

# **Guide to Setting Up A Child Care Centre**



**Family Services Division  
Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports**

Family Services Information Line: 1800-2585812  
Fax: 6354 8236  
Email: [MCYS\\_Child\\_Care\\_Link@mcys.gov.sg](mailto:MCYS_Child_Care_Link@mcys.gov.sg)  
Child Care Link Website: <http://www.childcarelink.gov.sg>

21 April 2009

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Page**

### **PART I INTRODUCTION**

- |           |  |          |
|-----------|--|----------|
| <b>A.</b> | <b>Role of the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports</b> | <b>1</b> |
| <b>B.</b> | <b>Definition of a Child Care Centre</b>                               | <b>1</b> |
| <b>C.</b> | <b>Legislation Governing Child Care Centres</b>                        | <b>1</b> |

### **PART II PROCEDURES FOR SETTING UP A CHILD CARE CENTRE**

- |           |  |          |
|-----------|--|----------|
| <b>A.</b> | <b>Finding Out About the Child Care Business</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>B.</b> | <b>Pre-requisites for Setting Up a Child Care Centre</b>                                     | <b>2</b> |
| <b>C.</b> | <b>Choosing Suitable Premises</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| <b>D.</b> | <b>Clearances from Relevant Government Departments</b>                                       | <b>5</b> |
| <b>E.</b> | <b>Child Care Centre Licence/Government Financial Support<br/>For Approved Organisations</b> | <b>6</b> |
| <b>F.</b> | <b>Starting Operation</b>  | <b>6</b> |

### **PART III REQUIREMENTS OF A CHILD CARE CENTRE**

- |           |   |          |
|-----------|---|----------|
| <b>A.</b> | <b>Services to be Provided</b>                            | <b>7</b> |
| <b>B.</b> | <b>Planning the Child Care Centre Programme and Meals</b> | <b>7</b> |
| <b>C.</b> | <b>Staffing Requirements to be Complied with OBLs</b>     | <b>8</b> |

### **APPENDICES**

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>Appendix A</b> | <b>Procedure for Setting Up a Child Care Centre at Private Premises</b>                                  |
| <b>Appendix B</b> | <b>Format for Computing Estimated Operational Costs Per Child/Year</b>                                   |
| <b>Appendix C</b> | <b>Tax Treatment of Expenditure Incurred in the Development of Employer-Sponsored Child Care Centres</b> |
| <b>Appendix D</b> | <b>Physical Requirements of a Child Care Centre</b>  |
| <b>Appendix E</b> | <b>Layout, Furnishings and Equipment</b>   |

<b>PART I: INTRODUCTION</b>
-----------------------------

**A. ROLE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, YOUTH AND SPORTS**

The Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) oversees the setting up of child care centres in Singapore. Individuals who are interested in setting up a child care centre are advised to read this guide thoroughly and contact MCYS for advice, if necessary.

Voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs) or employers who wish to set up a child care centre as a community service or as an employee welfare benefit can contact MYCS for consultation. You are welcome to email us at [MCYS\\_Child\\_Care\\_Link@mcys.gov.sg](mailto:MCYS_Child_Care_Link@mcys.gov.sg) or speak to our customer service officers at 1800 258 5812.

More information on child care services can be found at <http://www.childcarelink.gov.sg>.

With effect from 2 Aug 2004, all applications for child care centre licence must be submitted on-line via Online Business Licensing Service (OBS) at <http://www.business.gov.sg>

**B. DEFINITION OF A CHILD CARE CENTRE**

The Child Care Centres Act (Cap. 37A) defines a child care centre as:

**"any premises at which 5 or more children who are under the age of 7 years are habitually received for the purposes of care and supervision during part of the day or for longer periods."**

**C. LEGISLATION GOVERNING CHILD CARE CENTRES**

Child care centres are governed by the Child Care Centres Act (Cap. 37A) and Child Care Centres Regulations (Cap. 37A, Section 19).

The Child Care Centres Act (Cap. 37A), Section 4 requires:

- (a) all child care centres to be licensed; and
- (b) all child care centres to comply with standards set out in the Regulations made under the Act, or any other requirements that may be specified by the Director of Social Welfare. **The Regulations include the use of Child Care Link by child care centres to make submissions as stipulated by the Director. Please refer to Regulation 42 and First Schedule of the Child Care Centres Regulations.**

You are advised to familiarise yourself with the legislative requirements for the development and operation of a child care centre. Copies of the above-mentioned Child Care Centres Act and Regulations can be purchased from the SNP Corporation Ltd at :

SNP Corporation Ltd  
1 Kim Seng Promenade  
#18-01 Great World City East Tower  
Singapore 237994  
Tel: 68269600

**PART II : PROCEDURE FOR SETTING UP A CHILD CARE CENTRE**  
**A flow chart on the procedures can be found at Appendix A**

**A. FINDING OUT ABOUT THE CHILD CARE BUSINESS**

1. Visit a few child care centres if possible.
2. Do an initial costing to assess the viability of the business. You may need to consult an accountant on the tax implications of setting up a child care centre. Among the costs you have to consider are:
  - (a) capital costs, such as cost of building, conversion and renovation costs, etc; and
  - (b) operational costs, such as rent, utilities, administrative costs, staff costs, etc.

Appendix B gives a sample format for computing estimated operational costs per child per year.
3. Try to attend a course on early childhood care and education if you are going into the business full-time and do not have any previous training in early childhood care and education. If you are not prepared to attend the course, your involvement in running the centre should be limited only to handling the finance and administration.

**B. PRE-REQUISITES FOR SETTING UP A CHILD CARE CENTRE**

To set up a child care centre, the applicant must ensure that he/she meets the following pre-requisites:

- (i) The applicant(s) must be above the age of 21 years.
- (ii) The applicant/partners/Directors/Management Committee Members of the applicant(s)'s organisation/company has/have not: -
  - (a) committed any offence involving child abuse/child neglect;
  - (b) committed any offence under Part XI of the Women's Charter (Cap 353);
  - (c) committed any offence under Section 375 or 376A of the Penal Code (Cap 224);
  - (d) been convicted in any court of law; and
  - (e) been issued with a warning letter by the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports, which states that he/she has committed a non-compliance which will be taken into consideration for application of a child care centre licence.
- (iii) For current operators, the tenure of licence of your existing child care centres must be at least 12 months. Centre supervisor must be trained at Diploma in Pre-school Education –Leadership (DPE-L) level. At least 70% of programme staff must be trained, of whom 45% must be trained at least at the Certificate in Pre-school Teaching level (including at least one in four staff with Diploma in Pre-school Teaching). In addition, the centre should not have been issued with a warning letter during the current tenure of licence.
- iv) The applicants shall comply with requirements such as physical requirements, staffing requirements, administrative requirements and conditions for the extension of Government Child Care Subsidy

Scheme to Child Care Centres as approved by the Director of Social Welfare. Applicants can refer to the Child Care Centres Act and Regulations for the complete set of requirements.

