



DAY CARE CENTRE OFFICIAL POLICY

STATEMENT AND OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

Mission Statement

At Switch Brain Schools, we treat each child with the utmost respect. Each child is valued as an individual and is encouraged to reach his/her own maximum potential at his/her own pace.

We are committed to:

- Providing the highest quality childcare for all our families.
- Continually striving to help nurture, challenge and foster independence in all the children in our care.
- Providing a safe, warm, stimulating age appropriate environment, where all children are encouraged to learn, grow and actively explore.
- Developing strong partnerships with our parents, committing to working together to build a foundation that nurtures each child's self-esteem and confidence.

INTRODUCTION TO POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policies and procedures help to provide a consistent approach towards developing services and to minimise misunderstanding. Policies and procedures also provide a framework for making decisions. By involving staff and parents in the development and construction of policies and procedures there is a sense of ownership and commitment to the documents. To maintain a high standard of good practice, policies and procedures must be reviewed regularly and changed accordingly to incorporate any new developments in the childcare sector.

DAY CARE CENTRE POLICIES

Each child is consistently encouraged to develop naturally at his/her own pace. This growth is documented in each child's own individual developmental folder which parents are encouraged to peruse.

Switch Brain Creche is open to all families in our community.

We are committed to operating open and fair Admissions Procedures.

- Each child must be at least 3months old when starting at the day care centre
- Parents seeking to secure a place for their child must complete an enrolment form.
- A completed enrolment form must be lodged with the service prior to the child attending the service
- Children will be admitted on a 'first come first served' basis, following submission of the enrolment form.

FEE PAYMENT POLICY

Fees are set at the beginning of each year at a rate that takes account of affordability for parents and of the sustainability of the centre. Fees must be paid monthly in advance and there is a discount for families where more than one child attends the service.

COLLECTING CHILDREN POLICY

It is the policy of our centre that children may only be collected by the person(s) named on the registration form. The parent/carer must notify the staff if an alternative named person is to collect the child. Children must be always collected on time.

RECORD KEEPING POLICY

Records as required by the Child Care and Education Regulations will be maintained and made available to parents and any relevant persons, to ensure the health, safety and development of all children attending the centre.

Procedures

All records are kept up to date and accurate at all times. All confidential records are stored securely when not in use. Parents or guardians will be asked to co-sign the medical administration form and accident report form, when necessary. All records written are impartial and factual. Records in relation to Child Protection concerns are stored in a separate locked filing cabinet and are shared only on a need-to-know basis in line with our Confidentiality Policy.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

It is our policy to keep confidential all personal information about the children, families, staff and volunteers involved in our centre. Personal information about families in relation to Child Protection concerns will be shared on a need to know basis in line with our Child Protection Policy. Parents may have access to records kept in the service, but only in relation to their own child. All new staff and volunteers will be informed of our confidentiality policy and procedures as part of their induction programme. Information held in the service in relation to Child Protection Concerns will be stored in a separate locked drawer and will be shared only on a need to know basis in line with our Child Protection Policy and with Data Protection Laws.

STAFF & VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT POLICY

The management of Switch Brain Schools is committed to ensuring that our recruitment procedures are fair, open and transparent and comply with relevant employment legislation. Personal information received is dealt with in the strictest confidence. Police checks are conducted on all employees, volunteers, and students who may come in contact with children in our care. An induction period is provided for all new staff and volunteers where they are provided with information about their roles, performance expectations full details of the Centre's Policies and disciplinary procedures. Employees are obliged to familiarise themselves with the Policies and Procedures of the centre and to sign up to codes of behaviour.

Management is also committed to promoting the participation of parents as volunteers and ensuring that the recruitment of parents and other volunteers is open and transparent and at all times gives precedence to the safety and welfare of the children attending the school.

STUDENT POLICY It is our policy to assist students in developing their skills in childcare. Students will work closely with staff, to develop a professional and child-centred approach to working with children.

Procedures for Students on Placement

- All students must be over the age of sixteen.
- As part of their induction, students are requested to read the policies and procedures of the service.
- Students are not included in the adult/child ratio and are never used in place of staff. Students are never left unsupervised with groups or individual children.
- Students are supported through regular supervision meetings.

TRAINING POLICY

It is our policy that all staff will have access to ongoing in-service training, to keep them up to date and to develop their childcare and education skills.

