

CAISLEÁN ÓIR CHILDCARE, AND AFTERSCHOOL

GLINSK COMMUNITY CHILDCARE CENTRE, GLINSK, VIA CASTLEREA, CO GALWAY, F45 XR20.

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Parent Policy and Procedure Booklet.



**Childcare
Committees
Ireland**



AIM
ACCESS &
INCLUSION MODEL



An Roinn Leanaí
agus Ghriúna Óige
Department of
Children and Youth Affairs

**Better
Start**

Forbairt Cáilíocht
Luathbhlianta Náisiúnta
National Early Years
Quality Development

***Funded by the Irish Government under the National Development Plan
2018 - 2027***

Opening hours, fee and payment policy.

Caisleán Óir is open from 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Caisleán Óir is open 51 weeks of the year. Depending on how Christmas falls, the crèche is generally closed from the day before Christmas Eve until the day after New Year's Day. These dates vary slightly from year to year but a calendar will be distributed in September. We operate from Monday to Friday all year except for public Bank Holidays, and over the Christmas period. We are also closed on Good Friday.

Caisleán Óir participates in the following government schemes:

1. Early Childhood Care and Education Scheme (ECCE) Free Pre-School Year Programme.
2. Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) Programme *
3. Training and Employment Childcare Programs (TEC) *
4. National Childcare Scheme (NCS)

*To avail of these schemes you need to have been pre-registered before October 2019.

The fee which a family will pay will be the cost price of the place as advertised less the relevant subvention amount for each program.

Charges in relation to the following must be stated in advance –

Fees are payable every week in advance, by cheque, cash or direct debit.

Fees are to be paid in full even when children are sick or when parents take holidays.

Parents are requested to sign a contract agreeing the terms of the fee payment.

If a child is participating in the ECCE scheme and chooses to attend the centre outside of the times, additional charges based on days and times required will be charged.

If a child is participating in the ECCE scheme, and a parent or guardian chooses to have their child attend the centre for a particular number of afternoons, full

fees, minus the ECCE scheme hours, must be paid for every day, including sick, holidays, or any other absences during the ECCE calendar year. This place is dependent on the amount of hours the child is in the centre in total.

When a child is receiving a subvented rate, and then attends the centre outside the normal “booked” week, fees will be charged at a full rate for that time.

Optional extras – Weekly fees and the ECCE scheme does not cover the cost of outings and special events, such as a class trip or photographs. These are not essential. If a child does not participate in the event(s), alternative activities will be available.

All incidents of late collection of a child after the paid session ends will be recorded by the staff in a late collection record and from the second occurrence this will result in the parents/guardians being charged an additional fee of €20.00 and an additional €5.00 for every fifteen minutes thereafter. That is €20.00 for up to fifteen minutes late, €25.00 for up to thirty minutes late, €30 for up to forty five minutes late, and so on. This charge will be levied if the parent or guardian forewarns the centre that they will be late collecting their child.

Collecting Children Procedure:

- If a child is to be collected by a person other than their parents or guardians prior signed parental permission must be in place.
- The parents or guardians should provide the name, address, contact number of the persons authorised to collect their children and state the relationship of this person to the child.
- Authorised persons must be over 18 years of age.
- When an authorised person is to collect a child the parents or guardians must inform the setting beforehand on each occasion. (in person or by phone)

- Only persons named and authorised by the parents or guardians may collect a child.
- The setting should be informed if one parents or guardians does not have guardianship and access to the child.
- A child must always be collected on time or else a fee will be added to the invoice.
- Parents or guardians must speak to the staff to allow for an individual verbal handover of the child's day.
- Children must remain with their parent or guardian until they leave the building.
- Once a child is picked up by a parent or guardian, the child is in the custody of the parent or guardian and is no longer responsibility of the staff.
- Parents and guardians must discourage children from opening the doors upon departing, including opening the security gate.

Code of behaviour between Staff and Children.

Caisleán Óir, Glinsk Community Childcare Service provides an open, welcoming and safe environment. We believe that all parents, guardians, volunteers and staff play a crucial and valuable role in the effective operation of the centre and enriching the children's program. This code of conduct for parents, guardians, volunteers and staff outlines the type of practice we require all adults entering and working at our centre to follow. It will assist in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children, families and staff.

