

ADMINISTRATION

Running an effective operation requires a systematic approach which ensures that:

- the needs of the children, parents and staff are determined;
- programme plans are based on those needs; and
- accurate records are kept of the needs, plans and operations of the centre.

Make Information Available

- Information on the service and programme is available in the forms of brochures/leaflets, websites and multimedia products, or displayed on bulletin boards
- A notebook is kept on each child, where staff and parents periodically exchange written information about the child's interests and developmental milestones
- Photographs and names of staff are displayed and parents are informed of staff changes ahead of time

Record Keeping

All records are kept up-to-date and readily accessible/retrievable.

Examples:

- Periodic reports of children's progress
- Documentation of children's habits, character traits and interests
- Anecdotal notes of children's behaviour that is significant

The centre has a system which evaluates records for completeness, accuracy of contents and timeliness of entries at regular intervals, e.g. on a six-monthly basis.

Examples:

- Updating of staff training programme/activity, housekeeping and equipment records

The privacy and confidentiality of the records are protected.

Examples:

- Disposal of records is carried out carefully
- Unneeded records are shredded and not left in the open
- A list of destroyed files is maintained and updated regularly

Standard Operating Procedures

A standard operating procedure (SOP) serves to articulate the essential procedures necessary for the smooth daily operation of the centre.

SOPs include :

- a system for allocating available places for enrolment
- clear policies on fee collection, trial period and refunds
- assessment of child abuse and child protection procedures
- administration of medication and management of sick children
- management of children's behaviour
- crisis management covering fires, accidents and outbreak of communicable diseases

Staff Policy Manual

The centre has written personnel policies on:

- recruitment;
- job descriptions including qualifications and working experience;
- job responsibilities and duties;
- reporting structure;
- schedule of employee benefits (e.g. sick leave, annual leave, yearly medical check-ups, insurance and workmen compensation);
- staff appraisal system;
- disciplinary procedures;
- rewards (e.g. long service award and profit-sharing);
- resignation;
- termination;
- employee grievance procedures; and
- professional and ethical codes of practice

The policy manual is regularly reviewed, updated and made available to all staff.

A personnel record file is maintained for each employee with regular review and updating.

Parents' Handbook

The parents' handbook states the centre's philosophy, policies and procedures. It is clear, specific, comprehensive and preferably written in the four official languages. It conveys the following :

- the goals and objectives of the centre;
- how the centre plans to achieve its objectives;
- the values held by the centre with respect to children;
- the centre's approach to child management;
- rules/regulations, policies and procedures of the centre; and
- a preface with a list of health resources for emergencies, diagnosis, treatment and information.

The handbook is regularly reviewed and the updated copy of the handbook is distributed to parents with an acknowledgement of receipt.

Centre's Journal

The journal serves as a chronological record of all activities and events occurring in the centre. It helps the centre to reflect on changes and trends, and provides an avenue for further improvement, for example:

- experiences in working with staff and families enhance good partnership and facilitate follow-ups;
- documenting experiences in working with other centres helps in networking and possible collaboration in future;
- milestones reached through working with community partners help the centre gain recognition and credibility, and boost its professional reputation; and
- recording the process of working with children who have learning difficulties allows the teacher to improve her skills in providing alternative methods of education for special needs. Such documentation also provides other teachers with more teaching ideas.

Evaluation of the Centre's Performance

The centre constantly reviews and evaluates its performance by:

- working in accordance with its goals, missions and philosophy; and
- improving the quality of its services (through staff training and development, for instance).

Conducting surveys, customer satisfaction/evaluation exercises or having a suggestion box help to obtain feedback and enable the centre to see things from the parents' perspective, especially when differences arise.

The centre can aim for awards such as the People Developer (PD), Singapore Quality Class (SQC) and International Standards Organisation (ISO) certification to achieve recognition for investing in human resources and a comprehensive system for ensuring quality.



Centres receiving the ISO and PD certifications as a mark of their commitment to quality

