

1. Admission / Enrolment and Fee Policy and Procedure

1.1. Principles

At One Of A Kind Pre-School and After School we believe all children have the right to a high quality care.

1.2. Policy Statement of Intent

At One Of A Kind Pre - School and After - School we commit to open our service to all children, regarding their gender, race and cultural background or any special needs or requirements they might have and to value and treat all children equally

1.3. Procedures

• Enrollment

- Provided a place is available for a child here at One Of A Kind Pre - School and After - School, parents are asked to fully fill up our registration form with all required information and to sign all required consents.
- We admit children from 5 months of age onwards.
- We can cater up to 21 children in our premises at one time
- In our rooms we fully comply with the ratios adult/child dictated by the Health Board and the Pre-School Children Regulation
- If there is a waiting list, the first child to be offered a place at One Of A Kind Pre - School and After - School will be the child at the top position of the list, i.e. the child who was first put in the waiting list
- See our Children with Additional / Special Needs Policy in case of a child with special needs
- We commit to consult and work in partnership with the parents / carers to try and accommodate any change you need to make to your child care requirements and to consult you in case we need to make changes to the way we take care of your child
- As you enroll with One Of A Kind Pre - School and After - School you are asked to pay the followings:
 - One month's deposit (same amount as the monthly fee)
 - The monthly fee must be paid in advance every month and it can be paid by cash, cheque or standing order.

• Discounts and fees

We review our fees in September each year.

There is a 20% discount on the second sibling, provided that the sum of the fees for the two children before the discount exceeds Euro 1000. If that is not the case a discount of 10% applies for the second siblings.

There is no further discount for further siblings. This amendment on discounts does not apply for siblings who enrolled with us before July 2011, in which case the 20% discount will be applied regardless the fee paid until September 2012.

• Deposit

Please note that:

- The deposit you pay at enrolment is fully refundable as long as the child's parents give One Of A Kind Pre - School and After - School one month written notice of withdrawal of their child from our service.
- However, in May every year parents will be asked to confirm in writing whether they want to confirm the enrolment of their child with us for the following September. Once the enrolment is confirmed by the parents, the deposit will not be refunded should the parents decide to withdraw their child from One Of A Kind during the summer months.
- Please note that this deposit is not refundable if the child does not start with us

• Others

- There is no discount for absenteeism regardless the reason of the absence (holidays, sickness and so on)
- Children who enroll with us on a school-term basis will have a discount on their fees from the month of September until the month of June included. During the above period they will not attend our service while Primary National Schools are closed for school terms; during the summer months of July and August a full fee (non-school term discount) is payable.
- In case of a child who is attending our pre-school service for the last year and is moving into National School the following September, the child will have to attend the pre-school for the summer months of July and August for him to have a place kept in our after-school for the following September.
- Parents who wish to lessen the number of hours their child is attending our Pre-School must notify us with one month notice.
- After-schoolers do not pay during the summer months of July and August if they do not attend our service. We are happy to accommodate any after-school child during the summer months subjected to availability. The payable fee in this case will depend on the childcare arrangement needed.
- In case of a child attending our Crèche and Pre-School service and having a sibling attending our After-School service, should the child's sibling (after-schooler) not attend our service during the summer month, the child will pay full fee for the months of July and August while the after-school sibling is not attending. Should the after-schooler attend for the months of July and August, a discount for siblings will be applied according to our fee policy and Procedure.
- Childcare arrangements for the summer months should be finalized within the middle of May the same year and the total fee for those arrangements paid at the same time.

2. Opening time

One Of A Kind Preschool and After School is open from Monday to Friday from 08:00am to 18:00pm.

We close for: Bank Holidays, Good Friday, 10 days for Christmas from the 22nd of December, 14:00 and the week of the bank holiday week end in August.

3. Partnership with Parents /Carers Policy

3.1. Principle

At One Of A Kind Pre - School and After - School we regard the role of parents as the most important in the life, culture and education of a child.

We also appreciate the fact that every family as much as every child is different and might have particular needs or requests from us. We also understand and value the desire of every parent to be involved in their children's daily routine as the children spend some of their day with us and to be involved in decision and discussions about the child education and wellbeing.

3.2. Policy Statement of Intent

For this reasons we commit to regularly inform you of the daily routine of your child with us, his development, his behavior with us, to talk to you about the activities in which your child is involved and to let you know of any concern or issue we have about him / her.