Our code of behaviour is based on an ethos of:

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

Code 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.

General guidelines for Interactions:

- **Safety:** Comply with all policies and procedures of Caisleán Óir. These are displayed at the centre. Be aware of emergency evacuation procedures.
- **Ethical Conduct:** Always act in the best interests of the children, their families and other users of the centre.
- **Support:** Work in a co-operative and positive manner.
- **Communication:** Use courteous and acceptable verbal and non-verbal language. Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing, aggressive or otherwise offensive language.
- **Respect:** Value the rights, religious beliefs and practices of individuals. Refrain from actions and behaviour that constitute harassment or discrimination.
- **Confidentiality:** Comply with Caisleán Óir's confidentiality policy. Respect the confidential nature of information gained or behaviour observed, whilst participating in the program in relation to other children and adults.

In relation to children:

- Be a positive role model at all times.
- Always speak in an encouraging and positive manner.

- Listen actively to children and offer empathy, support and guidance where needed.
- Regard all children equally and with respect and dignity.
- Physical contact with children other than your own should be avoided.
- All photographic material taken whilst children are at the centre is solely the property of CAISLEÁN ÓIR and not to be used outside the centre unless written consent is given by the parent or guardian.
- Photographs taken by external contract will be the ownership of the photographer and agreement upon use of such pictures will be between photographer and parent or guardian and will not become the property of our centre unless written consent is given.

In relation to other adults:

- Use respect, encouraging and accepting language.
- Respect the rights of other individuals.
- Give encouraging and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Accept staff decisions and follow their directions at all times. Speak with the staff member if you have a problem complying with any directions.
- Be aware of emergency evacuation procedures.
- Discipline of the children is the responsibility of the staff.
- Avoid approaching staff to discuss a child during a session. Seek an alternative time when staff are free from their duties with the children.
- Refrain from public criticism of children and adults at the centre.
- Any issues or grievances should be raised as outlined in the complaints policy.
- Under no circumstances should a child, parent, guardian or member of staff be approached directly in a confrontational manner.
- Smoking is prohibited on the centre property at all times.

Procedure in the event that an accident happens:

- The Manager is alerted and informed of the accident/incident i.e. a child has bitten another child.

- If necessary, treatment will be assessed and administered by the First Aid Officer.
- If necessary, the Manager will telephone the local doctor or an ambulance.
- The Manager will provide emergency services with the child's name, contact numbers and any known allergies/medical records.
- The Manager will contact the child's parents/guardians.
- A members of staff will accompany the child to the GP or A&E, if the parents/guardians are not on hand.
- Remaining staff will reassure the children and if necessary explain the accident to other parents.
- Staff who witnessed the accident should fill in the accident report form.
- If the accident does not warrant an outside intervention, then the staff member who administered the First Aid will also complete an accident form. This will be read and signed by the manager and signed by the child's parents/guardians. The accident report is kept on file until the child is 21 years of age.
- If necessary a meeting may take place, if the incident reoccurs at regular intervals.
- 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.
- Records are accessible to all relevant staff in case of an emergency.
- Minor accidents will be treated in the childcare premises and parents/guardians will be advised of the injury and action taken, when the child is collected or telephoned in advance.
- All accidents even minor ones, are recorded in the Accident book.

Healthy Eating Policy

Caisleán Óir, Glinsk Community Childcare Service believes that good health and good food in the early years helps to safeguard children's well-being throughout their lives. It is important that children develop healthy eating habits from a young age for both the pleasure of having a wide variety in their diets and gaining knowledge about nutrition. Meal times are treated as an opportunity for social interaction as well as laying the foundations about making healthy choices.

Principle: This policy is underpinned by the Preschool Regulations 2006

Procedure:

- Potable drinking water will be available at all times.
- Fizzy drinks and fruit squash will not be provided.
- Children will have access to bread or fruit if they are hungry between scheduled meal and snack times.
- Mothers will be supported to continue breastfeeding their children.
- Infants will be held upright while bottle feeding. No bottles will be propped.
- Formula milk feeds for infants will be provided by parents/guardians and ready to use.
- A weekly menu will provide the children with varied foods.
- Recipes and food ingredients are available to parents/guardians.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to offer menu suggestions or comments.
- All children will have suitable food available depending on their age, development and needs, using the recommended servings table as a guide.
- Parents/guardians will be advised if their child is not eating well.
- Parents/guardians of children on special diets will be asked to provide as much information as possible about suitable foods. In some cases, parents/guardians may be asked to provide food themselves.
- Staff will sit with the children when they eat and encourage good eating habits.