## **C. CHOOSING SUITABLE PREMISES**

### **1. Decide on the type of premises to be used. The procedure for approval will depend on the type of premises used.**

#### **(a) Private Residential or Commercial Premises**

Apply to the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) for approval, for change of use of the premises. (Refer to URA website at <http://www.ura.gov.sg/dc/dcu/childcare.html>)

#### **(b) Housing and Development Board (HDB) Void Deck (Private Operator)**

Tender for the HDB void deck premises. Information on release of premises will be published in major dailies. (Refer to <http://www.place2lease.com> for details, and to take part in online bidding for the tender)

#### **(c) HDB Void Deck (Voluntary/Non-profit making Organisation)**

MCYS will invite Voluntary/Non-profit making Organisations to take part in Open Selection Process (OSP). (Refer to Child Care Link portal at <http://www.childcarelink.gov.sg> under `Announcements`)

### **2. Consider the following factors when selecting your premises:**

- (a) the child care centre should be located on the ground floor of the building, unless approved otherwise by the Director of Social Welfare. Approval must be sought from the Ministry prior to the setting up of the centre should it not be located on the ground floor of the building;
- (b) the structure and layout of the building should be such that it does not pose difficulties in the supervision of children or danger to children;
- (c) if private residential premises are used, the building must be a detached or a pair of semi-detached houses preferably with access to playground facilities; please refer to URA's website for its detailed guidelines at <http://www.ura.gov.sg/dc/dcu/childcare.html>
- (d) if the child care centre is to be sited on rented premises, the lease should be of a sufficiently long period (at least 3 years with an option to renew). To avoid potential problems with landlords, you are advised to obtain the support and approval of the landlord for the use of the premises as a child care centre;
- (e) the location should be accessible to the community it serves, have adequate parking facilities and be away from petrol stations, main roads and other traffic hazards; and
- (f) you may need to assess the demand for child care and the types of services. Some ways to assess demand are to:
  - (i) survey the availability of other child care and related facilities near the proposed premises, e.g. the number of facilities, the capacities and enrolment, etc;
  - (ii) check with parents in the neighbourhood on their needs, such as ages of children requiring care, hours and days per week when care will be needed and types of services required; and
  - (iii) anticipate any problems that may arise within the neighbourhood if the landed residential premises are converted to a child care centre (e.g. traffic flow, noise level) and assess whether you would be able to take measures to reduce or avoid these problems.

**3. Assess the space requirements for a child care centre before making the final decision on whether the premise is suitable for childcare. Some considerations are:**

- (a) the indoor space should be large enough to accommodate a desirable number of children. The centre's capacity is determined by space for indoor activities. It is computed based on the minimum space requirement per child, that is 3m<sup>2</sup> of usable floor space, excluding service areas. Any single activity area for children must be able to accommodate no less than 4 children at 3m<sup>2</sup> per child after deduction of the passageway.

As for infant care, the minimum space requirement per infant is 5m<sup>2</sup>. Similarly, the minimum space requirement does not include the space for service areas, entrance areas, hallways, passage ways and diapering areas.

- (b) there should be adequate space for service areas such as:
- (i) separate facilities for washing, bathing and dressing;
  - (ii) kitchen and pantry facilities;
  - (iii) storage facilities for mattresses, bedding, toys, supplies, indoor and outdoor materials and equipment, teaching materials, cleaning agents, inflammable substances, etc.;
  - (iv) office;
  - (v) sick bay (a room separate from the activity area of the children) for temporary isolation of unwell children; and
- (c) the child care centre must have access to outdoor play space. If this is not possible, there shall be an additional indoor gross motor activity area. The space provided, both indoors and outdoors, shall be at least 30 m<sup>2</sup> or one-fifth of the centre's capacity at 5 m<sup>2</sup> per child, whichever is more. The gross motor activity area shall exclude service and children's activity areas;
- (d) The outdoor playground must be within walking distance from the child care centre, i.e. the children should not cross any vehicular roads to reach the playground.

Refer to Appendix D for further details on the physical requirements of a child care centre.

**D. CLEARANCES FROM RELEVANT GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS**

Once you have identified a suitable premise for use as a child care centre, the following actions will be required:

**1. Apply for Change of Use**

Apply for approval for change of use of the premise (if it is not an HDB void deck) from:

Chief Planner  
Urban Redevelopment Authority  
Development Control Division  
45 Maxwell Road, The URA Centre  
Singapore 069118

For voluntary/non-profit making organisations and private operators using HDB void decks, MCYS will liaise with relevant authorities and Members of Parliament of the respective constituencies for their approval.

## 2. **Submit Floor Plan**

Once approval for change of use is obtained from URA, you should engage the services of a Qualified Person (QP), i.e. normally either an architect or engineer, to incorporate the physical requirements (Appendix D) into the floor plan, which is to be submitted to relevant government departments, e.g. Building and Construction Authority (BCA), URA, Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF), etc., for building plan approval.

Get your QP to expedite the building plan submission by submitting the revised floor plan to the following government departments simultaneously:

- (a) Central Building Plan Unit (CBPU) for clearance on:
  - (i) sewerage works;
  - (ii) environmental health matters;
  - (iii) drainage works; and
  - (iv) pollution control;
- (b) Land Transport Authority (LTA) for clearance on car park facilities; and
- (c) Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) for clearance on fire safety matters e.g. Fire Safety Certificate.

Get a plumber to seek clearance from the Sewerage Department (Public Utilities Board) for 'sewerage works' when more child-sized toilets and/or child-sized wash hand basins are installed in a given area.

## 3. **Renovate premises**

Get your QP to apply for 'Commencement of Works' from the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) before proceeding with renovation of the premise. Proceed with the renovation of the premise only when you have obtained approvals for building plan and 'Commencement of Works' from BCA.

### **Issue of Temporary Occupation Permit/Certificate of Statutory Completion**

Request your QP to submit Certificate of Supervision of Building Works and/or Certificate of Supervision of Structural Works (both are BCA forms) to BCA on completion of renovation. If all the requirements are met, the authorities will issue a Temporary Occupation Permit/Certificate of Statutory Completion (TOP/CSC).