Procedures

Induction training: All newly appointed staff/students/volunteers are provided with the basic information they need to settle into the job and this includes: health and safety, child protection procedures, conditions of employment, policies and procedures. External training and attendance at conferences/workshops/seminars is supported. At staff meetings, staff are given the opportunity to feed back the information from the conference/workshop/seminar they attended. A training needs analysis is carried out and reviewed on a regular basis, to establish what type of training is required, and if it is relevant to the work, individual and the centre.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

It is the policy of our service to ensure that children are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with staff and volunteers in our care. We endeavour to give parents, children and workers adequate information about what we do and what they can expect from us; as well as letting them know how to voice their concerns or complain if there is anything they are not happy about. We also make sure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, trained and supervised in accordance with our Recruitment Policies and Procedures. We have reporting procedures and a named designated person in place to deal with Child Protection Concerns and we ensure that all staff and volunteers are informed of the Reporting Procedures.

HEALTH POLICY

It is the policy of our childcare service to promote a healthy lifestyle through prevention of illness and establishing healthy eating patterns. It is our policy to comply with current Child Care industry and Food Hygiene Regulations.

Healthy Eating - An adult always sits with the children at meal times to encourage good eating habits, stimulate conversation and enhance the quality of the interaction and parents are advised periodically about healthy food choices for their kids.

ILLNESS POLICY FOR CHILDREN

- Children or adults who are sick or who may be a source of infection should not attend the service.
- Parents are advised that a child who has been sick during the night should not attend the service the next day.
- A child with a communicable illness should not attend the service

Illness Policy for Staff

- Staff with a communicable illness should not attend the service
- Arrangements are in place to provide relief cover while staff are on sick leave

SAFE SLEEP POLICY

A 'safe sleep' policy is in place at this school, which facilitates each child's individual need for sleep/rest. While parents are consulted on their child's sleep routines, we ask you to remember that we are responsible for each child in our care and will always follow recommended safe practice. All staff and emergency assistants receive induction on sleep policy and this includes precautions to be taken against SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome). Parents are also encouraged to be involved in meeting the individual needs of their child.

PROCEDURES

- Children over two have access to sleep mats or suitable alternatives.
- A separate sleep room of adequate size has been provided for all children under 2 years of age
- This room is near the playroom and a viewing panel permits staff to monitor the children
- Children under two years of age have access to a standard cot which is of good design; solid and stable
- We use well-fitting, firm mattresses, which are covered with waterproof material; easy to clean and disinfect; well aired and dry

Safe Sleep Practice & Procedures

- Baby always put to sleep on back
- Feet at foot of cot (Feet to Foot)
- Bedclothes tucked in securely
- Babies clothes are loose and light
- 1 child per cot
- Bibs, bottles or toys removed
- No quilts, pillows or cot bumpers
- Baby's head never covered
- Visual sleep checks recorded in a sleep log every 10-15 minutes. This records the time, the baby's position and who checked.
- The sleep area is well ventilated and the temperature is regulated
- Linen is not shared – separate linen is available for each child and this is washed regularly
- Sofas, beanbags, buggies are not suitable for children to sleep in.

HYGIENE POLICY

The school is committed to promoting a healthy environment and a high standard of personal hygiene for adults and children. We are in compliance with current regulations including the Child Care Regulations and Food Hygiene Regulations.

Hygiene Procedures

- All new staff and volunteers are informed of the hygiene procedures as part of their induction programme
- Hand washing must be carried out after using the toilet, after outdoor play, before and after handling food
- Cuts and sores must be covered with suitable dressings
- Disposable gloves and towels must always be used when cleaning up spills
- In the case of accidents, the area of the accident must be treated with suitable disinfectant
- All toilets, surrounding walls and sinks are cleaned and disinfected every day and as the need arises
- Floors, tables and equipment are cleaned and disinfected daily
- Play sand is always covered when not in use
- All left over food is properly disposed of

NAPPY CHANGING POLICY

It is the policy of our school and in the interest of the children's health and safety, that staff follow the nappy changing procedures correctly and that a high standard of hygiene is evident always.

Procedures

- Children's nappies and other items are stored in individual compartments and labelled accordingly.
- Disposable paper towels are used to cover the mat, and for hand-drying purposes.
- Disposable gloves are provided and worn during nappy changing, however this does not negate the need for hand washing.
- Soiled nappies are bagged and disposed of hygienically.
- The nappy changing mat is disinfected after every use.
- Anti-bacterial soap is provided for hand washing.
- Children are never left unattended when having their nappy changed. If required another staff member is always available to provide assistance.
- A cleaning schedule is in place to ensure that the nappy changing area is clean and hygienic at all times.
- To ensure that nappy changing time is a pleasant experience for the child, staff members use this opportunity to interact with the child and provide one to one attention.

TOILETING POLICY

It is the policy of our service and in the interest of the children's health and safety, that a high standard of hygiene is promoted always, especially when children are learning to use the toilet.