- Children will sit when eating or having a drink.
- Withholding food will not be used as a form of punishment.
- Parents/guardians are asked not to send sweets, crisps and other snack foods to the centre.
- Birthday party food should be discussed in advance with the staff.
- All food in the centre will be stored, prepared and served using good food safety practices.
- Staff will receive training in relation to healthy eating and food safety.
- Children will be encouraged to play outside every day, weather permitting, to ensure they receive sunlight which helps their bodies to make vitamin D.
- Staff will share each child's eating for the day with the child's family. Healthy eating suggestions will be given out to parents/guardians to support them to give their children healthy food options.
- Healthy eating suggestions will be given out to parents to support them to give their children healthy food options.
- Breakfast will be available each morning. Parents are responsible to inform the staff if their child needs breakfast on arrival. To avail of this your child needs to be here before 8.45am.
- Parents will inform management and staff when their child has been diagnosed with a specific diet. It will be recorded on the registration paperwork.

Allergies:

Caisleán Óir is completely **NUT FREE**. All foods containing nuts are not permitted in the centre.

Illness and Medicine Administration Policy.

Procedures for managing out breaks and reporting notifiable diseases to the Inspectorate.

Parents are required to notify the centre Manager, if their child has been exposed to an infectious disease.

Public Health doctors are responsible for the prevention and control of all notified disease. Should an outbreak occur they may contact you directly. If your child is diagnosed with such an infection all parents with children attending may be contacted by the HSE. This is normal procedure in these circumstances.

The manager will contact the local Department of Public Health in the event of the following:

- If they have a concern about a communicable disease or infection, or if you need advice on controlling them
- If they are concerned that the number of children who have developed similar symptoms is higher than normal
- If they think that you may have an outbreak of infectious disease in your facility
- If they are not sure whether to exclude a child or member of staff
- Before sending letters to parents about an infectious disease.

Although the child's doctor is legally responsible for reporting serious illness, parents should phone their local Department of Public Health if they become aware that a child or member of staff has a serious or unusual illness, (for example meningitis), or if a number of children or staff have the same symptoms suggesting an outbreak.

Caisléan Óir Childcare will ensure that all rooms, equipment, toilets, changing rooms, kitchens, walls & doors are all disinfected in the event of an outbreak.

The procedures for exclusion from the service relating to illness.

Management reserve the right to ask a parent to collect their child from the centre should we deem it necessary. We must all work together to create and maintain a safe, caring and healthy environment for the children under our care. In the event of your child becoming unwell during the course of the day, the manager will inform the parents of their condition. The manager will request the parents to collect their child as soon as possible. Caisléan Óir Childcare recommends that parents have an Emergency plan in place, in the event that their child needs to be collected due to illness. As stated in the Administration of Medication Policy, any child who requires an anti-biotic is

required to stay at home for the first 24-48 hours depending on the illness. It is important that parents contact the centre manager and inform them of the illness when a professional has diagnosed the child, so that we can inform the other parents should it be deemed necessary. It is important that parents allow sufficient recuperation time for children who are sick. Children who are sick should not be sent into Caisléan Óir Childcare, it causes upset and stress to your child and can cause the unnecessary spread of infection to other children, their families and to the staff members. If this situation arises Caisléan Óir Childcare reserves the right to request that the child be taken home. The centres environments are not a place for a sick child. Caisléan Óir Childcare has a guideline of incubation periods for illness. It is important that these are followed by managers, staff and parents at all times to prevent the spread of infection. Parents are required to have a backup plan should your child become unwell during the course of the day and you are not in a position to collect them yourself. This contact should be listed in your nominated contacts on your child's record form.

To ensure that all children are healthy enough to participate in the session that they are attending. It is a priority of Caisleán Óir to provide a clean and healthy environment for children. The staff will ensure that the spread of germs will be kept a minimum. To do this:

1. There is a strict procedure in place for the administration of medicine.
2. That all parents understand the importance to following the procedure when a child has an illness.