## E. ***CHILD CARE CENTRE LICENCE/ GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR APPROVED ORGANISATIONS***

1. Register your business with the Accounting & Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA) before you apply for the child care centre licence. If you intend to register your business under a sole-proprietorship or partnership, you are required by law to pay your Medisave contributions up to 31 December of the previous year before the business registration and licence can be approved.
2. Submit the application for licence via Online Business Licensing Service (OBLS) Licence Application at ([www.business.gov.sg](http://www.business.gov.sg)), once your centre has completed renovation and has been issued with the TOP or CSC by BCA.
3. An employer or a voluntary/non-profit making organisation which sets up a child care centre as an employee-benefit or as a community service, can apply for financial support for the development of the child care centre. Employers can refer to Appendix C for the tax treatment of expenditure incurred in the development of employer-sponsored child care centres.
4. Upon submission of licence application, you will be notified via email to contact a Family Services Officer for a pre-licensing visit. Please ensure that your centre is operationally ready before you arrange for a pre-licensing visit.

**F. *STARTING OPERATION***

1. **Please note that your centre should not begin operations nor accept monetary payments until your application for a child care centre licence has been approved.** The Child Care Centres Act (Cap 37A), Section 3 stipulates that:
  - (a) “No person shall operate or take part in the management of a child care centre except under the authority of and in accordance with the terms and conditions of a licence issued by the Director; and
  - (b) If a child care centre is not licensed or is used otherwise than in accordance with the terms and conditions of its licence, any person who operates or takes part in the management of the child care centre shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$5,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to both.”
2. When the licence is approved, you will be asked to attend a pre-operational briefing. The licence will be issued to you upon payment of the licence fees via GIRO.
3. Once the application for child care centre licence is approved, you are also approved to administer the Government Child Care Subsidy Scheme for eligible parents. However, the centre is required to adhere to the condition for extension of Government Child Care Subsidy Scheme to Child Care Centres which can be found at <http://www.childcarelink.gov.sg>.
4. Please note that the licence is non-transferable. If you wish to transfer ownership of the centre to someone else you need to give parents and MCYS at least 2 months notice in advance. Please refer to the “Guidelines on Transfer of Ownership for Child Care Centres” at <http://www.childcarelink.gov.sg> (under ‘Publications’). The new owner should meet the pre-requisites for setting up a child care centre. He is required to submit a fresh application for child care centre licence via OBLIS. The existing licensee will be responsible for the operations until a new licence is issued to the new owner.

**PART III : REQUIREMENTS OF A CHILD CARE CENTRE**
**A. SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED**
**Hours of Operation**

1. A child care centre should be open throughout the year except on Sundays and gazetted public holidays. A child care centre can observe half-days on the eve of Christmas, New Year and Chinese New Year. In addition, the centre may close for another 5½ days in a year, of which 2½ days should be used for staff training.
2. The normal hours of operation are:
 

Mondays - Fridays	:	no later than 7 am and close no earlier than 7.00 pm
Saturdays	:	no later than 7 am and close no earlier than 2.00 pm

*Note: Children should not be cared for in the child care centre for more than 24 hours continuously.*

**Types of Programmes**

The following types of programmes can be provided in a child care centre:

- (a) Full Day Care Programme;
- (b) Half Day Care Programme;
- (c) Flexible Child Care Programme; and
- (d) Student Care Programme

Durations of the above are to adhere to subsidy guidelines for the respective programme types.

**Age Range for Admission**

- (a) A child care centre primarily caters to pre-school children below 7 years old.
- (b) A child care centre can choose to incorporate infant care into its services.  
Infant care caters to children aged 2 to 18 months.

**B. PLANNING THE CHILD CARE CENTRE PROGRAMME SCHEDULE AND MEALS**
**Daily Programme Schedule/Time Table**

The centre operator should incorporate educational programmes which are suitable for the various age groups. The daily programme schedule must be oriented towards enhancing the physical, social, intellectual and emotional development of children. It is essential to outline the philosophy of care and method of operation in a written programme statement. An important part of the centre's philosophy of care should also include the encouragement of "parent-involvement" activities in the centre. The centre should adopt MOE's curriculum framework and guides to plan and develop appropriate curriculum and assessment to support and promote children's learning and development. (Centres referencing alternative curriculum frameworks should ensure proper documentation.)

**Meals**

Centres are encouraged to provide meals that meet the requirements of the Health Promotion Board (HPB). For more information, please log on to [www.hpb.gov.sg](http://www.hpb.gov.sg)

**C. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS TO BE COMPLIED WITH (OBLS)**

### **Levels of Programme Staff and their Qualifications**

The staffing of a child care centre is crucial. Programme staff must meet the basic qualifications and should be suitable in terms of age, health, personality, knowledge and experience in child care.

The specifications for child care centre staffing must be strictly adhered to:

1. For a start, a child care centre **providing only child care services for children aged above 18 months to 6 years 11 months** is required to meet the following minimum staffing:-
  - a. To have a qualified trained supervisor who meets the following requirements:
    - Trained at Diploma in Pre-School Education Leadership (DPE-L) / Diploma in Early Childhood Care & Education – Leadership (DECCE-L) level;
    - Certified<sup>1</sup> by MCYS / MOE as a Level 2<sup>2</sup> teacher;
    - Holds a valid first aid certificate recognized by MCYS;
    - Has at least 2 years experience in a child care /pre-school setting;
  - b. To have at least 1 programme staff certified by MCYS / MOE as a Level 2 teacher, trained at Diploma in Pre-school Teaching (DPE-T) / Diploma in Early Childhood Care & Education – Teaching (DECCE-T) level and;
  - c. To have at least 2 programme staff who are certified by MCYS / MOE as a Level 1<sup>3</sup> teacher, trained at least at Certificate in Pre-School Teaching (CPT) / Certificate in Early Childhood Care & Education (CECCE) level.
2. A child care centre **providing both infant care (aged 2 months to 18 months) and child care services for children aged above 18 months to 6 years 11 months** is required to meet the following minimum staffing:-
  - a. To have a qualified trained supervisor who meets the following requirements:
    - Trained at Diploma in Pre-School Education Leadership (DPE-L) / Diploma in Early Childhood Care & Education – Leadership (DECCE-L) level.
    - Certified by MCYS / MOE as a Level 2 teacher.
    - Holds a valid first aid certificate recognized by MCYS.
    - Has at least 2 years experience in a child care /pre-school setting.
  - b. To have at least 1 programme staff certified by MCYS / MOE as a Level 2 teacher, trained at Diploma in Pre-school Teaching (DPE-T) / Diploma in Early Childhood Care & Education – Teaching (DECCE-T) level;
  - c. To have at least 1 programme staff who is certified by MCYS / MOE as a Level 1 teacher, trained at least at Certificate in Pre-School Teaching level / Certificate in Early Childhood Care & Education; and
  - d. To have at least 1 programme staff who is trained at Certificate in Infant/Toddler Care (CITC) level.