We are also completely open to talk to you at any time about any doubts or concerns you might have regarding your child and we will try and help as much as we can with that.

You can talk to any of our staff or to our manager if you wish at any time (See our Open Door Policy).

3.3. Procedures

We encourage partnership with parents / carers the following way:

- We always go through the Child Daily Record with the parent / carer at collection of the child from our premises
- We provide the parents/ carers with a periodical report on the child progresses and development by reporting that in form of a Child Observation report (see our Program / Curriculum Planning and Evaluation Policy)
- Parents can schedule an appointment with our manager, any of our staff or both at any time should they wish to discuss any matter with us.
- Parents are informed of any incoming event / activity held in our premises such as a party, a special meeting etc. and we greatly appreciate any input into activities, outings and fund raising event or any other suggestions parent could have to help us improve our service
- Parents can access our policy and Procedure at any time as such as the child record relative to their children
- The daily routine in each room is displayed on the door of the room and so is our weekly schedule for the children
- A monthly children interest form is also displayed on each door with particular subjects we want to develop with the children

4. Managing Children's Behavior Policy

4.1. Principles

One Of A Kind Pre - School and After - School believe that children should be encouraged to grow and develop to their full potential in a suitable environment, where they know what is expected of them, and where clear limits are set, appropriate to their age and stage of development and any special needs they may have.

4.2. Policy Statement of Intent

At One Of A Kind Preschool and After School the staff has an affectionate and caring attitude towards the children in their care. Our staff displays a calm behavior, pleasant tone and they always treat the children with respect and dignity. All staff use positive methods of discipline that encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem and co-operation.

We strive to establish a relationship of trust and love with the children by encouraging them to talk, share their feelings and by listening to them attentively.

4.3. Procedures

The all of above is done by:

- Encouraging positive behavior
- Actively managing challenging behavior

4.4. How we encourage positive behavior

We encourage positive behavior by:

- Maintaining a serene and respectful atmosphere at all time in our premises
- setting the example for a start
- never using inappropriate language
- never letting a child use inappropriate language unchallenged
- encouraging each child to express their feelings in a respectful way
- listening to the child intently
- acknowledging the child feelings and opinions
- prizing positive behavior by thanking the child when she/he does something nice (ex: Thanks Sean for helping me setting up the table, that was very nice of you)
- Criticizing the behavior and not the child
- never inflicting corporal punishment to a child
- Always displaying a positive attitude in resolving conflicts.
- Children are though that bullying, fighting and hurting one another is not an acceptable behavior

4.5. How we actively manage challenging behavior

In case of a child displaying a challenging behavior we do the following:

- Physically remove the child from the situation causing the behavior and bring him in a corner of the room away from the other children
- We bend at child level and establish and maintain eye contact with the child
- We maintain a calm attitude at all time
- We firmly explain that the one witnessed is not an acceptable behavior
- We asked the child what happened and to express his/her feelings and we teach the child how to positively react next time he/she feels like doing the same naughty thing again
- We ask the child to apologize so that he/she has the opportunity to acknowledge that her/his behavior was wrong
- If the child continues displaying the same disruptive behavior we explain him that next time he will be sent to time out (seating for a while away from the activity and the other children), one minute for every year of his/her age
- At the end of the time out the child is asked to apologize and the opportunity is taken to restore peace between the two conflicting parts by shaking hands or hugging.
- The child is always forgiven at the end of this process.
- If a disruptive behavior has caused an accident between two children we record the accident on our Accident / Incident book and proceed to talk to the parent / carer of the children involved
- If a disruptive behavior has caused an accident between two children it is our policy not to disclose the name of the child whose disruptive behavior has caused the accident

If our staff is concern with the behavior of a child, we:

- Allocate the necessary resources to observe and record the child's behaviour among the other children and the modality in which the disruptive behavior takes place. The child's parent has access to those observation records
- Talk to the child's parents explaining our observations and concern to try and understand the possible reason behind the disruptive behavior and to device a combined corrective strategy and ensure consistency between home and Preschool/After School environment.
- If a child's disruptive behavior causes accidents involving other children or staff in wich those are injured it is the management's responsibility to evaluate:
 - The risk at which the other children / staff are put
 - Some children's behavior can be particularly worrying, for example some children are prone to hit a particularly vulnerable part of the body (such as the eyes or the head) so that the possible damage caused by the child on other children / staff can be cause of particular concern for the management
 - If a child's behavior is cause of concern, the management reserves the right to ask the child's parents to immediately remove the child from our service and look for alternative care
- If we have reason to worry about the well fair of the child in question we will contact the Health Board and report our concern.

