

Cork City Development Board

Integrated Target Group Plan

Children aged 0-5 in Disadvantaged Urban Areas

Approved by Cork City Development Board on November 10th 2004



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1. INTRODUCTION

1. Circular Letter LG 04/04 from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government requested that:

*“... in line with the recommendation of the NDP Mid-Term Review and the NDP/CSF Evaluation of Social Inclusion Co-ordination Mechanisms, each CDB should now take preliminary steps to prepare an Integrated Target Group Action Plan for **one** priority target group identified under the National Anti Poverty Strategy¹ (NAPS). Given the broad nature of the NAPS categories, the target group selected should be a tightly defined subset of these e.g. long-term unemployed men, at risk early school leavers between the ages of 9 and 14. Further guidance on the preparation of the Target Group Plan will issue in the near future.”*

2. The Agencies represented on the City Monitoring Group and the RAPID Area Implementation Teams were requested to nominate one target group for the preparation of the Integrated Target Group Plan. A list of Target Groups used in the Social Inclusion Measures Audit was also circulated (see Appendix 1). The target group nominations received were referred to the City Monitoring Group.

3. The City Monitoring Group decided to recommend “Children 0-5 in disadvantaged urban areas” as the priority Target Group around which the Integrated Target Group Plan should be prepared. Cork City Development Board approved this recommendation on May 12th last.

The rationale for this choice is most clearly set out by the Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education. It sees intervention at an early stage as a powerful instrument in breaking the cycle of poverty and social exclusion. The early years are the most formative and it is at this stage that the foundations are laid for all subsequent development. For this reason, the earlier intervention occurs the better. The level of learning experience obtained during the 0-6 years can have enduring consequences that may ultimately affect an individual’s ability to respond to challenges in later years.

Effective responses should be guided by three key factors:

- Early identification and support
- Investment in personnel
- Promotion of common cause across the entire early years sector

There is a need for a cohesive response in the area of service provision. Providing a co-ordinated service requires cross agency links that incorporate the work of the early years sector, schools, providers, communities and specialist units within government departments and other state agencies.

¹ These are as follows: The Unemployed; Children; Women; Older People; People with Disabilities; Travellers; Migrants and Members of Ethnic Minority Groups; Disadvantaged Urban Dwellers; Disadvantaged Rural Dwellers.

4. Guidelines on preparation of the Integrated Target Group Plan were issued by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government through Circular Letter LG 15/04 issued on June 24th 2004. These guidelines suggested that the final plan would have the following elements:

Background – socio/economic data, current service delivery, policy, key features of approach, gaps in service delivery, summary of relevant EU/ national/regional policies

Priority Needs

Objectives – agreed by service deliverers.

Roles/Resources/Responsibilities – taken by each organisation to meet the objectives and outcomes set for the target group

Measurement – realistic performance indicators (see appendix 5)

5. The following organisations were requested to bring this target group to the attention of relevant personnel in their organisations, outline their organisation's current actions which support this target group and outline the current service gaps which should be addressed by the plan:

- Each relevant public agency
- Each RAPID Area Implementation Team
- Each Community Development Project
- Each Family Centre
- Cork City Partnership
- Cork City Childcare Company
- Barnardos
- ISPCC
- St. Vincent de Paul

6. Each of the above organisations was invited to attend a planning day on September 17th 2004. A list of attendees is set out in Appendix 2.

7. Following this planning day a framework plan was approved by the Cork City Monitoring Committee on September 29th 2004 and by Cork City Development Board on October 13th 2004. The “OECD Thematic Review of Early Childhood Education and Care Policy in Ireland” was released just after the planning day. The National Competitiveness Council's Report for 2004 also deals with provision for this target group and was only released on October 14th 2004. It is important to incorporate the recommendations of these reports into the Integrated Target Group Plan.

8. A working group consisting of the organisations outlined in Appendix 3 developed actions to complete the plan. At its meeting on November 3rd 2004 the City Monitoring Group considered the plan and recommended it to the City Development Board. The Board approved the plan at its meeting on November 10th 2004.

9. The plan is part of the City Development Board's Improved Local Cohesion Actions. It is working with all of the interests in the city that provide services for the target group. It will strategically co-ordinate the future provision of these services within the city with a particular emphasis on quality and equity of access.

