate, and listen to them carefully and patiently.
- help children feel successful at a task and give options for other tasks if the one chosen proves too difficult;
- When necessary, intervene as quickly as possible to ensure the safety of all children.

9.3.2. **Restrictions:** Staff members are prohibited from:

- subjecting a child to punishment of a physical nature; for example, shaking, hitting, spanking, pinching, spitting, biting, hair pulling, yanking, slamming, excessive exercise, or any cruel treatment that may cause physical or psychological pain.
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth as punishment.
- Subjecting a child to punishment of psychological nature; for example, humiliation by derogatory or sarcastic remarks about the child or the child's family' race, gender, religion, or culture background.
- Using harsh language or actual or implied threats of physical punishment.
- Punishing or threatening a child in association with food, rest, or toilet training.
- Isolating a child without supervision or placing him or her in a dark area.
- Permitting a child to discipline other children.
- Punishing an entire group due to the actions of a few children.
- Seeking or accepting parental permission to use any punishment or an act prohibited by the requirements contained in this section.
- Participating in personal activities that interfere with adequate supervision of children, such as attending to visitors and phone calls, knitting, reading etc.
- Discriminating a child based on the child's gender, race, language, religion, physical appearance or any other status.

9.4. Procedural Requirements for establishment of an ECCD Centre

1. Proponent submits proposal to the Director General, Department of School Education through the Dzongkhag or Municipality.
2. The Department of School Education or the concerned Dzongkhag/Municipality inspects the proposed site to carry out feasibility assessment directly.
3. The Department of School Education accords approval in principle, if the site is found suitable.
4. Proponent pursues preparatory works such as facility preparation, Facilitator/ care giver recruitment.
5. Proponent informs DSE on completion of preparation for operation and requests for formal approval for commencement of the centre
6. DSE carries out final assessment to ensure that the centre is ready in all respects
7. DSE accords formal approval for commencement if found satisfactory.
8. Proponent and MoE sign Memorandum of Understanding that is valid for two years.
9. Proponent obtains trade licence from Ministry of Economic Affairs
10. Centre Opens
11. The MoU is renewed after every two years.