---

<sup>1</sup> For staff who have yet to be certified, certified true copies of their academic and professional qualifications may be submitted to the Family Support and Training Section, MCYS at the following address: 510 Thomson Road, #13-00 SLF Building, Singapore 298135

<sup>2</sup> Level 2 (L2) teachers may be deployed to teach at any level (Pre-Nursery/ Nursery/ K1 /K2)

<sup>3</sup> Level 1 (L1) teachers may only be deployed to teach pre-nursery and nursery classes

3. A child care centre providing **solely infant care (aged 2 months to 18 months) services** is required to meet the following minimum staffing:-
  - a. To have a qualified trained supervisor who meets the following requirements:
    - Trained at Diploma in Pre-School Education Leadership (DPE-L) / Diploma in Early Childhood Care & Education – Leadership (DECCE-L) level.
    - Certified by MCYS / MOE as a Level 2 teacher.
    - Holds a valid first aid certificate recognized by MCYS.
    - Has at least 2 years experience in a child care /pre-school setting.
  - b. To have at least 3 programme staff who are trained at the Certificate in Infant/ Toddler Care (CITC) level.
4. For applicants who take over an existing centre, the minimum staffing to meet licensing criteria will apply and the applicant must ensure that there is sufficient staff to meet staff-child ratios, should there already be children enrolled in the centre.
5. Every child care centre should employ qualified/experienced teachers who possess at least 5 GCE 'O' level credits including English Language, and trained at least at Diploma in Pre-school Teaching (DPE-T) / Diploma in Early Childhood Care & Education – Teaching (DECCE-T) level. Concrete plans must be made to send untrained staff for training at appropriate levels.
6. By January 2013, incumbent/existing teachers<sup>4</sup> are required to have a Diploma in Pre-School Teaching) / Diploma in Early Childhood Care & Education – Teaching (DECCE-T) and an 'O' level credit in EL/ or a minimum band 5.5 in IELTS to teach K1 and K2 classes.
7. MCYS will also require that each child care centre have at least 75 percent of all its teachers obtain a Diploma in Pre-School Teaching / Diploma in Early Childhood Care & Education – Teaching (DECCE-T) by January 2013.
8. Every child care centre should employ sufficient trained programme staff to meet the Ministry's stipulated programme staff-child ratios at all times.
9. Every child care centre should ensure that there is at least a staff trained in first aid at all times during the centre's operational hours.
10. Every child care centre should ensure that there is a minimum of two staff on the premises when more than one child is present in the centre.

---

<sup>4</sup> Definition of Incumbent/ Existing and New teachers :

-Incumbent/existing teachers are programme staff currently employed in either kindergartens or child care centres, and have registered and attained certification status with the Ministry of Education (MOE) or Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) as at 31 Dec 2008.

- New teachers are teachers in kindergartens or child care centres registered on or after 1 Jan 2009.

### **Trained Programme Staff-Child Ratio**

1. Table 1: Programme Staff-Child Ratio

<b>AGE OF CHILDREN</b>	<b>TRAINED PROGRAMME STAFF-CHILD RATIO</b>
2 months - 18 months	1: 5*
Above 18 months - 30 months	1: 8
Above 30 months - 3 years	1:12
Above 3 years - 4 years	1:15
Above 4 years - below 7 years	1:25

\* Centres may employ either a State Registered Nurse (SRN) or a trained Infant Care Educarer. Centre is required to ensure that at least one SRN or trained Infant Care Educarer is present at all times during the centre's operating hours.

When computing the number of programme staff required, only staff performing child care services, such as the supervisor, child care teachers and child care assistants should be considered. Administrative and auxiliary staff such as cooks, cleaners, etc., should be excluded from the computation.

2. Where mixed age grouping is practised, the programme staff-child ratio for the youngest children in the group should be adopted.
3. Centres are required to have teachers trained at least at CPT/ CECCE level for children above 18 months to 7 years during programme hours (from 9am to 5pm). Centres with infant care services are required to have a trained infant care educator (trained at CITC level) at all times (from 7am to 7pm).

### **Proposed Staffing**

1. An estimate of the minimum number of programme staff required for centres with capacities of 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85 and 90 children aged above 18 months to below 7 years is at Table 2.

**Table 2: Estimated Minimum Programme Staff Requirement**

<b>CAPACITIES</b>	60	65	70	75	80	85	90
<b>GRADE</b>							
Supervisor	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Head/Senior Teacher	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Teacher	3	3	4	4	4	4	5
Child Care Assistant	3	3	3	3	4	4	4
Total	8	8	9	9	10	10	11

2. You should also take into consideration coverage of work for staff on medical or vacation leave or training.
3. The final staffing requirements will depend on the age groups catered for, proposed number of children and the number of trained staff for each age group. If you plan to admit infants aged from 2 months to 18 months, additional programme staff is to be employed. State Registered Nurses or Infant Care Educarers are to be employed for infant care.

### **Recognition of Pre-School Qualifications**

1. Child care centres wishing to send their staff's qualifications for recognition are required to submit their applications by forwarding the certified-true-copies of the following documents:

- (a) copies of pre-school certificates and official transcripts (detailed description of course content). For certificates and transcripts in other languages, centres have to forward these documents for translation at a fee to:

The Interpreting Section  
Supreme Court  
St. Andrew's Road  
Singapore 178957

- (b) other relevant academic certificates e.g. GCE 'O' certificates;

- (c) curriculum vitae and indication of working experience in pre-school setting; to:

Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports  
Family Services Division  
Family Support and Training Section  
13<sup>th</sup> Storey SLF Building  
510 Thomson Road  
Singapore 298135

2. In addition to hard copies of the stipulated documents, child care centres are also required to submit an on-line application via the Child Care Link System (CCLS)

More information on the approved teacher-training courses, first aid courses and the training route for child care centre personnel can be obtained from <http://www.childcarelink.gov.sg> (under 'Quick Links for Operators').