2. BACKGROUND

Socio-economic data

10. The Target Group “Children 0-5 in disadvantaged urban areas” can best be estimated using data from the Census of Population 2002. In 2002, there were 8,163 children recorded in this age group. The Areas designated under the RAPID represent communities suffering from disadvantage under a number of measurements. There are 3,889 children in the Target Group recorded in RAPID Areas. This represents 48% of the city total. In contrast RAPID areas only contain 37% of the City’s population. Togher Mahon had the largest target group population at 1,110, Knocknaheeny/Hollyhill/Churchfield was next with 1,000, followed by Blackpool/The Glen/Mayfield with 993 and finally Fairhill/Farranree/ Gurranebraher had the smallest target group population with 786. These data are set out in the table below.

	<u>Total Pop.</u>	<u>Total 0-5</u>	<u>Male 0-5</u>	<u>Female 0-5</u>
Cork City	123,062	8,163	4,178	3,985
Total RAPID Areas	45,020	3,889	2,019	1,870
% City Total	37	48	48	47
Knocknaheeny/Hollyhill/Churchfield	10,615	1,000	517	483
Fairhill/Farranree/Gurranebraher	11,093	786	414	372
Blackpool/The Glen/Mayfield	9,257	993	519	474
Togher/Mahon	14,055	1,110	569	541

11. There may be smaller pockets of the target group living outside these RAPID Areas. The actions proposed by the plan can be applied to these areas as well.

Current Service Provision

12. The organisations invited to the planning day were requested to set out their current service delivery in relation to the Target Group. The information from those organisations that responded is set out in Appendix 3. Provision is divided into four sections: Childcare, Education/Information, Health and Family Support.

13. The major service providers were the Southern Health Board and the Department of Education and Science. However the Department of Social and Family Affairs has a major influence on the Target Group through its income and family support programmes whilst Cork City Council is the major supplier of housing and recreation/play facilities.

14. There did not seem to be much evidence of duplication. However four organisations are involved in courses relating to parents and parenting– the Department of Social and Family Affairs, Cork City Partnership, Cork Social and Health Education Project and the ISPCC. The plan preparation process clarified the links between these services.

Gaps in Service Delivery

15. The organisations that responded identified the following gaps in service provision for the Target Group. These gaps are again organised into the sections used to set out current service provision:

Childcare

- Lack of appropriate childcare places
- Cost of childcare
- Childcare provision for Traveller children
- Childminding initiatives
- Supports for children of asylum seekers in direct provision
- Multi - annual funding
- Training for 0-3 childcare providers
- Nappy changing in community facilities
- Change in policy in relation to creche supplement
- Enhancing access to mainstream community facilities (playgroups etc) for marginalised children especially in relation to Traveller children, children with disability, ethnic minority children
- Reliance on CE with community creches
- EOCP funding is labour market driven
- Confusion regarding qualifications, progression ladders, pay scales etc within the childcare sector

Health

- Services for children with special needs and behavioural problems
- Health food and nutrition in pre-schools
- Nutrition for babies
- Need for medical card for all under 5s
- A co-ordinated, multi-disciplinary approach
- Need to work with parents on the whole area of passive smoking
- Appropriate play facilities
- Interdisciplinary response to children 0-5 without a specific disability diagnosis
- Needs Assessment on health service requirements of Travellers
- Development of breastfeeding support in conjunction with phn service
- Establishment of Early Intervention Teams

Education/Information

- Access to pre-schools
- Education for children with disabilities
- Support for transition to primary schools
- Special needs assistants

Family Support

- Services for troubled children and children in trouble
- Intensive family supports
- Co-ordination of existing services and resources
- Full day care for under ones

- Care for children with disabilities
- Parent and toddler groups
- Parenting courses
- Support for role of fathers
- childcare with CE schemes
- Better links with new parents in antenatal groups
- Appropriate Housing
- Respite service for families
- Home help support
- Services for children affected by domestic violence
- Early ante-natal care with parents
- Access to and availability of suitable premises to run courses

EU/National/Regional Policies

16. **National Development Plan** - The absence of adequate childcare provision is highlighted in the plan as a significant obstacle in the participation of women in education and the workforce. Most notably these obstacles prevail in socially disadvantaged areas with high percentages of one-parent families. Equal opportunity and social inclusion measures aim to increase levels of participation and facilitate access to educational/training initiatives. €17 million has been made available in funding through the Regional Operational Programmes to provide a responsive and co-ordinated childcare system that will ideally attract higher numbers of trained personnel.

