



It's the trendiest way to spend Sunday afternoon - grab your hula hoop and your glowsticks and make for the club. And don't forget your Ma!

The raving Looneys: Fiona and her daughter Uainin get to grips with a hula hoop at the newest parent-child craze

seen the Baby Loves Disco phenomenon grow up in the States, Thomas knew that was the way to go.

'It's very much in the zeitgeist,' he says, 'so we realised there would be a demand for this.'

His own son, two-and-a-half year old Felix — 'a total born performer' — facilitated Thomas researching his market.

'In this country, there's so little you can do with toddlers. There's nothing really that involves the whole family.'

'It's stand and look at him doing something, rather than do something with him. And when you bring kids into restaurants, people go, "Oh no, kids" — so we wanted

to do something designed for kids in that environment.'

The result is semi-civilised: parents sitting at tables drinking coffee and devouring the complimentary Sunday papers while their kids go seven shades of mental on the dancefloor at the other end of the room.

Just as at Baby Rave, the music policy is designed with adults in mind — Barney and High School Musical are banned — though hearing Stevie Wonder on a Sunday afternoon is no hardship, whatever age you are.

As Stevie sings, Joan McClean takes to the dancefloor with her two granddaughters, 11-year-old Aoibhin and eight-year-old

Caoimhe (her grandson, Joseph, is more intent on chasing the balloons). 'I'm amazed that someone thought of this,' she says. 'We think it's absolutely brilliant.'

'The atmosphere is great, it's a safe and friendly environment and the music is easy for anyone to listen to and it's not too loud.'

John Cronin and Jeremy Moore, old schoolfriends from Blackrock, Co. Dublin, are using the club as a way to catch up while letting their kids blow off steam on the dancefloor.

'They're a bit too old for ball parks,' says John.

'And this is a good way for us to have a bit of a chat without having to constantly check up on the kids.'

If they weren't doing this, they say, they would 'probably be up Killiney Hill.'

As to whether they will be tempted onto the dancefloor themselves, 'we would probably have to have a few pints before that'.

And there's the rub.

Because for all the cool logos and slogans and talk about dance moves and music policy, the reality of these under-age discos is that there is precious little dancing going on.

For all the funky threads and happening sounds, show small children a dancefloor and they still just want to run around in big, fat circles on it. And any parents hoping to commune with their

offspring through a musical experience will probably just find themselves wound up in a silk scarf.

Which is not to say that baby raving isn't a fun way to spend an afternoon, and a welcome alternative from the leisureplex experience. Just don't expect the edgy, mind-expanding version of clubbing you might just vaguely recall from your youth.

That said, maybe some minds are more open than others.

On the way out of the Baby Rave, my own baby suddenly turns to me and asks: 'When I'm a granny and you're dead, what will the world look like?'

Like, far out, man.