### **Schemes Of Service**

1. Salaries should commensurate with qualifications and job responsibilities.

2. When working on the schemes of service, other related areas which need to be looked into are:

- |     |                               |   |   |
|-----|-------------------------------|---|---|
| (a) | hours of work;                | } |   |
| (b) | staff annual leave;           | } |   |
| (c) | medical & hospitalisation     | } |   |
|     | benefits;                     | } | In accordance with the regulations      |
| (d) | job descriptions;             | } | stipulated by the Ministry of Manpower. |
| (e) | conditions for termination    | } |   |
|     | of service, training, etc.;   | } |   |
| (f) | other benefits or conditions. | } |   |

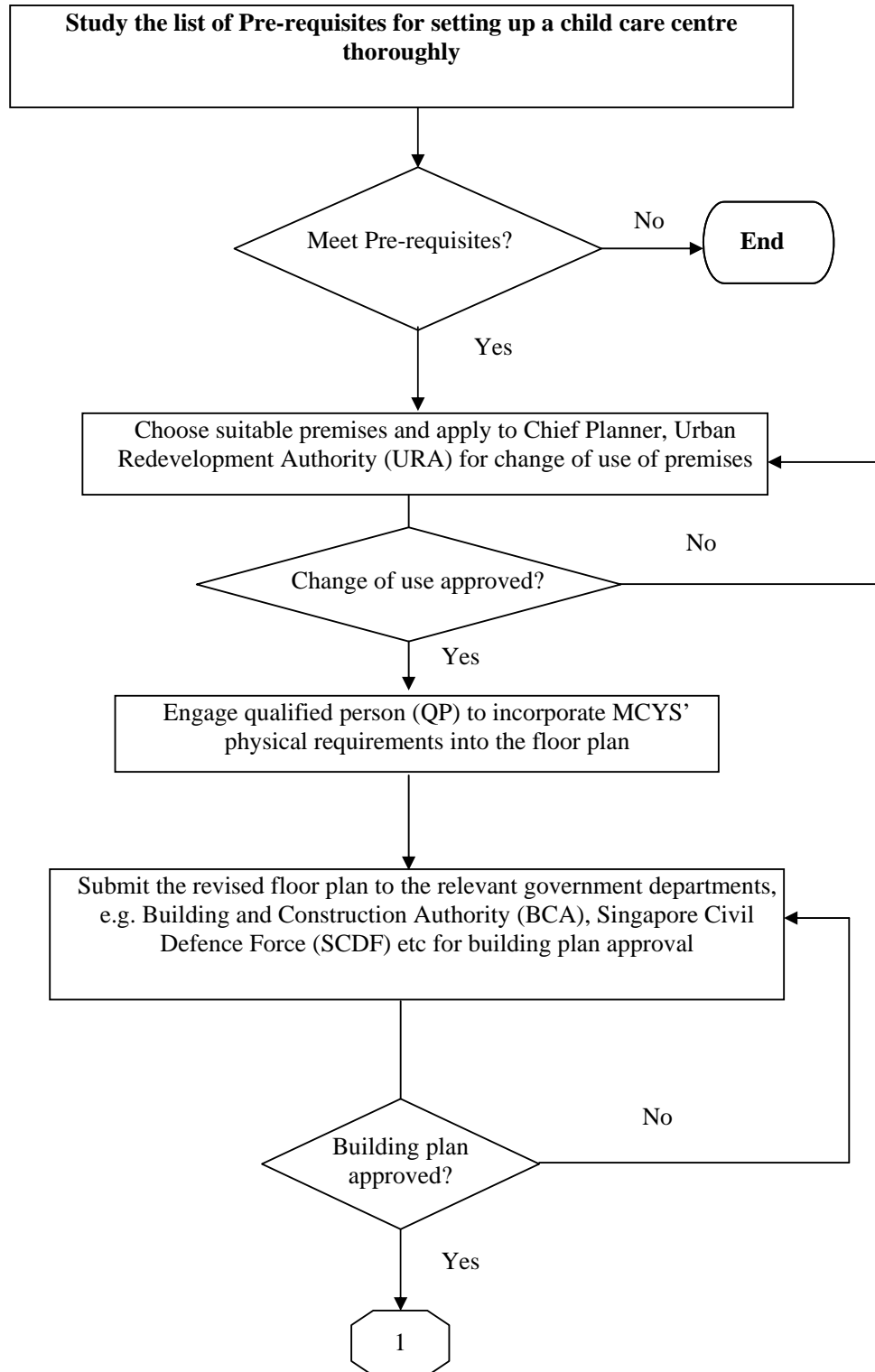
### **Health Clearance for Staff**

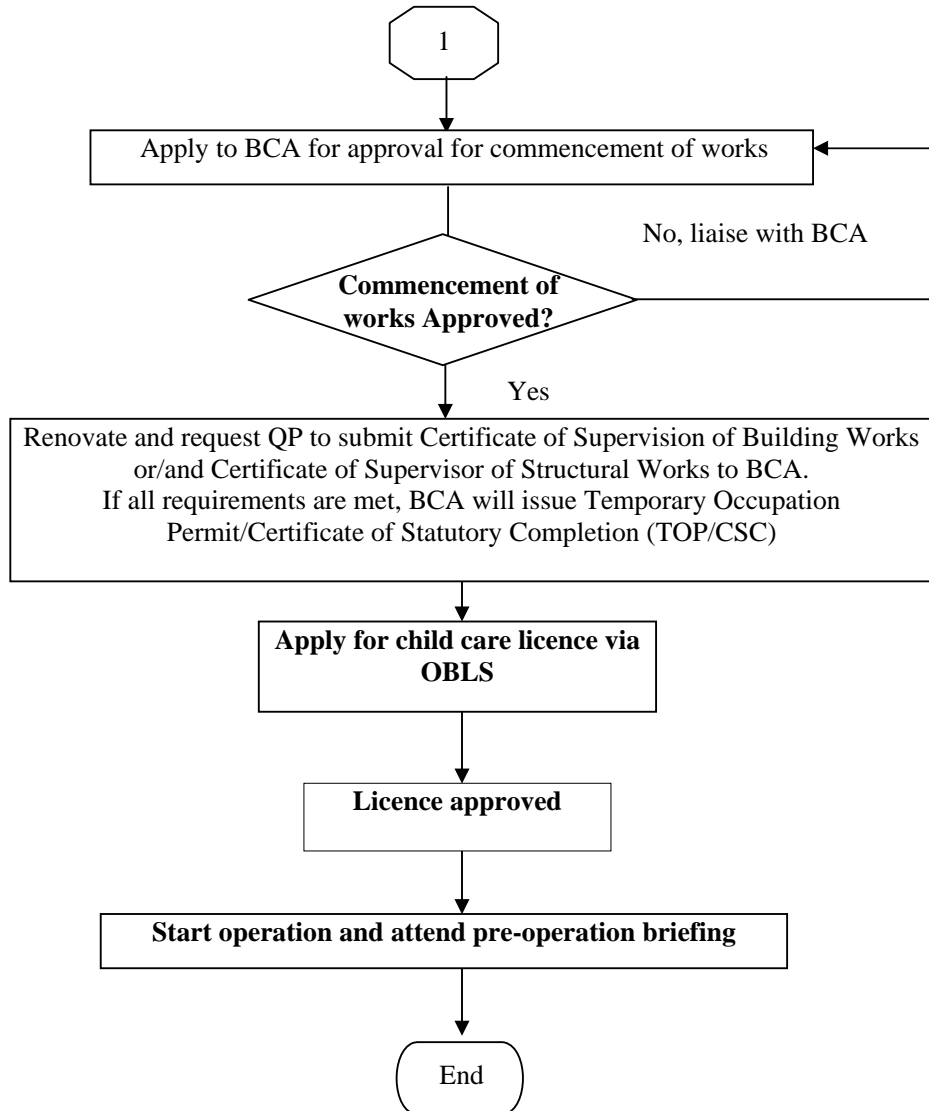
All child care centre staff must undergo a pre-employment medical examination and should be medically cleared before joining the centre. The types and frequency of medical clearances for child care personnel is at Table 3.