17. **The National Children's Strategy** - The formation of this strategy materialized from a state obligation to implement specific articles of the UN Convention of the Child, 1989. An inter-departmental group was established to develop the strategy in association with a cross-departmental group, international advisors and over 2,500 children. The guiding objective of the strategy is to provide a national framework for the integration of children's rights into the broader social arena. The 'whole child' perspective adopted by the strategy examines the need for improved service provision from the varying aspects of family, self-care, physical and mental welfare, emotional and behavioural well being and identity.

18. The Strategy aims to influence the work of both the public and private sectors to develop initiatives in a holistic and co-ordinated manner. A broad range of goals has been outlined in the strategy. The target group 0-5 years is dealt with particularly in relation to early educational and development needs. These are to be met through the provision of quality childcare and the introduction of family friendly employment policies.

19. **Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme (EOCP) 2002-2006** - In accordance with evolving trends in European social policy, the primary aim of this programme is "to enable parents to avail of training, education and employment opportunities through the provision of quality childcare supports".

20. Addressing the needs of the selected target group of 0-5 years cannot be done in a vacuum. There is a significant emphasis being placed upon the need to train and educate parents not only to cultivate progressive parenting skills but also in order to increase their employment opportunities. Meeting the broader long-term needs of families is essential if the cycle of poverty and exclusion is to be broken. Improving the quality of life within the whole family enhances the development opportunities of the child.

21. Specific Objectives aim to improve the overall quality of childcare; increase provision of places and facilities and to encourage the adoption of a co-ordinated approach in the delivery of services.

22. **The National Co-ordinating Childcare Committee (NCCC)** has responsibility for managing an integrated response countywide. Various sub-groups were set up to deal with specific issues such as Special needs, Minority /Ethnic Groups and Traveller Children.

23. **National Children's Office** - this is a government agency that seeks to improve all areas of children's lives. It has responsibility for reporting to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on national progress. It also participates in L'Europe de l'Enfance, a group comprised of government officials who informally discusses issues and viewpoints relating to children's issues and the introduction of mainstreaming the rights of the child in all EU policies. Government has asked the National Children's Office to convene a High Level Working Group to develop a national policy on co-ordination of early childhood education and childcare. The Working Group is due to report by the end of the year.

24. **The County Childcare Committees** seek to co-ordinate services at a county/city level. Cork City Childcare Company Ltd has close links with the Cork City Development Board and advises the Board on Childcare issues. Its Childcare Strategic Programme 2002-2007 supports the development of childcare in Cork City.

25. **The Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education (CECDE)** considers the early education needs of all children up to six years. The purpose of the CECDE is primarily to begin the process of enacting some of the key recommendations of "Ready to Learn" the 1999 White Paper on Early Education. To this end the Centre has a three-year work programme which is designed to fulfil the following core objectives:

- To develop a quality framework for early childhood education;
- To formulate targeted interventions on a pilot basis for children who are educationally disadvantaged and children with special needs; and
- To prepare the groundwork for the establishment of an Early Childhood Education Agency as envisaged by the White Paper.

3. PRIORITY NEEDS

26. On the planning day, the participants identified a set of needs based on the current service provision and the gaps in service provision. The matrix below relates these needs to the four sections used to set out current service provision and service gaps.

<u>NEEDS</u>	<u>Childcare</u>	<u>Education</u>	<u>Health</u>	<u>Family Support</u>
Quality Standards				
Training				
Information				
Drop-in Places				
Children with Special Needs				
Play				
Parenting Skills				
Parent & Toddler Groups				
Families in Crisis				
Home School Liaison				
Equality of Provision				
Greenmount Project				

4. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

27. Following the identification of Needs, the following Vision and Objectives have been developed to meet them:

Vision: Seamless service delivery for Children in the Target Group which manages their transitions from birth to pre-school to school

Objective 1 - There will be Clear Quality Standards for all Services Accessed by Children

Objective 2 - There will be Timely and Co-ordinated Provision of Services for Children with Specific Needs

Objective 3 - There will be Integrated and Responsive Family Support Services to Meet a Diverse Range of Needs

Objective 4 - There will be a Continuum of Support for the Educational and Developmental Needs of Children

28. It is a useful exercise to compare these Objectives with the recommendations of the OECD Thematic Review of Early Childhood Education and Care Policy in Ireland. This report made recommendations under the following headings:

1. Co-ordination of ministries, agencies and resources
2. Improving general access for Children aged 0-3 years and children aged 3-6 years
3. Improving access for special groups – children with disabilities, children from disadvantaged backgrounds, children from the Traveller Community
4. Improving the quality of early childhood education and care
5. Financing new resources

29. These recommendations are quite similar to the Objectives outlined above. The Actions that will be developed to implement this Integrated Target Group Plan will take account of the OECD Reports recommendations.