Procedure:

- Before admission, all parents will sign the consent form stating whether they give permission for staff to administer medication.
- Over-The-Counter medications will be administered by staff on a consent from parents either over the phone or in person. A record of phone consent will be kept and parents must sign off on same.
- Parents must provide the centre with all Over-The-Counter medications with their child's name clearly labelled.

- Suppositories will not be given
If a child is on a regular prescribed medication, i.e. Inhaler, which must be given while attending the centre:
- A medication consent form must be signed by the parent. The form is available from the staff.
- If the medication is an inhaler, the parents must demonstrate and sign-off that they have shown the practitioner how to use the inhaler.



If a child is sick at home:







- It is the parent's responsibility to inform the centre if their child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease/infection.
- All infectious illnesses, such as but not limited to chicken pox, head lice/nits, measles, ringworm, conjunctivitis/pink eye, swine flu and whooping cough, must have a doctor's note as to when the child may return to the centre.
- If a child is on antibiotics, they may not return until after the first 24 hours on the antibiotics. If a child is on antibiotics but has a Doctor Certificate to say they are non-contagious and fit to attend the Centre, please contact us before your child returns, and the Manager will make a decision on a case by case basis.
- When a child does return and is still on antibiotics, the antibiotics must be signed over to a staff member. A clear pharmacy label must be on the packaging stating the name of the child, name of the medication, amount of times the medication is to be taken, and dosage of medication. The parent or guardians must fill in a form stating what time the medication is to be given and the dosage to be given.
- Upon the collection of the child, the antibiotics will be signed back over to the parents.
- The process will repeat every time the child has to take antibiotics to the centre.







- It is up to the staff's management's discretion to ask the parents to collect their child if they feel the child is not well enough to be at the centre.







If the child develops an illness at the centre:


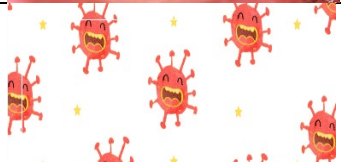
- Staff will monitor behaviour and symptoms.
- Staff will follow the procedure for administering a fever reducing medication.
- Parents will be notified before medication given and a signature must be obtained for approval.
- Diarrhoea is defined by the HSE as an increase in bowel frequency: three or more bowel movements within 24hours. When a child has a loose bowel movement for the second time. The parent will be called and informed that is another loose bowel movement occurs, the child must be picked up by a parent or guardian as soon as possible.
- As recommended by the HSE, there must be a minimum of 48hours from the instance of vomiting or diarrhoea before a child may return to Caisleán Óir.

Type of Infection	Signs and Symptoms	Recommended Incubation Period
Chicken Pox		7-14 days (until spots have dried up)
Hand, Foot & Mouth		4-7 days until infection is cleared

Impetigo		Until Lesions are crusted and healed 48 hours after Anti-Biotic Treatment
Slapped Cheek		Infectious before rash appears Depending on severity and form
Shingles		Minimum 5 days (until spots have dried up)
Ringworm		24 hours after appropriate treatment has commenced
Diarrhoea & Vomiting/ Gastroenteritis		48 hours after last episode
Conjunctivitis		24 hours after anti-biotic drops has been started Or Until eyes have completely cleared up of infection and discharge if on over the counter medications

Headlice		Until treatment has started
Oral Thrush		24 after Anti-biotic treatment
Viral Sore Throat		24 to 48 hours
Rotavirus		2-3 days
Whooping Cough		5 to 21 days 5 days from Anti-biotic treatment depending on severity
Influenza/Flu		3-7 days

Croup		24 to 48 hours after treatment
Meningitis/ Septicaemia		Until fully Recovered
Mumps		5 days after onset of swelling
E-coli 0157 VTEC		Must be excluded immediately until microbiological clearance
German Measles (Rubella)		6 days from onset of rash
Measles		4 Days after rash appears.

Tonsillitis		24hrs after starting anti-biotic treatment
COVID-19 Corona Virus		14 days Isolation in accordance with HSE guidelines.

Inclusion Policy.

