



City of Dublin ETB Foundations Project Referral Policy

Foundations Project after school & youth club, is a service for children who are currently homeless or have previously been affected by homelessness. However, we also accept referrals from other professionals of children whose family may not be homeless, but have additional support needs.

Priority is given to children directly linked with homeless services and the main criteria for attending our service is that the family

- is currently living in homeless accommodation.
- there is a social work referral

If a family is not homeless they are assessed on a case by case basis and the support needs identified in the referral form are considered. Criteria considered include the following;

- has previously lived in homeless accommodation.
- is at risk of homelessness
- the family is affected by addiction
- the family is living in extreme poverty
- the child has behavioural / educational support needs
- the parent / child has significant physical / mental health problems
- there has been family breakdown-bereavement/separation/parent serving prison sentence.
- the family has experienced domestic violence.

Foundations Project also assesses what other support services the family are linked with and priority is given to families that are not linked with other similar support services.

Referrals are accepted from a range of different professionals that may be working with a family e.g. social worker, teacher, public health nurse, key worker, addiction services etc. Families living in homeless services can also self-refer to our project. There is a referral form for professionals to fill out which gives our staff some background information on the family and allows us to assess if they are a suitable referral. This information is treated in the strictest confidence.

There is often a waiting period prior to children being offered a place in either of the clubs. If there is no immediate place available children's names are placed on a waiting list. Places are offered to families from the waiting list on a needs basis or a priority system, rather than length of time on the list. Staff



consider issues such as the family's current housing situation, the individual child's needs and the supports that are currently in place for the family or child.

Foundations Project may decide not to offer a child a place if it is felt that our service is not appropriate or we cannot meet the needs of the particular child, or if the child is accessing a similar service elsewhere.

All families/parents must meet with staff prior to being offered a place and complete a registration form. Staff will contact the referrer prior to contacting family to arrange a meeting with them. Staff will make assessments of need based on the information given by referrer and from the child's parents during the registration meeting.

In the event that a family needs language support classes, children can be prioritised for a place in our group if parents are willing to attend English language classes in Foundations Project.

As places in the groups tend to be limited, Foundations Project will endeavour to fairly share the places ensuring that referrals are accepted from a variety of different referrers. Whereby a professional makes a number of referrals at one time, these will be placed on the waiting list. Staff will liaise with the referrer to establish which referral is priority for a place. We will contact referrers to inform them when a place becomes available and may seek support from them in getting parent to attend the initial referral meeting.

When a child joins the after school club the parent* must complete a registration form in the presence of a senior member of staff either before or on the day of commencement.

Staff should go through the registration form with the parent/s and offer to complete it with them to ensure that parents do not have any literacy problems. They should also explain the form and why the information is needed and that all details are confidential. It is important that staff go through the policy document with new families and that they sign this. They should also be given a copy to retain themselves.