**Table 3: Types and Frequency of Medical Clearances for Child Care Personnel**

<b>MEDICAL CLEARANCE</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
(a) General physical examination	once only
(b) Chest X-ray	before employment and subsequently, once every 3 years for all staff over 45 years of age
(c) Full urine test	once only
(d) Blood test for haemoglobin count	once only
(e) Hepatitis B Surface Antigen (HbsAg)	once only
(f) Vaccination against typhoid (for cooks and any other person who also undertakes food preparation in the cook's absence)	before employment and subsequently, once every 3 years
(g) Fit for employment	once only

**PROCEDURE FOR SETTING UP A CHILD CARE CENTRE  
AT PRIVATE PREMISES**





Note: 1. Relocation of existing child care centre

If you intend to move your child care centre to alternative premises after starting operations for some time, you would need to inform the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports **at least 3 months in advance** of the plan to shift. After this, step 2 of the above procedure onwards would need to be followed, i.e. choose suitable premises.

2. Setting up of another branch

If you intend to set up another branch, you would need to start from step 1 of the above procedure, i.e. study the list of pre-requisites for setting up a child care centre.

**Appendix B**

**FORMAT FOR COMPUTING ESTIMATED OPERATIONAL COSTS  
PER CHILD PER YEAR**

<b>OPERATIONAL COSTS</b>	<b>AMT PER MTH</b> [\$(Y)]	<b>AMT PER YR</b> [\$(Y) X 12 MTHS = \$(Z)]	<b>AMT PER CHILD PER YR</b> [\$(Z)/CENTRE'S CAPACITY]
Expenditure on Manpower ♦ Salaries ♦ Bonus  Rent & Conservancy Charges  Public Utilities  Meals  General Supplies (e.g. teaching materials, office/household supplies, toiletries etc)  Programme Staff Training  Others (e.g. repairs, telephone charges, insurance etc)			
<b>TOTAL</b>			

**NOTE:** Please refer to Table 2 for the estimated minimum number of programme staff required for a child care centre. The number serves only as a guide. In computing the final programme staff requirement, the ages of children, the programme staff-child ratio and the groupings of children will have to be taken into consideration.

**TAX TREATMENT OF EXPENDITURE INCURRED  
IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
EMPLOYER-SPONSORED CHILD CARE CENTRES**

If the employer sets up a workplace childcare centre for the benefit of his employees, the employer may be accorded the following tax treatment:

- (a) If the employer is carrying on a qualifying trade under section 18(1) of the Income Tax Act and his building qualifies as an industrial building for which industrial building allowance is allowed, the employer may claim industrial building allowance on capital expenditure for renovating and converting premises into a workplace child care centre if the premises are physically part of the industrial building and the child care centre operations qualify as being "for the welfare of workers employed in the employer's trade". This is provided that the child care operations are carried out by the employer himself (i.e. not outsourced to professional childcare operators) and the childcare facilities are only available to children of employees employed in his trade.
- (b) The employer may claim capital allowance on capital expenditure for purchase of furnishing and equipment over and above the amount given by the Government for workplace child care centres or renewal allowance on such capital expenditure upon the replacement of the furnishing and equipment.
- (c) Losses incurred in running workplace child care centres will generally be regarded as losses of the trade and qualify for the normal deduction or carry-forward.
- (d) Subsidies given to employees to help them defray the cost of child care are regarded as deductible expenses to the employer. For the employees, the childcare subsidies are not taxable if they are given for their children's attendance at a licensed childcare centre, as provided for under section 13(1)(zb) of the Income Tax Act.

### **PHYSICAL REQUIREMENT OF A CHILD CARE CENTRE**

The specifications for child care centre premises and the hygiene and environmental health requirements which are spelt out in the First and Second Schedules of the Child Care Centres Regulations (Cap 37A, Sec 19) must be strictly adhered to.

Please refer to “Guidelines for Centre-based Infant/Toddler Care Services” at <http://www.childcarelink.gov.sg>, should the centre wish to incorporate infant care as part of the child care programme.

#### **Specification for a Child Care Centre Premises**

1. Child care centres are to be housed on the ground floor of a building unless otherwise approved by the Director of Social Welfare. The site of the child care centre shall be located away from main roads and other traffic hazards wherever possible. Approval must be sought from the Ministry prior to the setting up of the centre should it not be located on the ground floor of the building.
2. Every child care centre should have a designated space for activity areas, playing, toilet and bathing facilities, washing, eating, resting, an office, staff rest periods, isolation of sick children, storage of food, beds, bedding, toys, indoor and outdoor play materials and equipment, and medical supplies.
3. Every child care centre should have a designated space for the preparation of food and snacks and this should be made inaccessible to children.
4. Every child care centre shall have a minimum of 3m<sup>2</sup> of usable floor space (excluding service area) as indoor activity area for each child enrolled. Additional space as determined by the Director of Social Welfare shall be provided for children who are unable to walk yet.
5. For infant care centres at least 5m<sup>2</sup> floor space area should be provided for every infant/toddler. This requirement does not include space for service areas, entrance area, hallways and diaper changing areas.
6. Every child care centre should have at least one air-conditioned room equipped with air-cleaner or an add-on air filter to accommodate children who may develop health problems due to haze.
7. Every child care centre shall have access to outdoor play space. The outdoor playground must be within walking distance from the child care centre, i.e. the children should not cross any vehicular roads to reach the playground.
8. Where outdoor playground is not possible, there shall be additional indoor gross motor activity area. The space provided both indoors and outdoors, shall be at least 30m<sup>2</sup> or one-fifth of the centre’s capacity at 5 m<sup>2</sup> per child, whichever is more. The gross motor activity area shall exclude service areas and children’s activity areas.