5. Settling in Policy

5.1. Principles

We realize the settling in period for a child in a new environment is a difficult time for both parents and the child especially in case of a child attending a childcare service for the very first time. In many cases prior starting with us the child spend most of the time at home with the parent and therefore settling in with us coincide with the first experience of separation of the child from the parent / carer. The same anxiety is often experience by the parent when separating from his / her child for the first time.

5.2. Policy Statement of Intent

For the reason above all our staff at One Of A Kind Pre - School and After - School commit to be always very sensitive when it comes to settling in time and considerate towards the feelings of both child and parents / carer and to device and adhere to procedure that makes the process the less painful and stressful the possible for both of them.

5.3. Procedures

For settling in we follow the procedure below:

- At enrolment we talk to the parents and we explain and discuss oursettling in policy with them
- We would suggest parents to let their child get used to the new environment gradually by letting him with us initially for a short amount of time that can be gradually lengthen as the child gets more confident and relaxed in the present of our staff and the other children
- We suggest that the parents don't spend more than 5 minutes in the school with their child. We found that if the parents stay too long the child get confused and associate the school with the parents. The risk is that the child will demand more and more time with the parents in the school at arrival and will struggle to relax and settle in with us
- For the first few days we will keep in constant contact with the parents by phone. We will phone the parents first after 15 minutes they have left and then again every half an hour to update them on how their child is doing
- We cannot expect the child not to react to such a radical change of routine such as settling in a playgroup but experience tell us that usually parents are the last to get used to the new routine while children adjust quite easily and will be soon very happy to kiss you goody and go play with their little friends and their teacher!

6. Healthy Eating Policy

At One Of A Kind Pre - School and After - School we fully appreciate the importance of a healthy diet for the children in our care. We realize the parents of the children in our care expect us to make sure the food we provide is safe, the diet for their children is balanced and varied and that we promote a healthy eating pattern on the children and teach them the importance of a healthy diet. Moreover, since 1998 it has been a legal requirement for all food businesses to have a food safety management system based on the principle of HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point), a food safety management system to identifying and controlling hazards, whether microbiological, chemical or physical, that could pose a threat to the production of safe food

6.1. Policy Statement of Intent

We commit to do all the above by implementing the following procedure with regards to food.

6.2. Procedures

- We provide the children with healthy food, snacks and drinks throughout the day. We do that by:
 - We provide the children with a healthy breakfast (served until 9am) consisting of cereals and milk, and a hot meal at 12:15pm
 - For our food we use Moon and Spoon, a well-known Irish food provider specialized in food for childcare services. They provide us with delicious handmade, nutritionally balanced food suitable for children, made without any unwanted additives (no coloring, no flavorings or preservatives) and using only the purest and finest ingredients – locally sourced where possible. They can also provide a delicious range of dishes which are suitable for children who have specific dietary requirements, including those with vegetarian or gluten free preferences
 - We ask parents to provide mid-morning snacks for the children. And encourage the parents to support our healthy diet policy by not sending crisp, sweets or sugary drinks with their children. Healthier alternatives could be cheese, sandwiched, fruit, raw vegetable sticks, yogurt etc.
- We make sure the food we provide the children with is safe by implementing a food management procedure based on the principles of the HACCP Protocol:
 - At arrival our food is immediately hygienically stored into our freezer / refrigerator.
 - Our fridge and refrigerator's temperatures are checked and recorded daily
 - When handling food, our appointed staff wears food handling gloves at all time
 - Prior to preparing food our appointed staff wears a clean apron, wash her hands with anti-septic soap and dries them with paper towel and finally wears clean food handling gloves
- We promote healthy eating patterns and preferences and interest in healthy food by involving the children in healthy food related activity such as gardening and cooking in which we take opportunities to make dishes that we know the children will love and are original of other countries. In doing that we seek suggestion from the parents on the preferences of their children