Procedures

To create an awareness and understanding of good hygiene practice, staff members do a project with the children about the importance of self-care for example: flushing the toilet, washing hands etc. Anti-bacterial soap and disposable paper towels are used for washing and drying hands. A cleaning schedule is in place to ensure that children's toilets are kept in a clean and hygienic condition always. Praise and recognition is used when children are being toilet-trained to encourage self-esteem and a sense of achievement. Potties are disinfected after each use. The child's privacy is always respected.

ACCIDENT AND SAFETY POLICY

It is the policy of our childcare centre to promote the health, wellbeing and personal safety of all children and adults involved in our school, through developing and regularly reviewing accident prevention procedures.

PROCEDURES

- There are at least two adults on the premises at all times
- Children are supervised by adults at all times
- Care is taken to ensure that no child can leave the premises undetected
- When the main entrance is locked the key must remain in the position which is known and accessible to all adults
- Staff must know which children are present at any one time
- Furniture and equipment are laid out to minimise safety risks
- Only suitable and age appropriate objects are available to children
- The First Aid Box is always fully equipped, easily identifiable and in a location which is known to all adults
- At least one member of staff who holds an up to date First Aid Certificate is on the premises at all times
- Minor accidents will be treated in the childcare premises and parents/guardians will be advised of the injury and the action taken, when the child is collected
- All accidents; even minor ones, are recorded in the Accident Book
- The service has an arrangement with the local hospital in case of an accident or sudden illness
- In the case of serious accident, the senior staff member will call the doctor and the child's parent/guardian. If the child must go to hospital before the parent/guardian arrives, an adult known to the child must accompany him/her to hospital and stay until the parent/guardian arrives.

OUTINGS POLICY

It is the policy of our centre to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children and adults involved when planning and undertaking outings. Parents are encouraged to take an active part in the planning, preparation and undertaking of outings. Prior information about proposed outings is given to all

parents. All parents must sign a consent form prior to the outing. There is always at least one adult to every two children.

CHILDCARE & EDUCATION CURRICULUM

Our child care curriculum offers experiences that help children learn about themselves and the world around them. We are committed to developing a curriculum that creates a child centred, play based environment which empowers young children to actively pursue their own learning. This process is facilitated by adults who provide appropriate, timely, balanced intervention as well as support, continuity and progression to encourage positive attitudes towards learning.

The curriculum focuses on these areas of child development:

Cognitive/intellectual Development – Numbers and shapes, counting, patterns and measurement, sense of space, knowledge and experience with the world, art, movement and dramatic play

Language/literacy Development – Communication (listening, understanding and speaking), knowing about letters and word sounds and patterns, knowing about print and books

Social Development – Cooperation, positive social relationships, respect for others, knowledge about families and communities

Emotional Development – Self-control and knowledge about feelings

Physical Development – Gross motor skills, fine motor skills, active play and health and safety

Cultural Awareness – Awareness and appreciation of their own and others' cultures

Our school recognises that the establishment of daily routines is essential for all young children in our care. We strive to provide a programme of activities which encourage the physical, social, emotional, intellectual, creative and language development and of the children who attend the service.

Our Curriculum is based on clearly defined aims and objectives and is flexible and open to new approaches and ideas, on how to promote and meet the growing need of children. We also recognize that children are learning all the time, and that children learn best when they are actively involved and interested. Our various activities help to stimulate sensory experiences (touch, taste, sight, sound, and smell) appropriate to the child's level of development and encourage children to think for themselves, as well as helping them to make their own decisions and find their own answers to questions. We provide an atmosphere that offers the children suitable challenges, stimulates problem-solving, encourages feelings of safety, trust and emotional security to the children in our care. We also help children to develop high self-esteem by giving them the opportunity to be actively involved in their own learning.

EQUIPMENT POLICY

The equipments available at our centre are suitable, safe and age appropriate and they help to provide new challenges and experiences for the developmental needs of each child. All equipments are always

kept clean and hygienic. They are also checked regularly for broken parts. The layout of each playroom must ensure that the equipment is accessible to the children, to promote choice and a sense of independence.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Our school respects the individuality of all children and adults involved and actively promotes positive attitudes to differences of culture, race, gender, language and financial circumstances. A range of activities is chosen to reflect differences in cultures, gender and ability. We regularly check our books, posters and other materials to ensure that they positively and accurately reflect cultural and racial diversity and differences in ability. We will challenge any statements or behaviour by anyone in the school, which are deemed to be racist, sexist or in any way derogatory to an individual.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Management and Staff of Switch Brain Schools believe that children should be encouraged to grow and develop to their full potential in a suitably planned environment, where they know what is expected of them, and where clear limits are set, appropriate to their age and stage of development and any special needs they may have. Children's efforts, achievements and feelings will always be acknowledged to promote the growth of self-esteem and self-discipline. The service will strive to manage behaviour consistently in order that children have the security of knowing what to expect and can build up good patterns of self-discipline. Adults working in the centre must be good role models by following codes of behaviour and showing respect for each other and the children.

