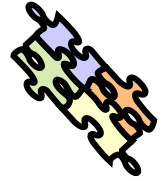


St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG

Parent's Handbook





Welcome

Welcome to St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG. We are a community based Service operated by a Board of Directors. We are committed to providing high quality, accessible and affordable childcare. We are registered with and inspected by Tusla- The Child and Family Agency. All children are provided with opportunities to explore, learn and develop in a safe, nurturing and developmentally appropriate environment.

We believe parents are the primary educators in their children's lives and working in collaboration with our qualified early years teachers will provide the best possible care and education for all children attending.

Thank you for choosing our service.

Staff

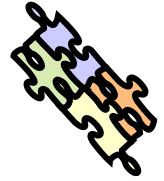
Margaret Glancy is the manager of St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG and in her absence Carolyn Farrell is the deputy manager.

Margaret Glancy is the Designated Liaison Person with regards to child safeguarding reporting procedures and Carolyn Farrell is the Deputy Liaison Person.

A full list of all our employees can be found on our website

www.stmaryschildcarecampus.ie This includes photographs and relevant qualifications.

All staff are qualified and Garda vetted.



Mission Statement

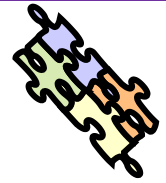
Our Mission is to provide a safe, nurturing and engaging early care and learning environment that effectively supports the diverse needs of children and families in our community and creates a foundation for children to become lifelong learners, explorers and critical thinkers. We strive to work in collaboration with parents and carers to foster the holistic development of each child.

Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures ensure that we deliver a consistent approach in line with the service's principles and values. St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG have developed a comprehensive range of policies and procedures. All staff are required to adhere to these policies. This Parent Handbook highlights some of these policies and procedures, however, parents are encouraged to read the full policy document which is available on our website. Parents must sign that they have read and will adhere to all of our policies and procedure. www.stmaryschildcarecampus.ie

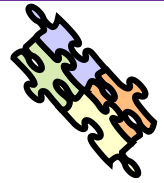


Preschool outdoor area



General Information about our Service

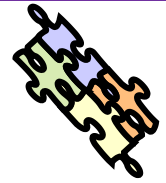
- Our opening hours are from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday. We are open for 48 weeks each year. We close for two weeks at Christmas, two weeks in August, bank holidays and Good Friday.
- Please note that our Preschool/ ECCE service runs for three hours only each day from 9.15am – 12.15pm, for 38 weeks of the year. We offer additional childcare and afterschool care which is offered as an optional extra outside of our set times. These places are limited.
- St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG maintains correct Adult: Child ratios at all times.
- Please inform us if your child will not be attending for any reason. If we are not informed before 10.00am on the morning of non-attendance fees will be charged for the missed day. Baby/toddler room fees are charged weekly if the Service is open regardless of attendance.
- Our Childcare Service calendar will be available on our social media page, website and parents/guardians are given a copy in September.
- Children must be accompanied to and from St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG by a designated adult. Children will not be allowed to leave until a designated person is present to collect them. A Temporary Authorisation to collect form must be filled out if a new adult who is not on the child's enrolment form will be collecting them.
- Children under the age of 16 years are **not** permitted to collect a child from the service.



- Our service operates a Healthy Eating Policy.
- Our Service operates an open door policy where parents can come in and discuss any issues without an appointment. For complaints please see our complaints policy and procedure in our full policies and procedures.
- Please notify us as soon as possible of any change in family circumstances; for example a change in phone number, email or address, so we can keep our records up to date and you can be easily contacted in case of emergency.
- Should your child become unwell, staff will immediately contact the Parents/Guardians or the Emergency Contact to make arrangements for your child to be collected. Please read our Infection Control policy and our Exclusion of Sick Children policy for further information.



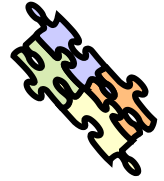
Our Baby and Toddler room



Admissions

- Children must be at least 6 months of age when starting at the service.
- Parents wishing to secure a place for their child must fill out an enrolment form.
- All details regarding a child's enrolment form must be completed. All relevant information regarding additional needs, dietary requirements, medical needs, etc should be included on the form before enrolment to allow us to have supports in place before your child starts.
- Siblings are given priority if we have received a timely application form and there are places available.

- Children already attending a care room will be given priority when ready to move on to the next stage, for example, moving from the baby/toddler room to preschool.
- Thereafter, children will be admitted on a first come first served basis, following submission of an enrolment form.
- If there are no remaining places children are placed on a waiting list and will be offered a place when one becomes available.
- Referrals from family support services will be accepted provided there is a place available.
- If your application is successful you will receive a letter confirming your place.
- Parents must read, sign and agree to all policies and procedures before their child commences. Parents are welcome to come in at any time to discuss these and will be given an opportunity to have any queries answered on open day.
- Parents are provided with information regarding applications for funding from the National Childcare Scheme or other Government schemes.
- Policies and procedures will be reviewed and updated in line with new learning and developments and HSE guidelines.