#### **Sanitary Facilities**

1. Pedestal child-sized flush toilets and child-sized wash hand basins have to be provided according to the ratios stipulated in Child Care Centres Regulations. Toilet facilities are to be provided at every floor of the child care centre premises. One adult-sized toilet should be provided where there are 20 or more staff employed.
2. The child-sized wash hand basins should be fixed at a height approximately 500 mm to 600 mm from the floor.

3. The flush toilets should not exceed a height of 350 mm (measured without seat from the floor).
4. Internal walls of toilet blocks must be lined with glazed tiles to a height of at least 1.5 m. The wall behind and above wash hand basins and sinks must be lined with glazed tiles to a height of not less than 450 mm.
5. Toilets are to be separated by partitions that are at least 1 m high.
6. Mirrors of suitable size are to be fixed to the wall above the child-sized wash hand basins.
7. Liquid soap dispensers are to be mounted on the wall next to wash hand basins at the ratio of one dispenser to every two wash hand basins.
8. Hand-drying facilities, preferably single use disposable towels are to be installed near wash hand basins.
9. Toilet paper holders should be within easy reach of children.
10. Bathing facilities (including water heater) are to be provided for children.

#### **Sanitary Facilities for Infant/Toddler Care**

1. Separate facilities for changing diapers and dressing area to be provided for infants & toddlers.
2. Sinks with running water are to be installed next to the diaper changing area at a ratio of one sink to every 10 infants.
3. Sufficient potty-chairs are to be provided for infants & toddlers.

#### **Safety Requirements**

1. Children should not have access to anything that would endanger their safety e.g. medicine, poisonous substances and dangerous objects like knives and thorny or poisonous plants.
2. Window grilles should be installed on all windows which are not on the ground floor. Compliance with this requirement may be waived for those child care centres with central air-conditioning, in which case the windows shall be kept closed at all times when the children are on the premises.
3. At least one movable grille should be installed on windows in each room which is not on the ground floor.
4. Safety gates are to be installed at both ends of staircases.
5. Staircases should be safe for children's use (spiral staircase is not allowed).
6. Hand railings are to be installed at a height suitable for children's use on both sides of the staircases.
7. Gaps between banister railings and steps of the staircases should not be too wide.
8. The height of the railings at the staircase landing and corridors should be at least 1.5m.
9. Children should not have access to the kitchen/pantry. Suitable barriers are to be installed.

10. The centre should have properly equipped first aid kit(s). (No oral medicine and eye-drops are allowed.)
11. First aid kits should be made inaccessible to children.
12. The centre should have fire-fighting equipment/apparatus as indicated in the floor plan.
13. The fire-fighting equipment and apparatus should be regularly serviced.
14. Fire-fighting equipment and apparatus are to be made inaccessible to children.
15. All drains in areas to which children have access to should be covered.
16. The floor of the designated child care area should not be of bare concrete. It should be clean, safe, damp-proof, level, washable and non-slip.
17. The playground (within the compound) should be adequately fenced.
18. The outdoor playground must be within walking distance from the child care centre, i.e. the children should not cross any vehicular roads to reach the playground.
19. No swing door should be installed on the premises.
20. Power points within the designated child care centre should be either raised to a height of at least 1.5 m/rendered ineffective or harmless.
21. Exits, staircases and passageways are to be free from obstruction.
22. Bath tubs should not be used for storing water.
23. Bath tubs must be laid with non-slip mats, and if not in use, covered up.
24. Keys to the emergency exits (doors/windows/grilles) should be easily accessible to staff.

**LAYOUT, FURNISHING AND EQUIPMENT**

**Layout of Centre - Child Care**

1. The layout of the centre should meet the needs of children and facilitate easy supervision. Space should be allocated for both active and quiet activities.
2. Children should have convenient access to toilets and washing facilities. There should be clearly defined passageway to these areas.
3. Toys and books should be displayed within the reach of children.
4. Care should be taken to ensure that children do not have access to anything that would endanger their safety.

**Layout of Centre – Infant/Toddler Care**

1. The infant/toddler care premise is to be preferably housed on the ground floor of a building. If this is not so, every level of the premises is to be equipped with diapering and napping areas.
2. To provide a separate indoor activity area for infants/toddlers away from the child care children.
3. The napping area is to be physically separated from other activity areas by partitions or other suitable barricades.
4. Both the sleeping and indoor activity areas are to be protected from general walk/passageways.
5. Floor finishes must be safe for crawling, standing and walking.

**Furnishings and Equipment – Child Care**

1. When selecting furnishings and equipment for the centre, their developmental relevance, size and type should be considered. In addition, the materials should be safe for the children.
2. There should be enough tables/chairs of a suitable size and eating/drinking utensils. Individual feeding spoons and bowls are to be provided.
3. PVC mattresses and mattress covers should be provided for the children. Toys and books should be age-appropriate.

**Furnishings and Equipment – Infant/Toddler Care**

1. Sufficient strollers/ rockers are to be provided.
2. Child-sized chairs and tables for older infants are to be provided.
3. High chairs which have footrests, side and back supports with a facility for latching the food tray firmly are to be provided.
4. A crib/cot with mattress and mattress cover for each infant aged below 12 months; and PVC mattress with mattress cover for each infant aged 13 months and above are to be provided during nap time.
5. Sufficient and suitable facilities for the sterilisation of milk bottles are to be provided.
6. A refrigerator solely for the storage of baby food, expressed milk, etc is to be provided.
7. A sink with running water for food preparation is to be provided.
8. A broad range of equipment to allow for different types of play is to be provided. All equipment, materials and toys are to be age-appropriate, washable, non-breakable, safe and non-toxic.