30. The actions reflect the recommendations outlined in the CECDE report “On Target - An audit of service provision Targeting Disadvantage and Special Needs among Children aged Birth to Six in Ireland”.

31. The actions are also informed by the findings of the National Competitiveness Council’s “Annual Competitiveness Report 2004” which highlights the importance of pre-primary education and childhood development.

5. ACTIONS

Objective 1 There will be Clear Quality Standards for all Services Accessed by Children

Action 1.1: Quality Provision in the Early Years

Background

It is now well-known that a child who is already disadvantaged is further disadvantaged if he/she is attending a poor quality early years service. However high quality services provide a caring and stimulating environment for young children as they are involved in their own learning, supported by a well-trained staff and the adults closest to them.

There are several types of early-years services operating in areas of disadvantage in Cork. Some are using the High-Scope models, others are Montessori or Steiner, whilst others are providing a good play-based curriculum. The provision is very good in some, and not so good in others.

Quality in childcare services is a relative concept based on values and beliefs. It is also a dynamic concept with definitions of what constitute quality evolving over time. At present while there are certain minimum requirements for basic standards in childcare. There are also specific, locally identifiable factors to be considered. For example, the needs of children in a very disadvantaged area of Cork City will differ from those in a rural setting.

The 1996 Pre-school Regulations are minimum standards. They only relate to only one aspect of quality provision, what may be called the static variables of quality such as space, ratio, group size, etc. There is a whole other dimension to quality. This aspect of quality relates to the dynamic variables, or quality of the interpersonal relationships, the pedagogical style within the childcare setting.

This action will set up a working group of the key stakeholders to look at current provision and identify groups that could benefit from this type of programme and to progress the quality agenda. Other issues that will be considered are family support services, training, involvement of community employment schemes in childcare, outdoor learning, sustainability, management of groups, affordability, access, etc. The Action will develop local quality standards that current providers will be encouraged to adopt and support will be given to groups who wish to reach these standards.

National Policy Context²

OECD Thematic Review 2004

‘The formulation of a common National Goals and Quality Framework for all centre-based programmes for young children, focussing on agreed standards for services.

The development of a voluntary accreditation and quality improvement scheme for service providers linked to funding, and focussing on management, staffing and programme requirements, developmental goals and ongoing pedagogical monitoring and support.’

National Council for Curriculum Assessment – “Towards a Framework for Early Learning”:

“Early Childhood is a time of incredible learning. This learning has a fundamental impact on all later learning and on the individual’s life itself and should therefore be supported and encouraged appropriately.”

Lead Agency

Cork City Childcare Company, Southern Health Board

Support Organisations

Southern Health Board, IPPA, National Council for Curriculum Assessment, Barnardos, Cork City Partnership, Cork Early Years Network.

Resources

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Capital/Revenue	National	Local
Quality Project Leader	56,000	56,000	56,000	Revenue	168,000	
Project worker	44,000	44,000	44,000	Revenue	132,000	
Training costs for groups	10,000	10,000	10,000	Revenue	30,000	
Total	110,000	110,000	110,000		330,000	

² The references in the National Policy context section of each of the actions are not intended to be exhaustive. Other key policy documents which have not been specifically referenced but provide an important context for the plan include Inter Alia; White Paper on Education – Charting our Educational Future, Ready to Learn – A White Paper on Early Childhood Education, National Action Plan Against Poverty and Social Exclusion.

Action 1.2: Developing Quality Provision for Children Under 3

Background

There is a consensus of opinion that birth to three is a crucial time of development for children. Services for children under 3 are a relatively recent edition to the childcare sector. Childcare providers in Cork City are concerned about the quality of care available to children under 3 in our childcare services. The optimum care in the most nurturing environment is particularly important to children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Cork City Childcare Committee will put in place a strategy to engage providers in the understanding of providing quality care for children under 3. This action will involve three strands:

- The first part of this action is a conference in UCC in November 6th 2004 to explore quality care for children under three. This conference will provide an opportunity to hear inspirational speakers with a wide range of experience of the relevant issues from a range of different perspectives.
- The second part of this action is to invite Professor Lesley Abbott from Manchester University to a seminar in Cork City on working with under threes. Professor Abbott developed the Birth to Three Matters programme in the UK and is considered one of the foremost experts in quality care of children under three
- The final part of the strategy is a series of training sessions with providers working with very young children.