- Staff will actively discourage stereotyping of gender, culture, background, or ability by facilitating non-stereotypical play and through the use of non-stereotypical resources and images.
- Where possible, staff will attend training pertaining to inclusion, for example, behaviour management, equality and diversity, language development or special needs.

Upon commencement of employment, staff will be given a period of induction to the service. All staff will be made aware of inclusive practice within our service and its importance.

Language Policy.

It is imperative in Caisleán Óir, Glinsk Community Childcare Service, to welcome all children and to encourage their involvement.

Here our staff will endeavour to learn some key phrases in the child’s language. Staff will communicate with parent or guardian and ascertain the key words. Staff will encourage parents or guardians to become involved in Caisleán Óir and communicate to staff about their culture and country of origin.

If a parent or guardian has concerns about a child's transition, a meeting can be held with all relevant parties to discuss concerns or issues that the parent or guardian may have.

Supporting Behaviour Policy

1. The learning curriculum in Caisleán Óir is designed with the age and developmental stage of the child in mind.
2. Staff will be the role model of positive behaviour and how they play, speak and interact with the children is a key part of their role.
3. Role Modelling will include; Explaining feelings, using a calm tone of voice, getting down to the child's eye level, giving choice to the children, using language to help children understand positive decisions, waiting and checking for the child's understanding.
4. Any rules will be kept clear simple, and age appropriate.
5. Staff will always comfort an upset child.
6. We have a procedure around monitoring and recording any incidents or issues in relation to supporting children with managing their own behaviour.
7. In cases where supporting children's behaviour becomes a bigger issue than our Policies and Procedures, can manage we will consult with parents/guardians and with other professionals and/or other agencies.
8. Children's efforts, achievements and feelings will be acknowledged by sincere encouragement leading to growth in self-esteem and self-discipline.
9. Play activities will be used to play out challenging situations so children get the opportunity to practice positive behaviour strategies.
10. Books and storytelling is used to talk about feelings and what we can all do when we are angry, upset or frustrated.
11. A range of activities will be available to the group of children which offer a lot of choice to all in order to support children's play ideas.
12. Children will not have to sit for long periods of time allowing them have a choice and to move from an activity which does not interest them
13. Children will have ample time to explore outdoors giving them lots of opportunity to run and feel free.

14. Do not use the word 'BOLD' things you could say is "that makes me sad" or "by doing that it upsets me and your friends"

Anticipating Inappropriate Behaviour.

The staff carry out observations through the process of 'tuning-in' and play alongside the children getting to know their likes and dislikes and emerging interests.

Through their role they are in a position to begin anticipating a child's reaction and behaviour knowing what is likely to upset a child's mood or behaviour, knowing when to step-in or just observe from a safe distance.

Strategies for Supporting Children

Caisleán Óir recognises that all children's behaviour has some meaning to the child, however at times this behaviour may be difficult or pose a danger to the child or other children.

For minor behaviour issues e.g. children fighting over a toy a conflict resolution approach will be used by the childcare staff:

- Approach Calmly – put yourself in the shoes of the child. All feeling are relevant and real in the moment. Approach the situation calmly and get down to the child's eye level.
- 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.
- Gather Information - remain neutral by giving each child the opportunity to tell their said story. Children sometimes need lots of time to get the words out so take your time and remember the importance of the lessons learnt in these situations.
- Restate the Problem – after listening to the children simply describe what the problem is so both/all can understand each sides of the storey.
- Ask for ideas for solutions and 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 it is giving the children lots of practice compromising with one another which is a vital skill they need.

- Be prepared to 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.

Managing Moderate Behaviour Issues

This type of behaviour can be recognised when the inappropriate behaviour is becoming a more regular occurrence.

- The staff team will discuss the reoccurring behaviour and put a plan in place.
- Staff will observe the child to identify any triggers of the behaviour.
- When the behaviour happens the steps above will be used with the child.
- The matter will be discussed in detail with the child's family.

Managing Challenging Behaviour Issues

If a child's behaviour is considered dangerous to themselves or others, a staff member will carefully remove either the child or the other children from the situation. This is in order to protect all in Caisleán Óir. The child will be given time to become calm and a staff member will help guide them with their behaviour. The staff member that has seen will record the incident and discuss with the family. If a child's behaviour is ongoing or becomes severely challenging Caisleán Óir will implement the following strategies:

- The staff will discuss the behaviour and develop an action plan.
- The child's key worker will carry out a number of observations at different times of the day.
- These observations will be discussed with the child's family.
- A plan will be drawn up in collaboration with the staff team and family of the child.
- If the behaviour is a child protection concern the Child Protection Policy will be implemented.