Positive Strategies for Behaviour Management

- One to one adult support will be offered to the child that has misbehaved to help the child to see what went wrong and offer possible solutions.
- Comfort and support will be offered where another child has been hurt in an incident
- Explanations for challenging unwanted behaviours and attitudes will be made clear immediately to the child/children. It will always be made clear to the child in question that it is the behaviour and not the child that is unacceptable.
- Staff will use simple language, speaking calmly and quietly to the children when dealing with these situations
- Staff will demonstrate respect and empathy by listening and being interested.
- By offering alternatives, positive behaviour is encouraged and helps to teach children about the value of compromise
- Recurring problems will be dealt with in an inclusive manner following observations and involving the child's parents, and other appropriate adults.
- Books and activities will be available to help the children explore and name their feelings, where appropriate, in conjunction with an adult.

PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILIES

Our school promotes the active participation of parents in the planning and development of the service, valuing parents as the first educators of their children. Regular meetings are held with parents and they are provided with a handbook giving details of the school before the child starts. Parents are encouraged to be involved in decisions about policies and procedures at the school, and any other aspects that affect their child. Parents are welcome to visit the service at any time and are encouraged to work as volunteers in the school. Staff members are available to discuss any concerns a parent may have regarding their child and the school.

SETTLING IN POLICY

Every effort is made to ensure that the settling in period is as easy and pleasant as possible for the children and their parents/guardians. Each parent is provided with an information pack about the services rendered at the school before the child starts and they are encouraged to drop in to the school with their child before he/she starts, so that the child can become familiar with the other children, staff and the day to day activities. On the first day the parent is encouraged to stay with the child until he or she feels comfortable in their new surroundings. Each parent is encouraged to spend as much time as necessary with the child during the settling period. There is no set time limit on the settling in period. No child will be pressurised to take part in any activity during the settling in period. To help staff build a relationship with the child, staff will discuss the child's interests with parents, as well as their likes, dislikes and key words the child uses at home. Each parent will be given a daily account of the child's progress.

COMPLAINTS POLICY

Switch Brain Schools welcome any suggestions, recommendations, comments or complaints made by children or their parents in relation to our childcare services. Any complaints made about the school will be dealt with in an open and impartial manner. Complaints should be made to the manager/leader or a designated member of the management committee and every attempt is made to resolve the matter as amicably as possible and to the parent's satisfaction. If agreement cannot be reached the parent may make a formal complaint in writing to the person designated to receive complaints. The complaint is recorded. If the complaint is made against a member of staff, the staff member must be informed that a formal complaint has been made and be given full details. If a complaint against a staff involves a child protection concern a second separate reporting procedure will be followed in line with our child protection procedures. The parent is sent an acknowledgement that the complaint has been received and told how it will be dealt with, by whom, and within what time limit. The person investigating the formal complaint will keep dated records summarising what has been said and done by those involved. If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome, he or she may make a written request to the Child Welfare & Protection Board of the Ministry of Education in Lagos State. The Board will consider all the relevant material and interview all persons concerned, will reach a decision and if necessary, make recommendations. The complainant and other people involved will be informed of the outcome.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR BETWEEN STAFF & CHILDREN

Our codes of behaviour are based on the following values

- Listening to children
- Valuing and respecting children as individuals
- Involving children in decision making, as appropriate
- Encouraging and praising children

Codes of behaviour

- While physical contact is a valid way of comforting and reassuring a child, it should only be in response to the need of the child, not the adult.
- Staff should never physically punish or verbally abuse a child
- Staff should never tell jokes of a sexual nature in front of a child
- Staff should not develop favouritism or become over involved with any one child
- All staff must respect the personal space, safety and privacy of each child
- It is not recommended that staff give lifts in their cars to an individual child, especially for long journeys.

Dealing with a Disclosure

Should a child disclose to a staff member/volunteer that abuse may be happening in their life, the role of the staff member/volunteer is primarily to listen, asking only open-ended questions e.g. is there anything else you want to say? The staff member/volunteer must share this information with the designated person. They must never promise a child that they could keep such information to themselves, even if a child requested it. It is never the role of the staff member/volunteer to investigate or to make an assessment of the risk of abuse to a child. The Child Welfare and Protection Board of the Ministry of Education will carry out such assessments. At the appropriate time, the staff member/volunteer will record the disclosure as it happened, quoting the words of the child. The designated person will implement our Child Protection Reporting Procedure.