The outcomes of these actions will be:

- The conference will present a valuable opportunity to raise questions and begin to answer questions around what is quality care for children under 3
- The seminar led by Professor Lesley Abbott will share learning from the Birth to Three Matters Programme developed in the UK
- The training sessions will engage directly with the childcare workers in developing a quality programme in individual childcare centres

National Policy Context

CECDE – ‘On Target?’:

‘It is the view of the CECDE that focused attention must be given to deepening our understanding of the role of targeted intervention with children aged birth to three years in Ireland. This will require a multi-layered approach, which incorporates policy, practice and research, as delays in redressing the imbalance in targeted services cannot be afforded.’

Lead Agency

Cork City Childcare Company

Support Organisations

Cork City Partnership, Southern Health Board

Resources

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Capital/ Revenue	National	Local
Seminar Costs	2,000			Revenue		2,000
Training Costs	2,600			Revenue		2,600
Total	4,600					4,600

Objective 2 There will be Timely and Co-ordinated Provision of Services for Children With Specific Needs

Action 2.1 Children With Specific Needs

Background

Several of the preschools in the disadvantaged communities have increasing numbers of children with special needs enrolled. These range from children with identified conditions and syndromes to children with mild intellectual impairment who are at risk of non-identification. Presently the services need to be further developed and enhanced for this group as there can be considerable waiting lists for assessment and subsequent services.

Early intervention is essential with this group and therefore a pilot programme will be implemented in the Mayfield/the Glen area, involving the employment of a local special needs key worker who will be based in one preschool but who will serve all eleven preschools in the area. His/her job will be to liaise with the individual, the family, the preschool, the appropriate non-governmental organisation and the Southern Health Board. The emphasis will be on early intervention and ensuring timely assessments. The key worker will also take a lead role in ensuring the implementation of the care plan and the collation of information and tracking of progress in the project. There will be ongoing review and evaluation to ensure the added value of the initiative. This programme will be compatible with services already provided in the area e.g. by COPE and Enable Ireland.

This action will address the following key areas:

- Highlight the issues of children with special needs in the pilot area
- Increase supports for children with special needs, preschool staff and parents
- Develop linkages between preschools staff, Southern Health Board staff and parents
- Facilitate access to services including assessment, speech and language, occupational therapy, physio etc
- Provide services for children with special needs in a community setting
- Support the integration of children with special needs into community preschools

National Policy Context

CECDE – On Target? 2004

‘The crucial factor for children in the birth to six age group with disabilities is early intervention’.

‘... , most professionals, parents, advocates, and policy makers now agree that it is a societal responsibility to provide needed early intervention programs for children with established disabilities and for those whose development may be

compromised as a result of biological or environmental factors. Similarly, most agree that the early years constitute a unique opportunity for influencing child development and supporting families, an opportunity that may well maximise long benefits for all concerned.’ \Guralnick. 1997:)

OECD Thematic Review 2004

‘According to information received, services for children with disabilities and their families are very insufficient. With the exception of children with visual or hearing impairment, children with disabilities under 4 years have no entitlement to education provision. Crucial time is lost if education intervention starts only at the beginning of infant class or primary schooling.’

Cork City Childcare Company – ‘Including Children with Disabilities 2004’

‘It is clear from the report that children are being supported but providers have also commented on their fears that the provision of the best quality service cannot be available to children with disabilities without the adequate training or resources being made available to the childcare sector. The urgent need for these resources is heightened by the propensity for these resources to have a significant impact on the child. The positive impact of resources being made available to support young children with disabilities in their local childcare service cannot be overstated when considering the impact of early intervention.’

Lead Agency

Southern Health Board

Support Organisations

Southern Health Board, Newbury House Family Centre, Mayfield/the Glen Childcare Network, Mayfield/the Glen/Blackpool AIT, Cork City Childcare Committee, Cork City Partnership

Resources

	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Capital / Revenue	National	Local
Special Needs Key Worker	50,000	55,000	60,000	Revenue	165,000	
Equipment	10,000			Capital	5,000	5,000
O/heads	10,000	10,000	10,000	Capital	15,000	15,000
Training	10,000	5,000	3,000	Revenue	9,000	9,000
Evaluation			8,000	Revenue	8,000	
Total	80,000	70,000	91,000		202,000	29,000

Objective 3 There will be Integrated and Responsive Family Support Services to Meet a Diverse Range of Needs

Action 3.1 Developing Quality Services for Under Fives and Their Families through Excellent Voluntary Management

Background

Many of the services for children under five in Cork City are provided by voluntary organisations. These organisations have a long history of providing front line services in disadvantaged communities. Services for the under fives and their families are provided by the voluntary sector and may include: childcare, family support, literacy, short courses, community facilities, tenants and neighbourhood groups. Of course each voluntary group is unique but the one essential element they all share is a management committee at the helm.