Termination/refusal

- We reserve the right to refuse admission
- Children who are disruptive, who may cause injury to other children or staff or damage property may be excluded from the service.
- If a situation arises where parental expectations cannot reasonably be met by our facility after a period of negotiation, we reserve the right to terminate care.
- We reserve the right to terminate our services.

Dress code

We ask that children wear comfortable suitable clothes, ideal for artwork, messy play and outdoor play. Velcro shoes are preferable as open laces can be a trip hazard.

We ask that you send in a pair of wellies at the start of the year for wet weather and outdoor water play. We ask that children do not wear hoop or long earrings as these can also cause injury. If you want your child to wear these you must sign a disclaimer. **(See appendix 2 in our full policies and procedures)** Please send a spare set of clothes with your child daily in case of accidents. A sun hat and sun cream are required during the hot weather.

Please clearly mark your child's belongings as we cannot be responsible for lost items. Do not send expensive or important items that are at risk of getting lost or broken.

Vaccinations

St. Marys Childcare Campus CLG have a legal requirement to maintain immunisation records on all children attending. Prior to enrolment parents/guardians should provide a copy of their child's immunisation passport or record card. HSE



guidelines encourage all children to be vaccinated. If your child is not vaccinated we ask that you sign a disclaimer. **(See appendix 3 also Infection control policy)**

The most up-to-date immunisation advice is available on <http://www.immunisation.ie>

Admissions procedure for children with additional needs

- Parents complete enrolment form and submit relevant medical paperwork. It is imperative that parents disclose all relevant medical/developmental details at this stage of the process.
- Places are allocated on a first come first served basis depending on availability and type of childcare required.
- The enrolment form and relevant paperwork will be reviewed by management.
- The manager/deputy manager will contact the parent to discuss what supports need to be put in place before the child commences.
- Parents may be advised to apply for Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) support. **(See appendix 4 & 11)**

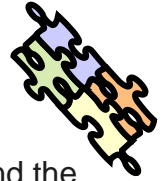
Access and Inclusion Model (AIM)

AIM

The goal of AIM is to create a more inclusive environment in pre-schools, so all children, regardless of ability can benefit from quality early learning and care.

What is AIM all about

- Empowering service providers to deliver an inclusive preschool experience.
- Ensuring every eligible child can fully participate in the ECCE programme.



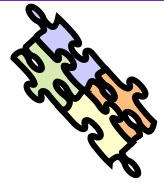
- Seven levels of progressive supports based on the needs of the child and the service provider.
- Designed to be responsive to the needs of each individual child in the context of their preschool setting.
- Where medical needs have been established and additional support is required for the child suitable supports can be put in place as soon as possible.
- The parent may be asked to care for their child at home until suitable support is provided, for example one to one care or specialised equipment.

Nappies and wipes

Parents/guardians are asked to send in a supply of nappies and wipes where applicable. You will be informed when the supply is running low and we ask that you replace same in a timely manner. Records of nappy changes are kept and shared with you through our Little Vista app. Please see our Nappy Changing and Toileting policies for more information.

Little Vista

St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG understands the importance of partnership with parents and we believe the use of the little vista app can promote better communication between parents and early years teachers. Governance requires childcare services to retain a vast amount of data for a specified period of time. (See data retention policy) We believe little vista will also reduce waste and our carbon footprint by using less paper.



What is little vista?

Little Vista is a tablet based childcare tool that simplifies activity recording, eliminates paperwork, connects parents directly with their child's key worker, allows for real time communication during working hours, allows EYT's to send messages and media to parents and lots more.

What do I as a parent need to do?

We ask that all parents/guardians download and use the little vista family app. St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG will send an invitation email and also an SMS with a verification code on it. You will be prompted to join the family app from the email where you will need to enter this SMS code. This will then bring you to a registration page where they create a password. Finally, you are then brought to a page where you can download the app.

Payment of Fees

ECCE and NCS

St. Mary's Childcare Campus participate in the Free Preschool Year in Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE) under the Office of the Minister for Children, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Youth (DECEDIY)

We participate in the National Childcare Scheme (NCS) which provides subsidies for families with childcare costs.

We are required to notify Pobal if your child is absent for more than 20 consecutive days when in the ECCE programme. We are required to notify Pobal if your child is



absent for more than 8 consecutive weeks when using the NCS programme. This may result in loss of ECCE place or loss of subsidised hours.

Fees

The Fee Schedule is on display

Parents/guardians are required to sign a Parent Agreement form (**See appendix 1**) regarding payment of fees.

- Fees must be paid weekly.
- Fees can be paid by cash, cheque or bank transfer.
- A receipt will be issued upon payment.

Reviewing Fees:

- Fees are reviewed annually by the management.
- Parents/guardians will be informed by one months notice of increase in fees.