- All information gathered and discussed will be stored securely and all Conversations are highly confidential.
- The staff will always work in the best interest of the child using their best judgement in situations which can be demanding and stressful on all involved.

Practices Prohibited

- Corporal or physical punishment.
- Any practices that are disrespectful, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful.
- The use of bold chairs or time outs.

COVID-19:

COVID-19 Policy and Response Plan

Policy Statement

This policy is intended to support Caisleán Óir to safely re-open our services for staff, parents and children, to adopt a risk assessment approach and to implement public health measures to reduce the risk of the transmission of COVID–19 so as to provide a safe and healthy environment.

This policy sets out procedures to implement public health measures to reduce the risk of the transmission of COVID-19 while ensuring that the service’s policies and practices remain child-centred and that children’s health and well-being are a primary concern.

The service has a strong focus on the importance of effective communication with staff, parents and children and supports that may be required to alleviate the impact of the disruption, uncertainty and distress for some caused by COVID-19

The most common symptoms are:

- Cough - this can be any kind of cough, usually dry but not always
- Fever - high temperature over 38 degrees Celsius
- Shortness of Breath
- Breathing Difficulties

It can take up to 14 days for symptoms to appear. Some cases are asymptomatic, meaning there are no symptoms, and however the individual is still infected with Covid-19.

We will follow the following protocol in terms of hand washing

We will wash our hands frequently with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub if hands are not visibly dirty for 40-60 seconds and in line with the WHO and HSE recommendations. Water will be controlled to 43 degrees C.

- The service will promote good hand hygiene techniques in line with HSE and WHO guidelines, and support children to do the same through modelling, signage, activities and games
- We will ensure an adequate supply of liquid soap, hand gel or rub and disposable or paper towels available throughout the premises including the arrival and outdoor areas. All hand gels and rubs must be kept out of children's reach.
- All hand gels for staff, parents or visitors to the Service are alcohol based.
- We will use liquid soap and warm running water for hand washing and only use hand gels or rubs where running water is not available
- As we do not have sinks in all of the children's rooms or in the outdoor area, the children will use alcohol hand gel under the supervision of staff and keep the hand gel out of children's reach. It is better if children wash their hands where possible.
- Hand gel or rub must be applied vigorously over all hand surfaces, for 40-60 seconds, and are only effective if hands are not visibly dirty.

- If hands are physically dirty, then they need to be washed with liquid soap and warm water and children and staff will have to go to the nearest sink or bathroom.
- Staff and children will be encouraged to avoid touching their eyes, their mouth or nose with their hands

Children should wash their hands and be supervised doing so

- When they arrive at the Service and before they go home
- Before eating and drinking
- After a nappy change or using the toilet
- After playing outside
- After sneezing or coughing into their hands
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty

Staff should wash their hands

- When they arrive at the Service and before they go home
- After coughing and sneezing
- Before handling food, preparing bottles or feeding children
- Between handling raw and cooked food
- Before and after eating their own food – breaks/lunches
- Before and after giving or applying medication or ointment to a child
- After changing nappies, assisting a child to use the toilet or using the toilet themselves
- After caring for babies or children who are teething or dribbling.
- After caring for babies and young children who require close physical contact and comfort, where contact points such as the neck or arms may become contaminated with secretions or mucous, these should be washed immediately.
- If staff move from one room to another room or from inside to outside areas
- If staff have physical contact with a child from another group other than their own group

- After contact with bodily fluids (runny nose, spit, vomit, blood, faeces)
- After cleaning tasks
- After removing gloves
- After handling rubbish
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty
- If in contact with someone who is displaying any COVID-19 symptoms

Parents

Revised Drop off and Collection Procedures

The purpose of these dropping off and picking of children procedures is, in as far as possible, to support social distancing and minimize the number of contacts that parents and children have with other parents and children, especially at the entrance to the service or in the arrival area. The service will where practical:

- Ensure that the group of children in their 'play pod' and parents are met by the staff assigned to that 'play pod' group of children
- Use 2-meter markings on the ground outside the service to encourage parents with their children to socially distance at drop off and collection times
- Request that only one parent per family drops off and collects their child/children.
- Ask parents to wash their hands and children's hands at home before they come to the service.
- Ask parents to take their child's temperature each day before they come to the service as part of ensuring that children are well, this will need to be balanced against not causing distress to the child.
- Ask parents to bring their child to the centre in clean clothes each day. Where this is not practical, discuss alternatives with the parents. The

service will ensure that it has additional clean clothes for children to change into if required.