The management committee has the responsibility of guiding an organisation, developing services and employing staff. Each of these responsibilities has legislative and administrative aspects, which weigh heavily on a voluntary management committee. In addition to this, committees' report that the workload attached to reporting on funding received grows annually. A strong management committee with clear policy and procedures leads to good quality, locally run service provision.

In an effort to support voluntary management committees in the valuable work they do in their communities, Cork City Childcare hopes to support voluntary management committees working with under fives through:

- developing a committee handbook and subsequent training
- identifying and negotiating with a panel of professionals to provide support at a reasonable price to individual services as per the need of each individual group

These actions will result in:

- Strengthening the management committees of groups which provide services for the under fives
- Ensuring the management committees will have access to the information they need to ensure the organisation runs to the highest quality standard.
- Reducing the cost of professional expertise for management committees which work with the under fives

National Policy Context

This action accords with the Cork City Development Board's submission to the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs under Improved Local Cohesion.

Lead Agency

Cork City Childcare Company, Southern Health Board

Support Organisation

Cork City Partnership

Resources

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Capital/ Revenue	National	Local
Printing	3,000			Revenue	1,500	1,500
Training	1,250			Revenue	625	625
Advertising	1,500			Revenue	750	750
Information	500			Revenue	250	250
Total	6,250				3,125	3,125

Action 3.2(A) Mapping family support services

Action 3.2(B) Parenting Course provider seminar

Background

Extensive research has shown that when considering the needs of children 0-5 the family has a crucial role to play in the development of the child

A range of local family support initiatives currently exists ranging from parent and toddler groups, crisis family support, home school liaison etc. Each RAPID area implementation team will bring together these providers at a local level.

A number of agencies and groups are currently delivering parenting courses in Cork City. A seminar will be held for these organisations, to allow for the identification of gaps in the current range of services provision and to explore opportunities for shared working.

The key areas that these actions will address are:

- Increase networking between agencies involved in the provision of these services.
- Explore opportunities for joint working
- Identify and map services currently available

National Policy Context

This action accords with the Cork City Development Board's submission to the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs under Improved Local Cohesion.

Leader 3.2 (A):

RAPID Area Implementation Teams

Support Agencies

Southern Health Board, City of Cork Vocational Educational Committee, Cork City Childcare Company, relevant Community and Voluntary Groups, Dept. Social and Family Affairs

Leader 3.2(B):

Department of Social and Family Affairs

Support Agencies

Bernardos, Southern Health Board, relevant Community and Voluntary Groups, Dept of Education and Science

Resources

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Capital/ Revenue	National	Local
Organistaion of Seminars	20,000			Revenue	10,000	10,000
Total	20,000				10,000	10,000

Objective 4: There will be a Continuum of Support for the Educational and Developmental Needs of Children

Action 4.1 Education

Background

Cork City Partnership has, since 2000, piloted an innovative approach to Early Childhood Education in Scoil Mhuire na nGras, Greenmount and Greenmount Pre-school. This project provides a structured approach to counter the early onset of educational disadvantage through developing a quality Programme of Learning that enhances oral language development among children aged 3 – 6 years using an outdoor learning area as a stimulus and providing suitable training for pre-school, infant teachers and parents.

It is the intention to pilot a programme in the Mahon area of Cork that will build on and complement this intervention with a particular focus on children aged 3-6 years and the transition from pre-school to primary school, which is a key stage in the educational development of children. Following intensive consultation with the key stakeholders an intensive programme will be developed that will counter the early onset of educational disadvantage.

The key areas that this pilot will address are;

- Develop the capacity of the education system (Pre-school and Infant Classes) to support children aged 3-6 years adequately and appropriately.
- Increase the co-ordination between Pre-school and Infant Classes.
- Develop and implement a Programme of Learning for 3–6 year old children.
- Establish an after-school programme for ‘at risk’ children in infant classes in the school setting.

National Policy Context

A number of recent publications have emphasised the importance of working with pre school children.