Payments in relation to Holidays or Illness of the Child/Children:

- Parents/guardians of children attending the baby/toddler room will be required to pay for any days/weeks that their child/children do not attend the Service.
- Parents/guardians of children attending breakfast club, preschool extra hours service or afterschool **must give notice before 10.00am** if their child will not be attending otherwise fees will be due.
- In the case of a long term, medically certified illness of a child, parents/guardians are advised to keep in contact with the Manager on a regular basis. Further arrangements will be discussed with the Parent/Guardian.



- There will be no fees charged when the Service is on holidays. These dates will be circulated directly to parents/guardians and posted on the online parent's notice board available on our website well in advance of these closure periods.
- There is no reduction in fees for Public/Bank Holidays for children attending the baby/toddler room.

Closure in Exceptional Circumstances:

In the event of the closure of the Service in exceptional circumstances, that is beyond the control of the Management i.e. adverse weather conditions, the following will apply:

- If the Service is open during adverse weather and child does not attend the full fee will be payable.
- No fees are payable if the Service is closed.

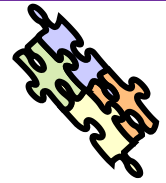
Late Collection of Child/Children from the Preschool

Parents/guardians should note that due to legislative requirements under the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and *Children First* – Child Protection Guidelines two members of staff are required to be with the child/children.

- Parents/guardians are advised to keep within their agreed time for collection of their child/children for the above reasons. We require that all children should be collected by the designated time in order that the Service may follow health and safety practices to ensure that the Service may close safely.
- Please see the Dropping Off and Collection of Children Policy and Procedure.

Withdrawal of Children

Parents/guardians sign up and agree in the Parents/Guardians Fee Agreement Form that they will:



- Give notice, in writing, that the child/children are leaving the Service
- Give two weeks' notice or pay two weeks of fees.
- Management also reserve the right to request that the Parent/Guardian withdraw their child/children from the Service if they are not 'settling in' or adapting to the environment. The Management agrees to give two weeks' notice of this to the Parent/Guardian so that they can make alternative arrangements.

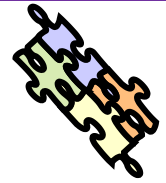
Non-payment of Fees

- Non-payment of fees may result in loss of placement.
- A text reminder of fees will be given to the parent if fees have not been paid. A repeated failure to pay fees may result in suspension or withdrawal of child's place until the matter is resolved.
- Any delays in payments must be discussed in advance and agreed with management.

The National Childcare Scheme

All families are eligible for financial support towards their childcare fees. See <http://www.ncs.gov.ie> for more information.





Settling in

At St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG we aim to ensure the settling in process is as smooth and pleasant as possible for both children and parents. For some children this may be their first experience being away from parents/guardians and family. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there is sensitive planning and management of transitions, consistency of key relationships and partnership between the setting and parents/guardians to ensure positive experiences and continuity for children.

Policy

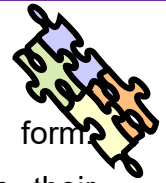
The Service will endeavour to make the settling-in process a positive experience for children and will work closely in partnership with parents/guardians to ensure this is achieved.

We recognise that in some cases there may be particular difficulties experienced by children, parents/guardians and staff during the settling-in period and we are prepared to explore and consider various ways of settling children into the Service. We understand children are unique, with their own individual needs and each child will transition at their own pace.

Procedure

Pre- Admission:

- The Service invites the child and parents/guardians to visit at an agreed time.
- We offer phased/staggered settling-in.
- Prior to enrolment exchange of information will take place between parents/guardians and staff. In order to meet the needs of each child



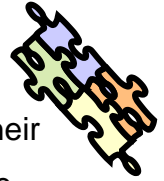
- parents/guardians will be asked to fill out the “All About Me” form. Parents/guardians are encouraged to provide us with information on their children's likes/dislikes, interests, achievements etc.
- Parents are encouraged to tell their child when they are going to begin at the service. An infant can be told “..... will take care of you this morning.” A toddler can be encouraged to look forward to playing with other children a few days in advance and can then be reminded on the day itself.
- Parents are encouraged to talk with their child’s Key Person about bringing items from home that are important to their child, for example, a favourite soft toy or blanket, photos of family members, or a recording of themselves reading a favourite story or singing a familiar song.

Continuity of Care

Continuity of Care is very important for the development and security of young children. Each child that attends our service has a key person that will be his/her main carer/educator. The key person provides an important link between the child and the parent. We aim to minimize any changes to staff to maintain a continuity of care

First Day

- We will greet the child and parent together.
- Each child will be appointed a key worker, sometimes it may take a few weeks to assign a key worker as children sometimes gravitate towards certain staff members and it makes sense that these natural relationships are nurtured. Moreover, this gives the children a choice in decisions affecting themselves.
- The parent/guardian will be assured of the value of their presence to the child in this process.
- Some children may not be ready for a full session, in this case gradually increasing the amount of time may ease the transition for children.