- Ask parents not to leave equipment such as buggies, car seats, scooters at or in the premises but to bring them home.
- Ask parents and children to use hand gel on arrival at the service and at collection times.
- Limit access to the service to parents of infants and those with specific needs or in risk categories

Verification of Child's Fitness to attend

Whoever drops the child to the service will be asked the following questions:

- Has the child been ill in the last 24 hours?
- Has the child had anti-febrile medication in the last 24 hours?
- Has the child had a temperature in the last 24 hours?

The staff member who is accepting the child into the service will verify the answers and the child will be admitted only if the answer is NO to these questions.

Communication with parents/guardians

In advance of children returning, the service will make contact with parents:

- Enrolment forms will be updated if required particularly in relation to authorised collectors
- To enquire if their child is returning to the service
- To ask them to complete the return to service child form
- To explain the revised COVID-19 health and safety and risk management procedures, the revised drop off and collection procedures, the purpose of these new procedures in reducing the transmission of the virus and that the service is safe for their children to return to while acknowledging that the risk of the virus being transmitted cannot be fully eradicated
- To explain the 'play pod' – who will be their child's key worker and that the purpose is to reduce the number of close contacts that their child and the staff will have while attending the service

- To emphasize the importance of their child only attending the service if they are well and with no symptoms of COVID-19 and actions to be taken if their child is displaying any of the symptoms of COVID-19 or is a confirmed case or is a close contact with a suspected or confirmed case
- To explain the actions that will be taken if a child or staff member shows symptoms of COVID-19 while attending the service including that their child's temperature may be taken in this context
- To request an additional emergency contact in the event that they are not contactable
- To explain the parental agreement, what it will cover and that parents will be required to sign it
- To assure them that the service's practices will continue to be child-centred.
- To emphasize the responsibilities of parents in supporting the new procedures.
- The service will also seek to understand if COVID-19 and the restrictions have had any traumatic or difficult impacts on the child and family and how the service may need to support the child on their return.
- The service recognizes that ongoing communication will be really important especially if procedures change or are updated and this helps to make everyone feel secure and safe with the new procedures.
- The service will ensure that parents are met at the entrance of the service each day by a staff member, while adhering to social distancing between the adults. In addition to the usual communication about children, this time also allows discussion on children's health and any sign of them being unwell.
- Given that communication between staff and parents will be reduced to drop off and collection times, management and staff will use alternative ways to communicate with parents e.g. email, text, phone, social media and TeachKloud.

These actions are to prevent adults and children with symptoms of COVID-19 from entering the service.

Children

Child return to service

- Before returning to the service parents will be asked to complete a pre-return to service form for their child. This form will seek confirmation that the child, to the best of the parent's knowledge, is well, has no symptoms of COVID-19, that they are not a close contact of a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days or awaiting results of a COVID-19 coronavirus test, and that they are not in a risk category.

After returning to the service

- Any child who is unwell with fever, cold, influenza or infectious respiratory symptoms of any kind or displaying any symptoms of coronavirus, needs to stay at home, contact their GP and seek their guidance on referral for coronavirus testing.
- Any child with symptoms of coronavirus or who tests positive should quarantine at home for 14 days and only return to the service when the symptoms have fully resolved and with a doctor's certificate stating that the child is no longer infectious.
- Any child who is a close contact of a person who has or is suspected to have COVID-19 should stay at home and quarantine for 14 days even though the child feels well but it is possible that they are also infected. It can take 2 – 14 days to show symptoms, so it may take up to 14 days to know if they are infected or not. They should only return to the service with a doctor's certificate to say they do not have coronavirus and are not infectious.
- Parents/guardians must adhere to all public health travel restrictions that are in place e.g. quarantine for 14 days on return from non-essential travel abroad or any other travel restrictions that are put in place