Forfás – “Annual Competitiveness Report 2004”:

“International evidence suggests that investment in pre-primary education and childhood development offers potentially high returns, improving children’s school readiness and positively impacting on subsequent attainment levels.

“It should also be noted that the number of children in pre-primary education in Ireland is extremely low is extremely low”

CECDE - “On Target”:

“The lack of communication between school-based providers and in particular community providers means that many children in disadvantaged areas or other situations of disadvantage are making the

transition into school from community or other playgroups with no communication between the school and the provider”

OECD – Thematic review of Early Childhood Education and Care Policy in Ireland

“By European standard, access to early education and care for children in this age group is also comparatively weak and inequality at the starting gates of school is clearly evident for specific group of children”

Lead Agency

Cork City Partnership

Support Agencies

Southern Health Board, Bernardos, School Principals, Primary Teachers, City of Cork Vocational Education Committee, Cork City Childcare Company, Dept of Education and Science, Local Education Networks.

Resources

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Capital/Revenue	National	Local
Outdoor learning opportunities	45,000			Capital	45,000	
Materials	20,000	20,000	20,000	Revenue	60,000	
Project Co-ordinator	27,000	27,000	27,000	Revenue		81,000
Curriculum Development Worker	45,000	45,000	45,000	Revenue	135,000	
Childcare workers x 3	90,000	90,000	90,000	Revenue	270,000	
After Schools Service	21,000	21,000	21,000	Revenue	63,000	
Workshops to disseminate Good Practice	9,000	9,000	9,000	Revenue	27,000	
Project Evaluation			8,000		8,000	
Total	257,000	212,00	220,000		608,000	81,000

Action 4.2 Play

Background

Cork City Council, in conjunction with each RAPID Area Implementation Team and local communities, is developing a playground in each RAPID area. Play is an essential element of early years development and in order to maximise the benefit for the children aged 0-5, there is a need to employ a play leader in each playground, particularly at weekends.

The key areas which action will address are:

- Increase access to play facilities
- Increase awareness among parents of the value of play for young children
- Increase access to structured play for young children resulting in improved social skills etc
- Reduce danger of obesity for young children through increased physical activity

National Policy Context

National Play Strategy:

‘Local development programmes providing services to families and their children, such as CLÁR and RAPID, will identify the potential for actively supporting improved play provision within communities’

‘City/County Development Boards will identify the range of actions necessary to support the play activities of children from marginalized groups’

National Children's Policy - "Our Children their Lives":

"Play recreation and cultural activities are essential childhood experiences which enrich the lives of children and provide them with experiences and competencies that serve them well in later life"

Lead Agency

Cork City Council

Support Agencies

Local communities, Cork City Partnership, Cork City Childcare Company, Southern Health Board

Resources

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Capital/ Revenue	National	Local
Playgrounds	288,000			Capital	*288,000	0
Play leaders	96,000	99,000	104,000	Revenue	299,000	0
Materials	6,000		3,000	Capital	9,000	0
Total	390,000	99,000	107,000		596,000	

* Already funded

APPENDIX 1 Target Groups

1. Disadvantaged Urban Communities
2. Disadvantaged Areas
3. Disadvantaged Adults
4. Disadvantaged Women
5. Marginalised Men
6. Young People at Risk
7. Children at Risk
8. Schools with poor Retention Rates
9. Early School Leavers
10. Schools
11. Further Education
12. Adults with Literacy problems
13. Adult Students
14. Traveller Children
15. Travellers
16. Young Mothers/Fathers/Parents
17. Vulnerable Families
18. Single Parents
19. Disability Groups/People with Disabilities
20. Persons using Health Centres/Hospitals
21. The Elderly
22. Youth (Youthreach)
23. Ex-Prisoners/Probation Service
24. Ex-Drug Addicts
25. Refugees/Asylum Seekers
26. The Homeless
27. The Unemployed
28. Long-Term Unemployed (LTU)
29. Redundant Workers
30. Seasonally Employed
31. The Low Paid
32. Local Authority Tenants
33. Substance Abusers (actual or potential)

APPENDIX 2 Attendees at Planning Day

Dept. of Social and Family Affairs
Dept. of Education and Science
Garda Síochana
FAS
Cork City Council
Southern Health Board

Knocknaheeny/Hollyhill RAPID Area Implementation Team
Togher/Mahon RAPID Area Implementation Team