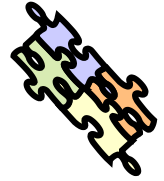


- Parents/guardians will be made aware of the necessity of interacting with their child and the other people in the Service in order to reassure the child of the safety of the new surroundings.
- Children must be collected on time and promptly from their session at the agreed time. Otherwise children may become anxious and be upset when you leave them the following day.

Please see our full policy on settling in.

Preschool Room 1





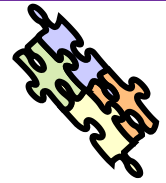
Procedure for Children with Allergies

Procedures for Children with Allergies Requiring Treatment with Oral Medication

- Asthma inhalers are regarded as "oral medication" Oral medications must be prescribed by a GP and have the manufacturer instructions clearly written on them.
- Staff must be provided with clear written instructions on how to administer such medication.
- Inhalers must be provided to the Service clearly labelled with the child's name
- The Service must have the parents/guardians' prior written consent. This consent must be kept on file.

Emergency Medicines

Where medical conditions exist for a child, we will develop individual medical care plans which will include the management in the event of an emergency relating to the condition. This will be developed in conjunction with the parents and the child's medical advisers. Where a child has a condition that may require emergency medical treatment staff will be trained on the condition and the treatment. This would include medications like Ventolin, Glucagon or EpiPen. Where medication is administered in the case of an anaphylaxis or asthma emergency the Service will ensure that the emergency services are contacted as soon as is practically possible and the parents and guardians are also contacted as soon as possible. Emergency numbers for the local pharmacist and local medical practitioners are available within the Service.



Life Saving Medication and Invasive Treatments

Adrenaline injections (EpiPen's) for anaphylactic shock reactions (caused by allergies to nuts, eggs etc.) or invasive treatments such as rectal administration of Diazepam (for epilepsy).

Management must have:

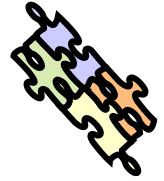
- A letter from the child's GP/consultant stating the child's condition and what medication if any is to be administered.
- Written consent from the parent or guardian allowing staff to administer medication.
- Proof of training in the administration of such medication by a doctor or appropriate health profession or persons recommended by a manufacturer.
- A copy of such proof may be required by our insurance provider for appraisal so that our insurance can be extended if necessary.
- For medicines like EpiPen's it will be decided on individual cases and if staff are happy and competent to administer them.
- Consent forms.

Note: Unused medicine must be returned to parents for safe disposal. Medicines must be stored out of reach of children and not in the First Aid Kits.

Exclusion of Sick Children

Policy Statement

St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG prioritises the health and wellbeing of the children in the service and believes a child needs to be fit and well to benefit from attending the service. If children are sick at home or become ill throughout their day, the service believes the best place for them is at home where they can rest fully and recover.



Procedure

1. High Temperature

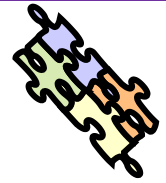
In children, any temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or above is considered high. High temperature is common in young children. The temperature usually returns to normal in 3 or 4 days.

A temperature above 38 degrees Celsius is usually a sign of an infection such as a cold. But it can also be due to more serious infections, so it's important to look at all your child's symptoms.

- If a child has a suspected temperature, the electronic thermometer will be used to take an accurate reading. A temperature of 38 degrees Celsius or higher is considered high.
- A parent/guardian will be contacted and informed that Calpol will be administered, providing there is a Medicine Administration Form on file.
- The child will be monitored and made comfortable allowing them to rest. If there is little or no improvement after 30-60 minutes, the parent will be asked
- to collect their child. In this case the child will **not** be allowed return to the setting for 48 hours.
- Where calpol reduces the temperature to below 38 degrees Celsius the child will be monitored and a temperature check form completed at regular intervals.

There is a low risk of serious illness if your child:

- is content and smiling
- stays awake
- is taking drinks
- is responding normally to people



There is a high risk of serious illness if your child:

- cannot be woken up or if woken, does not stay awake
- has a weak or high-pitched continuous cry
- has pale or blotchy skin
- keeps vomiting
- is grunting, if they are a baby, or breathing very fast

Any child in the service who becomes ill with **fever**, **headache** and **vomiting** will be sent home as soon as their parents/guardians can be contacted. Parents will immediately be made aware of the staff's concerns for the child's wellbeing. In this situation, if there is any significant delay in contacting the child's parents/guardians medical advice will be sought immediately. A child with fever, headache and vomiting **must not** be allowed to wait indefinitely in the service as this can be a sign of serious illness.

Checking a temperature:

If your child has a high temperature they might:

- feel hotter than usual to touch - on their forehead, back or tummy
- feel sweaty or clammy
- have red cheeks

You should:

- dress your child normally - do not under dress them or overwrap them in clothes
- give your child plenty of fluids
- give your child food if they want it
- check on your child regularly during the night
- Do not use a cool cloth or sponge to get their temperature down.



Do not send your child to school or crèche with a high temperature. They can go back when their symptoms have been gone for **48 hours**.