Parents

- Only parents or carers who are well and have no symptoms of COVID-19 or who have served the required quarantine time of 14 days where advised should be allowed to drop off and collect children.
- Limit access to the service to parents of infants and those with specific needs or in risk categories

The incident plan where a child or staff member has or is suspected of having COVID-19 while attending the service:

To safely manage a situation whereby a staff member or a child becomes unwell while in the Service and may be presenting as a suspected case of COVID-19 the Service has an incident plan in place including:

- The Service has an Infection Control Officer: Niamh Boyle
- The Service has appointed a COVID-19 lead staff representative (Niamh Boyle)
- Management has identified [Sensory Room] as the designated isolation room or area in the Service and the route to the isolation area.
- The purpose of moving a staff member or child who is presenting as unwell and maybe a suspected case of COVID-19, is to move them away from other staff and children thereby reducing the risk of transmission of the virus to others
- Ensure that the staff member or child who is presenting with symptoms of COVID-19 is at least 2 meters distance from other staff and children
- Management will ensure that the isolation room or area will contain Personal Protective Equipment i.e. disposable aprons, gloves, face masks; tissues, hand sanitizer, disinfectant, dedicated pedal bin to dispose of any waste material

Staff

- Claire Keane will be the designated person who will accompany a staff member to the isolation room

The Procedures to be followed are:

- When you get to the gate, we ask you to use the hand sanitiser before you press the buzzer.
- Then you proceed to the room that your child/children are being cared in. Parents are required to wait at the door 2 metres distance from the staff member and as far as possible encourage the child to walk in. **NO PARENT IS ALLOWED TO ENTER THE ROOM.** Please always respect social distance and do not put added pressure on the staff to come into the room.
- We ask that only one person attends at drop off and collection this is to eliminate the number of contacts that staff, and children have. Also, we ask that if a child has an older sibling in another room (pod) that the child does not enter that pod unless that is the room, they are being cared for.
- We ask that as much as possible that the same person drop off and collects your child to limit the number of contacts. Please ensure that you make the person collecting your child aware of this process.
- Please always respect social distance on collection and drop off.
- If you need to speak with management an appointment can be arranged by phone.

This is a completely new phase and situation for us all and these measures are put in place for the safety of all. Please respect these guidelines and understand that it will take time for these measures to fit together. If we feel that something needs to change, we will make the required adjustments as necessary.

We thank you for your understanding during this challenging time.

Communication Plan for Parents/Guardians and Staff

A copy of this policy will be provided to all staff team members/ students/ volunteers and parents and copies are always available.

Management and Staff regularly review policies and procedures as part of ongoing team meetings and practice reviews.

Parents/guardians and staff members/students/volunteers will receive written notification of any updates.

Reviews to Policies, Procedures and Statements will be carried out in line with changing regulations or legislation, experience, or changing circumstances of the service. We will monitor and implement ongoing guidance during the COVID-19 Pandemic in line with updated HPSC guidance: www.hpsc.ie.

Who must observe this Policy?

The Manager and Room Leaders are responsible for the implementation of policies and procedures where applicable to their role. Management, staff, students, volunteers, school age children and parents/guardians should observe all policy and procedural practices.

Actions to be followed if Policies and Procedures are not followed.

Purposeful non-observation of Policies and Procedures of the service will be addressed by Management. In the case of staff, this may be in the context of the Disciplinary Policy of the service.

Foreign Travel:

Please note in accordance with the government guidelines, which is based on official public health advice, the Department of Foreign Affairs continues to advise against non-essential travel overseas. This includes Great Britain but does not apply to Northern Ireland. It also includes all travel by cruise ship.

Travel to a very limited set of locations is exempted from this advice. Individuals arriving into Ireland from these locations will not be required to restrict their movements upon entry. These locations currently have a 'normal precautions' ("green") security status rating

Please note that if you travel overseas to a country that is not on the “green” list, you and your child will not be allowed to return to the centre until you have completed 14 days of quarantine.

Please refer to: <https://www.dfa.ie/travel/travel-advice/> as the information can change on a regular basis.