Cork City Partnership
Cork City Childcare Company

St Vincent de Paul
Barnardos

Before 5 Family Centre
Mahon Family Resource Centre
Hollyhill/Knocknaheeny Family Resource Centre

Mahon CDP
Cork SHEP
Mayfield CDP
We The People Knocknaheeny
Ballyphehane/Togher CDP
Farranree CDP
Glen CDP

APPENDIX 3 – Organisations Preparing Detailed Actions

Cork City Council
Cork City Childcare Company Ltd
Cork City Partnership
Southern Health Board
Department of Education and Science
Department of Social and Family Affairs
Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education
Barnardos
ISPCC
St. Vincent de Paul

APPENDIX 4 Service Map for Children 0-5 in Disadvantaged areas as per submissions - 13/09/04

Organisation	Childcare	Education/information	Health	Family Support
City Childcare Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childminding Initiative • Networking • Appraising EOCP Applications 			
Southern Health Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides funding and support to a variety of Childcare Providers. • SHB Childcare Services • Preschools Office. • Childrens First Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Promotion Dept. • Community Work Service • Health Action Zone Initiative- Knocknaheeny/Churchfield and Mayfield/The Glen • Community Welfare Service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SHB Community Services, Mental Health Services & Acute Services • Community Welfare Services • Public Health Nursing • Area Medical Officer Service • Speech and Language Service • Dental Services • Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Service • Community Psychology Service • SHB Physical and Sensory Disability Services. • SHB Intellectual Disability Services. • Drug and Alcohol Service • Occupational Therapy Service • Physiotherapy Service • Podiatry Service • Environmental Health Service • Traveller Health Unit • Ethnic Minority Health Unit • Community Work Service • Health Action Zone Initiative Knocknaheeny/ Churchfield and Mayfield/The Glen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides funding and support to a variety of Family Support Service Providers • SHB Social Work Services • SHB Childcare Services • Springboard Projects-Mahon, Knocknaheeny, Farranree • NYP Projects: The Glen and Mayfield • SHB Physical and Sensory Disability Services. • SHB Intellectual Disability Services. • Carers Support Service • Southern Regional Committee on Violence Against Women

Organisation	Childcare	Education/information	Health	Family Support
Dept. of Education & Science		Early Start Programme - Mahon - Churchfield - Mayfield - Knocknaheeny - Blackpool - Farranree Traveller Pre-school - Turners Cross - City Centre - Blackpool Support Agencies - CDCE - National Council for Curriculum Assessment Early Childhood Technical Working Group		
Dept. of Social & Family Affairs				Income Support Parenting Courses
Farranree Family Resource Centre	Parent & Toddler Groups			Family Support
Before 5 Family Centre, Churchfield	Creche Parent & Toddler Groups			Family Support
Mayfield CDP	Parent & Toddler			
Cork City Partnership	Supports Networks Capacity Building Annual Seminar	Early Childhood Education - South East - South West Information Mailouts		Parenting Training

Organisation	Childcare	Education/information	Health	Family Support
Ballyphehane/Togher CDP	Creche			
Cork Social & Health Education Project				Parenting Courses
Barnardos		National Childrens Resource Centre		Intensive Family Support Project - Mahon Child & Family Learning Development - Knocknaheeny
ISPCC				Childhood Support Workers Parenting programmes
Mahon CDP	Creche			Family Support
FAS	CE Support –to childcare providers – 190 places			
Cork City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of premises for childcare providers • Mange capital funding for Learning and development Centre Knocknaheeny • Develop capacity of providers • Provide interim management of childcare facilities • Childcare facility co-ordinator 	Library-based activities: reading, general cultural activities in all libraries	Playgrounds, Parks and Swimming Pools	Premises for Springboard Project

APPENDIX 5– Performance Indicators

Action 1.1

Indicator 1 - Design of Quality Standards

Indicator 2 - Number of groups adopting Quality Standards

Action 1.2

Indicator 1 - Number of people working with children receiving training courses

Action 2.1

Indicator1 - An evaluation of the project has been built in to the action

Action 3.1

Indicator 1 - Publication of Handbook

Indicator 2 - No. of Training Courses for Management committees

Action 3.2 A

Indicator 1 - Proportion of agencies that provide parenting services that participate in networking seminar

Action 3.2 B

Indicator 1 - Proportion of agencies/groups providing services in relevant RAPID area that attend seminar

Action 5.1

Indicator 1 - An evaluation of the project has been built in to the action

Action 5.2

Indicator 1 - No of children using playgrounds