Children are excluded only if they are actually ill, present a danger or a risk to others (Children or adults) or are unable to benefit from the service's normal daily activities.

There are some particular illnesses where exclusion is necessary. In general, parents/guardians are asked to keep their child away from the service, and staff members are required to stay away until they have seen their GP if any of the following are evident:

- Diarrhoea and vomiting
- A temperature of 101 °F/ 38°C or above
- Eye discharge
- Unexplained rash
- Strep throat
- An earache or a bad cough

Antibiotic:

If a child commences a course of antibiotics and has not consumed the antibiotic previously, he/she must not attend the crèche until they have consumed the antibiotic for 24 hours plus. Children will not be excluded if taking an antibiotic medicine if the child has been on the medicine before or has consumed the medication for 24 hours plus.

Accidents and Incidents

If your child is involved in an accident or incident a record will be written up and shared with you. You will be asked to sign these records. Staff members are trained



in First Aid and will treat minor injuries. If a child needs to attend hospital parents will be contacted immediately.

Child Protection

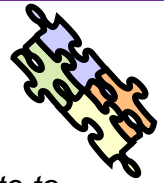
We have a duty to care for every child attending our service. We will follow Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Our Duty to Care published by the Department of Health and Children in this regard. Children first requires that every organisation providing services to children appoint a Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for reporting neglect or abuse. The DLP in St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG is Margaret Glancy and the Deputy DLP is Carolyn Farrell.

Action will be taken in response to any suspicion of abuse.

Please see full policy and procedure on our website; a hard copy is also available in our service.

Our Curriculum

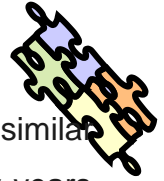
We offer an emergent and inquiry based curriculum based on Aistear and Siolta which uses children's and practitioner's interests, questions and experiences as starting points for curriculum planning.



Aistear defines curriculum as "*all of the experiences, both formal and informal, planned and unplanned in the indoor and outdoor environment, which contribute to children's learning and development*" (Principles and themes, p.54).

What does this look like?

- Children are offered a wide variety of resources and materials which are kept at child level. This allows children to make decisions and allows early years teachers to observe children's interests and stage of development. This information is used to plan activities and resources that promote learning in a way that interests the child.
- Children are provided with plenty of time and space for supervised free play where children can lead play, learn from each other, be creative, be happy, have fun, develop friendships and explore the world around them. Early years teachers are there to support, observe, join in and extend play experiences.
- We understand every child is unique and at their own stage of development, understanding and ability. Therefore, all our activities and resources are inclusive and adaptable to ensure every child can fully and meaningfully participate in the whole environment and curriculum.
- We acknowledge and promote the individuality of each child. Key workers work closely with their children to provide learning experiences based on their current interests and stage of development.
- Routines and transitions are important to support young children's healthy social and emotional development, especially for children with additional needs. Routines include things such as arrival time, clean-up time, naptime, and departure time. Many routines, such as meals or group time, are necessary and helpful to building a consistent classroom community. Routines and transitions are planned to match children's stage of development is key to success. For young children, this means that routines support children's developing abilities and independence but should not be too complicated for young children to learn and remember.



- Daily outdoor time is also an important part of the day. Outdoor time is similar to indoor free play where children can follow their own interests. Early years teachers will join in play or organise games based on children's interests and stages of development. Outdoor play promotes gross motor skills, balance, a positive view of exercise and encourages children to be physically active. Research shows children who spend more time outdoors are more physically active and, therefore, less likely to suffer from health problems in the future.

Food

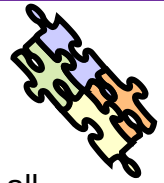
We have a Healthy Eating policy. All food is prepared and cooked by our HACCP qualified chefs. Our menus are designed to provide a nutritious well balanced diet that meets the needs of all children in our Service. The weekly menu is displayed on our website. Special dietary requirements/restrictions will be accommodated.

Birthday cakes are provided by the Service and made in our kitchen by our chefs.

Children's bottles must come to the Service readymade as per HSE and FSA regulations. They will be stored in the fridge until needed and given at room temperature or warmed. Please see Bottle making and Breastfeeding policy.

In the event of any child or adult having a life threatening nut allergy we do not allow any nut products. You will receive a letter informing you if there is a child with a nut allergy in your child's class.

Confidentiality and Social Networking



All information kept on record by St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG regarding children, staff, families, accidents and incident, etc, shall remain confidential at all times. All employees sign and adhere to our confidentiality policy. Please see Child Safeguarding Statement for procedure when reporting child welfare concerns to TUSLA.

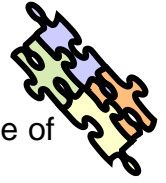
Parents/guardians, children and families must not post any photos or videos containing other children, parents or employees of St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG without permission. St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG will seek written permission before sharing any images/videos of children.

Please see Data Retention policy for more information.