**SUGGESTED FURNISHING & EQUIPMENT FOR A CHILD CARE CENTRE**

<b>ITEMS</b>		
<b><u>OFFICE</u></b>		
◆ Table	◆ Computer	◆ Calculator
◆ Chair	◆ Printer	◆ Filing cabinet
◆ Cupboard	◆ Photocopier	
<b><u>SICK BAY</u></b>		
◆ Sofa bed, PVC mattress	◆ Pillow & blanket	◆ First aid kit
<b><u>WAITING/RECEPTION AREA</u></b>		
◆ Sofa set	◆ Wastepaper basket	◆ Door mat
◆ Bulletin board		
<b><u>TOILET/SHOWER AREA</u></b>		
◆ Mirrors	◆ Hand towels dispenser	◆ Toilet roll holder
◆ Water heater	◆ Shower curtains	
◆ Washing machine	◆ Soap dispenser	
<b><u>KITCHEN</u></b>		
◆ Pantry shelves	◆ Cooker	◆ Trolley
◆ Kitchen cabinet	◆ Cooker hood	◆ Oven
◆ Crockery, Cutlery & Cooking Utensils	◆ Refrigerator	◆ Rice cooker
<b><u>GROSS MOTOR ACTIVITY AREA</u></b>		
◆ Rocking horse	◆ Water play equipment	◆ Trampoline (small)
◆ Quadro set	◆ Sand play equipment	◆ Stompers, balls
◆ Tricycle, bicycle	◆ Giant scrambler	◆ Swing, slide, climbing frame, tunnel
◆ Blocks	◆ Bean bags, hoops	
<b><u>MUSIC &amp; MOVEMENT CUM REST ROOM</u></b>		
◆ Television set	◆ CD player	◆ Piano
◆ Magnetic white board	◆ Video player	◆ Guitar
◆ Musical instruments	◆ Radio/cassette recorder	◆ Storage cabinet

**SUGGESTED FURNISHING & EQUIPMENT FOR A CHILD CARE CENTRE**

ITEMS		
<b><u>CLASSROOM</u></b>		
<u>General</u>		
◆ Weighing scale	◆ White board	◆ Wastepaper basket
◆ Height measurement chart	◆ Markers	◆ Floor mats
◆ Storage cabinet	◆ Magnets	◆ Softboard partitions
◆ Table/chair (adult & child size)	◆ Eraser	◆ Book display rack
◆ Cubby holes	◆ Display board	
<u>Interest Corners Dramatic</u>		
◆ Refrigerator	◆ Plates, Cups, forks, spoons	◆ Ironing set
◆ Kitchen store	◆ Plastic fruits & vegetables	◆ Toy telephone
◆ Sink	◆ Combs	◆ Toy bed
◆ Cooking utensils	◆ Clips	◆ Dress up cupboard with appropriate clothing
<u>Manipulative/Block</u>		
◆ Stacking toys	◆ Dough	◆ Hallow blocks
◆ Lego set	◆ Puzzles	◆ Blocks of different shapes, sizes & colors
◆ Threading equipment	◆ Stringing beads	
<u>Science/Maths</u>		
◆ Plants	◆ Live animals	◆ Weighing scale
◆ Charts on life cycle of plants, animals, body parts	◆ Abacus	◆ Charts on mathematics concepts e.g. shapes, numbers & colors
◆ Containers of different shapes, sizes & colors		
<u>Art</u>		
◆ Easel boards, paintbrushes	◆ Scissors (child-sized)	◆ Scrap materials e.g. straws, egg cartons
◆ Poster colours, crayons	◆ Glue, scotch-tapes	
◆ Pencils, rulers, sharpeners	◆ Color paper, crepe paper	
<u>Library</u>		
◆ Age appropriate books	◆ Cushions	◆ Picture charts
◆ Flannel board	◆ Puppets (teaching aids)	
<b><u>GENERAL</u></b>		
◆ Fire extinguishers	◆ Locks	◆ Extension cord
◆ Venetian blinds	◆ Door bell	◆ 2-way plug
◆ Wall clocks	◆ Name tags	◆ Hangers
◆ Ceiling wall fans	◆ Cleaning equipment	◆ Shoe rack
◆ Curtain & tracks	◆ Potty	◆ Lockers/cubby holes

**SUGGESTED AGE-APPROPRIATE TOYS, FURNISHINGS & EQUIPMENT**

<b>TOYS</b>			
<b>INFANTS</b>	<b>TODDLERS</b>	<b>NURSERY</b>	<b>KINDERGARTEN</b>
◆ Mobiles (4 mths)	◆ Shape toys	◆ Construction toys	◆ Puzzles
◆ Spoons, small rattles & cups (5-6 mths)	◆ Big wooden beads	◆ Wheelbarrow	◆ Snap games
◆ Paper (12 mths)	◆ 3-dimensional puzzles	◆ Tricycle	◆ Snap & color & shapes sorting cards
◆ Large multi-colored balls, cubes, odd shapers (12 mths)	◆ Stacking toys	◆ Ringer puppets/hand puppets	◆ Build-a-shape
◆ Hand bell	◆ Telephones	◆ Tools	◆ Describing words
◆ Mirror	◆ Pots & pans	◆ Simple lotto game	◆ Lotto game
◆ Various sized containers	◆ Plastic containers	◆ Ping pong balls	◆ Doing word
◆ Jack-in-the-box	◆ Big simple dump truck	◆ Transport toys	◆ Make-a-word spelling game
◆ Stacking rings/nesting	◆ Barn & farm animals	◆ Pails	
◆ Snap-lock beads	◆ Alphabet/number blocks	◆ Puzzles	
◆ Bath toys/watering, can & sponge	◆ Push & pull toy	◆ Farm animals	
◆ Indoor slide	◆ Safe riding toy	◆ 2-way 1-5 bead stairs	
	◆ Cobbler's bench	◆ Rulers	
	◆ Art supplies	◆ Measuring tapes	
	◆ Transport toys	◆ Weights & balances	
	◆ A set of big wooden blocks	◆ Lotto	
	◆ Tea set		
	◆ Punching toy		
	◆ A set of different hats		
	◆ Easy wooden puzzles		
<b>FURNISHINGS &amp; EQUIPMENT</b>			
◆ Cots/Cribs	◆ Hand rail	◆ Tables & chairs	◆ Tables & chairs
◆ PVC mattresses & mattress cover	◆ Infant stools/chairs	◆ Hinged shelves (3 shelves high)	◆ Cubby holes
◆ Separate fridge	◆ Tables	◆ Side/wall shelves	◆ Low shelves
◆ Sterilizer	◆ Cubby holes	◆ Cubby holes	◆ Hinged shelves
◆ High chairs	◆ Storage bins	◆ Storage bins	◆ White boards
	◆ Hinged shelves (3 shelves high)	◆ Tote trays	◆ Notice boards
◆ Potties	◆ PVC mattresses & mattress cover	◆ PVC mattresses & mattress cover	◆ PVC mattresses & mattress cover
◆ Playpen	◆ Shoe racks	◆ Shoe racks	◆ Tote trays
◆ Cupboards	◆ Stationery	◆ Stationery	◆ Storage bins
◆ Tray unit			◆ Shoe racks
◆ Strollers & Rockers			◆ Stationery