Partnership with parents/guardians

We believe collaborating with parents is paramount for young children's early education and care. We have an open door policy where families are always welcome but where the needs of the children in our care are our first priority. We aim to build trusting open relationships between parents/guardians and early years teachers. EYTs will share information with you regarding your child's progress, how their day went or any other information that comes up. In return, we would love if you shared information about your child that would help us provide the best possible care and education, for example a milestone they met at home, a new pet, their favourite activity, etc.

Information will be shared through little vista, informal face to face and one to one meetings between you and your child's key worker. These meetings will be arranged at a time that suits you. However, if at any time you would like to discuss your child we are always available to meet with you. In the event that you would like to make a complaint, this must be made to the manager Margaret Glancy or Deputy manager Carolyn Farrell. Please see our Complaints policy for further information.



We aim to provide an inclusive environment where the individuality and heritage of every child and their family are understood and respected. We ask you the parents/guardians to help us raise our cultural awareness by helping us celebrate festivals that are important to your family, teaching us a few key words in your child's home language, talking to us about your culture, etc.

Drop off and collection

Morning Arrivals:

- For their own safety, children must be accompanied until they enter the Service by a parent/guardian or their nominated person.
- Parents/guardian or their nominated person are responsible for their children during arrival at the Service.
- Under no circumstances may a child be left unattended on the premises; this includes a child on foot, in a stroller or wagon, in a car or other vehicle or in any other situation.
- Parents/guardians or their nominated person line up outside the building with their child.
- Children are greeted at the playground gate or front door by staff and walked to their care room.
- Children are welcomed into the room by staff and their attendance is noted for our records.
- If a child will not be attending, we request that parents/guardians advise us.

Collection Policy:



- For their own safety it is the policy of the Service that no children will be permitted, under any circumstances, to leave the Service unaccompanied.
- Children must be collected by a parent/guardian or their nominated person.
- Parents/guardian or their nominated person are responsible for their children during collection at the Service and must accompany the child off Service premises.
- Parents/guardians or their nominated person line up outside the building.
- A member of staff will greet the parent/guardian or nominated person at the gate. A staff member will hand over the child and sign the child out in the attendance book/on little vista.
- Parents/guardians must collect their child by the agreed collection time. Parents/guardians will be asked to give the names of at least two other people who are authorised to collect the child. If the parent is late arriving to collect the child without previously informing the service the person in charge will endeavour to contact the parent. In the event of being unable to contact the parent, the person in charge will contact the other named persons to collect the child.
- Children will not be released into the care of a person under the age of 16 years or to a person who appears to be incapable of caring for the child. Should this situation arise the staff will contact an authorised collector. If no one is available to collect the child, then the person in charge should contact the TUSLA social work child safeguarding team. Services are required to get proof of age for persons over 16.
- Nominated persons who are unknown to the Service will be required to produce either a driving licence, passport or other photographic identification which states the person's date of birth so that the Service can ensure that person is over 16 years of age. A temporary authorisation to collect form will be filled out by the parent.
- In the event of a parent collecting another child a prior arrangement must be made.

If the nominated person arrives in an unfit state



Parents/guardians/Nominated Persons should be in a fit state to collect their children. If a parent arrives in an 'unfit' state, for example under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the senior member of staff on duty will contact the other parent or nominated person as listed on the child's registration form (depending on authorisations and circumstances) or will contact the duty social worker or the Gardaí. The child's welfare and safety will always come first.

Attempted collection by a person who is not on the child's records:

Children should be collected only by the adult/s named on the 'Collection Authorisation'. Should the person responsible be unable to collect the child, a letter of explanation must be presented signed and dated by the parent / guardian with a contact telephone number, the staff member will then telephone the parent prior to allowing the child to leave the Service. If the parent personally arranges this with the staff the telephone call may not be necessary, but signed consent will be required at all times.

If the parent has not been personally contacted to authorise the collection of their child, the child **will not** be permitted to leave the premises until an authorised collector, as recorded in the child's records is available.

Late Collection of Children:

We understand that sometimes a parent is unavoidably delayed when coming to collect their child. We will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible. Parents/guardians in this situation must contact the Manager to say that they will be late and arrange with staff what to do. Children are only released from the Service to individuals named by the parent.

Early Collection of Children:



We ask that parents/guardians let us know if they or their nominated person will be picking up their child early so that we can have the child ready and minimise disrupting the rest of the group.

Late Drop Off:

We ask parents/guardians to drop children off at the correct time to avoid disrupting the group once they have started and so that the child benefits from the full daily programme.

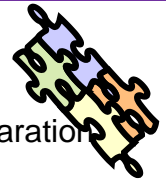
Where a child is not collected:

In the event that a child is not collected from the Service after the expiration of 10 minutes after the appointed time, the Management will contact the parents/guardians by telephone to ascertain when they will be arriving at the Service to pick up their child. Management will then make arrangements with the parent in relation to collection.

In the event that Management is unable to contact the parents/guardians by telephone, a text message will be sent to the parent or guardian. If no response is received to this text message within 5 (five) minutes Management will contact the parent/guardian's emergency collection person identified to the Service to plan for the emergency person to collect the child from the Service.

Where Management are unable to make contact with parents/guardians or the specified emergency person after the expiration of two hours after the appointed collection time, if there is no contact from parents/guardians or emergency person the Management will notify Tusla and An Garda Síochána of the position in case an emergency has arisen.

Separated and Divorced Parents:



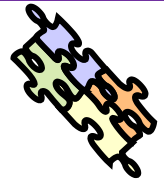
Married parents are automatically joint guardians of their children. Neither separation nor divorce changes this.

- We cannot refuse either parent to collect their child unless a Court Order is in place. However, we reserve the right to seek clarification of identity when one parent has not had any contact with the Service, or the contract has been with one parent only and a second parent makes unexpected contact. This is usually in circumstances where a separation is happening.
- We ask that parents give us information on any person that **does not** have legal access to the child.
- Where custody of a child is granted to one parent, we would ask parents to clarify the circumstances with us. This information will remain confidential and will only be made known to the relevant staff. If there are any legal documents i.e. Custody Order, Barring Order we would ask parents to provide us with a copy to keep on file.

Attempted collection by a parent who has been denied access in a Court Order:

- A parent who has been denied access to a child through a Court Order will not be permitted on to the Service's premises
- If the parent who has been denied access becomes threatening or violent and insists on removing the child from the Service, this will be viewed as trespassing. The Service will in this event contact the Local Garda.

By law, an unmarried mother is the automatic guardian of a child born outside of marriage. In some circumstances, unmarried fathers have automatic access. The Service should be informed about access rights. Unmarried fathers will automatically become guardians of their children if they meet a cohabitation requirement. An unmarried father who cohabits for 12 months with the child's mother, including 3 months following a child's birth, will automatically become the child's guardian. This provision is not retrospective, so guardianship will only be acquired automatically where the parents live together for at least 12 months after 18 February 2016.



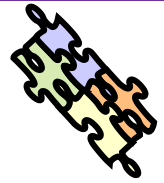
Toilet Training

We work together to assist parents/guardians with toilet training. Children do not need to be toilet trained to attend preschool. We ask that parents/guardians ensure their child has a supply lots of spare clothes and that children wear washable shoes as accidents do happen during toilet training.

Biting Policy

Biting is a normal part of a child's development and should not be seen as bad behaviour. As adults we have the skills to express our frustrations in socially acceptable ways. For a young child who is learning to regulate their emotions biting should not be seen as 'bold' behaviour. Biting can occur for many reasons, for example, teething, frustration, sensory overload, attention, hunger, etc. Once we have become aware of a child who has started to bite we will shadow them closely in order to reduce the chance of biting and to observe what could be going on for the child that has caused the biting to occur. Any child can bite and any child can be bitten, therefore the following strategies are in place to deal with occurrences of biting. The strategies will differ depending on the child's age and stage of development.

- When a child demonstrates ongoing biting behaviour a support plan will be put in place in conjunction with the child's family and health professional if necessary.
- Early years teachers will observe the child closely and anticipate situations where biting may occur.
- EYTs will shadow the child allowing them to intervene and minimise incidents.



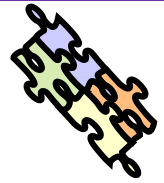
If a child gets bitten:

- EYTs will comfort the child who has been bitten and examine the bite. The bite area will be cleaned with an antibacterial wipe.
- EYTs will not overreact but will remove the child who has bitten from the situation.
- When the child is ready to talk and listen we will talk with the child to find out why they bit? We will discuss how they feel and how the other child might feel. We will talk about different ways of dealing with frustration.
- We will work with parents/guardians to address the biting and try to understand what the child is communicating.
- For babies we say a firm "no "when biting occurs. We give the child something to chew if teething is believed to be the cause. We do not give the incident much attention and ensure we praise all positive behaviour.
- We will address over or under stimulation with appropriate activities and quiet time.
- An incident form is filled out for both children and signed by both sets of parents. Other children will not be identified in children's incident report forms.

We aim to prevent biting, however, we cannot guarantee biting will never happen. Our objective is to support all children and ensure they feel safe and secure and learn to regulate the complex range of emotions experienced in their daily lives.

Head lice Policy

It is always possible to catch head lice when a group of children are together. When head lice is suspected or confirmed in your child's class you will be notified so that you can keep an eye out for head lice in your child's hair. If your child has head lice they must stay at home until the hair has been treated.



Health and Safety

We will ensure so far as is reasonable the health and safety of all children, families, employees and visitors to our Setting. This is done through planning, risk assessments, training and relevant policies and procedures. We have a dedicated fire officer and deputy fire officer. Fire drills are carried out and recorded on a monthly basis. Fire fighting equipment is ready for use and maintained in good working order. Staff are trained in the use of fire fighting equipment and first aid.

Please see our full policies and procedures on

<http://www.stmaryschildcarecampus.ie/>

Positive Behaviour Management Policy

St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG aim to support and guide all children to manage their own behaviour and learn to resolve conflicts that arise. Children attending the Setting are here for new learning experiences which may test their own coping strategies. All staff will support the children to regulate their behaviour and will have a number of strategies to deal with both positive and challenging behaviour.

NO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT SHALL EVER BE USED IN THIS SERVICE.

6 Step Conflict Resolution

1. Approach calmly – put yourself in the shoes of the child. All their feelings are relevant and real in the moment. Approach the situation calmly and get down to the child's eye level.



2. Acknowledge feelings – describe how the child/ children are feeling, children often don't have the language to explain how they feel, leading to more frustration. Help the child by describing it for them “you both look very sad and upset”

3. Gather information (in a way that is appropriate to the age of the child) – remain neutral by giving each child the opportunity to express their said of the story. Children sometimes need lots of time to get the words or actions out so take your time and remember the importance of the lessons learnt in these situations.

4. Restate the problem – after listening to the children simply describe what the problem is so both/ all can understand both sides of the story.

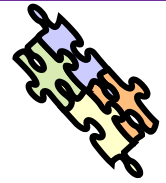
5. Ask for ideas for solutions & choose one together (or for younger children give a solution) - give the children an opportunity to come up with solutions and keep working on it until you all agree on something. This can take a bit of time but gives the children lots of practice compromising with one another, which is a vital skill for the future.

6. Be prepared to give follow up support – it is important the staff member follows through on the agreed solution. This helps place trust in the process and children will have confidence in the approach.

Full list of policies and procedures which can be found on our website. A hard copy is also available in our Setting.

GOVERNANCE

1. Statement of Purpose and Function
2. Fees Policy
3. Children's Charter
4. Admissions Policy
5. Admissions Policy for Children with Additional Needs
6. Complaints
7. Recruitment (Including Garda vetting and references)
8. Staff Absences
9. Staff Training
10. Staff Supervision



HEALTH, WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT

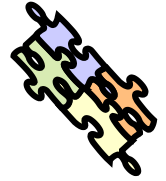
11. Settling-In
12. Behaviour Management (including managing challenging behaviour)
13. Inclusion, Equality and Diversity
14. Healthy Eating (Incorporating Food Hygiene)
15. Outdoor Play
16. Use of Internet, Photographic and Recording Devices (Incorporating Multi-Media)

SAFETY

17. Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
18. Child Safeguarding Statement
19. Medication Management
20. Accidents and Incidents (Incorporating first aid)
21. Infection Control
22. Exclusion of Sick Children
23. Nappy Changing
24. Toileting
25. Safe Sleep
26. Risk Management
27. Checking in and Out and Record of Attendance
28. Dropping Off and Collection of Children
29. Fire Safety
30. Outings

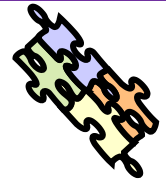
The policies below are not mandatory but are required for our service.

31. Supervision of Children - Indoor and Outdoor
32. Missing Child
33. Sun Safety
34. Animals
35. Critical Incident and Evacuation Plan
36. Partnership with Parents/ Guardians
37. Curriculum



38. Bottle making and Breastfeeding policy
39. Data retention policy
40. Policy for Unexpected Closures
41. Policy for Little Vista
42. Policy on Biting





Parent Fee agreement form

This agreement is made between.....(Name of parent/guardian) and St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG for the care of.....(Name of child)

Payment is due to the provider in advance of the care and should be paid on Monday of every week. Payment can be made in cash, personal cheque or bank transfer. A receipt will be issued for payment received.

Fees are reviewed annually by the management. Parents/guardians will be informed by one months notice of increase in fees.

Parents must give two weeks' notice in writing or pay two weeks fees if withdrawing their child from the Service. Management also reserve the right to request that the Parent/Guardian withdraw their child/children from the Service if they are not 'settling in' or adapting to the environment. The Management agrees to give two weeks' notice of this to the Parent/Guardian so that they can make alternative arrangements.

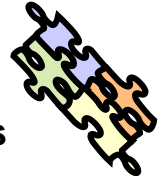
Non-payment of fees may result in loss of placement. A repeated failure to pay fees may result in suspension or withdrawal of child's place until the matter is resolved. Any delays in payments must be discussed in advance and agreed with management.

Please note: Fees for the baby/toddler room are due weekly whether you child attends or not. No fees are due when the Service is closed for holidays.

Please see Fees policy for more information.

Signed.....(Parent/guardian)

Signed.....(Manager)



Acknowledgement of parent/guardian receipt of St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG's policies and procedures

By signing below I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the policies and procedures of St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG. I agree to read the policies thoroughly and after reading them, if there is any policy or procedure that I do not understand I will seek clarification from the manager/deputy manager.

We the parents of -----
have read and understand the parent handbook and St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG policies and procedures. We agree to follow the policies and procedures and understand that St. Mary's Childcare Campus CLG reserve the right to amend these policies when necessary.

Parent/Guardian 1 _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian 2 _____ Date _____