



Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori

Policy #2

Admissions

Introduction

- To facilitate a positive introduction to the Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori for families.
- To make the Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori a place where everyone – irrespective of his or her gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances – feels welcome and valued.
- To enable equal access to a differentiated and full curriculum that caters for the individual needs of all children.
- To promote positive attitudes to our diverse society by valuing everyone and encouraging a positive self-image in every child. It is our responsibility to ensure that our diverse society is reflected in the Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori

Policy Statement

All new admissions are dealt with on an individual basis to ensure that the unique needs of each child and their parents/carers can be met. Every effort is made to admit children with specific needs providing that the individual children's needs can be met within the service.

Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori believes that the principle of equal opportunities is fundamental and this is integrated into every area of the programme. This is especially important at the admission stage.

We will make every effort to ensure that the service is accessible to all children irrespective of their or their parents' gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability or social circumstances. Children who are learning English as a second language are very welcome.

Prospective parents/carers and their children are encouraged to visit the Centre to become familiar with the facilities, the programme, the children attending and the staff members, and to discuss their expectations and/or their concerns.

We will do our best to be flexible with reference to children's attendance in order to meet each individual family's needs.

Places are subject to availability and staffing levels.



Procedures & Practices

Allocation of places

Priority for the allocation of available places will be in the following order:

- *Children who are already attending the Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori.*
- *Children who have siblings or relatives attending the Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori.*
- *Children who require full time care.*
- *Children who require part day sessions.*
- *A number of places are reserved for children with specific requirements*

When all available places are taken up, a waiting list will be established. Acceptance will generally be based on the date the child's name is placed on the waiting list; however priority will be decided according to the above criteria.

When notified of an available place, parents/carers will be allowed (one week) to decide on acceptance before the place is offered to another on the active waiting list.

The admissions procedure is as follows:

1. Parents/carers will make an initial enquiry to the Centre.
2. Parents/carers will be invited to visit with their child/children. At this stage, a preliminary assessment of childcare needs will be made – this will also ensure that parents'/carers' wishes and preferences are taken into account when planning the delivery of childcare.
3. If the parents/carers wish to take a place and the required place/places is/are available, they will be asked to complete and sign an Enrolment Form in details.
4. Registration forms are to be given to the manager for information about the child, and then placed on file. Parents/carers are asked to return the form to the manager prior to commencement of care.
5. Four weeks notice will be required for any changes or cancellation of the original agreement.
6. Every child will be allocated a Key Person who will be the primary point of contact for parents/carers and the child. The Key Person will play a fundamental role in ensuring that the child receives the best possible standard of care and education during his or her time at the Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori.
7. During the week prior to the child starting at Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori, parents/carers will be given the opportunity to become more familiar with the range of facilities in Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori, exchange information and get to know their child's Key Person, other staff members and the routines.



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8. Parents/carers will be given information on the key policies and procedures (including the Comments and Complaints Procedure), practical issues and the way in which a stimulating environment and curriculum are provided for the children. This information will be provided verbally and in a handbook. While working in the best interests of the child, staff members will consider the parents'/carers' needs as well.

Settling in

New children will be introduced to the Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori individually or with their siblings – starting days and times will be staggered to facilitate this.

Young children have been developing an attachment to their parents/carers and are generally secure in their daily home life and routine. There are specific measures that both parents and caregivers can take to ease the transition to care and alleviate separation anxiety.

Both child and parents/carers will be helped to feel welcome. The child's cubby and other personal spaces will be labeled in advance.

Parents/Carers will be encouraged to bring the child in on a gradual schedule to allow them to adjust in a gentle way.

Bookings, fee payment, cancellation and late collection

- Childcare places must be booked 4 weeks in advance.
- Payment for childcare places will be made 4 weeks in advance.
- Parents/carers must notify the Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori on the day if their child/children will not be attending a booked place(s) on any day/s.
- Parents/carers must notify the Centre 1 week in advance of any holidays.
- Parents/carers must notify the Centre if they are going to be unexpectedly late. A charge of €10 per every 15 minutes will be made for late collection.



Communication Plan

The Parent's/Carer's Handbook will include the following information:

- a) The service's Mission Statement and Aims
- b) Contact information
- c) The type of services provided and the age range of the children
- d) The childcare policies and information about the programme/curriculum
- e) The Admissions Policy
- f) Information on staffing – including staff qualifications and ratios
- g) The hours of opening
- h) Costs and charges/Fees
- i) The settling in procedure
- j) Routines and activities provided for the children
- k) The Behaviour Guidance and Discipline Policy
- l) Equality and Non-Discrimination Policy
- m) Information about the management structure
- n) Catering arrangements
- o) The policy on Children's Illnesses

All parents/carers are to be informed of the Little Ladybird Creche & Montessori policies and procedures on registration. Staff members will check with parents/carers that they have received, read and understood the Parents'/Carers' Handbook and are aware of the policies and procedures and will provide any assistance needed.

This policy will be included in staff induction and annual staff training.

A copy of all policies will be available during all hours of operation to staff members and parents in the Policy Folder located in the main office.

Parents/Carers may receive a copy of the policy at any time upon request.

Review Date

Date:

Person Responsible:

Related Policies, Procedures and Forms

- Equality and Non-Discrimination Policy
- Records & Record Keeping Policy
- Key Person Policy
- *List any relevant forms from Pobal here too*
- Registration/Admission/Enrollment Form
- Confidentiality Policy



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References/Supporting Documents/Related Legislation

- Child Care Act, 1991
- Child Care (Pre-school Services) Regulations, 2006 and Child Care (Pre-School Services) (No 2) (Amendment) Regulations, 2006
- Freedom of Information Act, 1997 and 2003
- Data Protection Act, 1998 and 2002
- **Supporting Quality: guidelines for professional practice in early childhood services (3rd edition)** by Geraldine French. Barnardos' Training and Resource Service, 2008

Contact Information: [Who to contact for more information]

Name:

Policy Created

Date:

Signatures

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Appendix A

SETTLING IN PROCEDURE

Starting daycare is a major life transition for both young children and their families. Change, even when it is a positive change, can be stressful. In many cases this may be the first time a child is away from the secure and loving arms of their family. Parents/carers want to know that their child will be in a loving and safe environment when the child is not in their direct care. It is not uncommon for parents/carers to feel guilty about placing the child in daycare, thus making the farewell more difficult. Young children have been developing an attachment to their parents/carers and are often secure in their daily home life and routine. There are specific measures that can ease the transition to care and alleviate separation anxiety.

Recognise the parent's feelings – Both parents/carers and children are undergoing a major life change. Realise that parents/carers may have feelings of apprehension or guilt in leaving their child in your care. Be sure to make both child and parents/carers feel welcome. You can make them feel welcome by labelling the child's cubbyhole and other personal spaces in advance. You may want to hang a poster or banner welcoming the new family.

Make the first day a first week – One of the most successful strategies for alleviating separation anxiety is to encourage a slow transition. Provide opportunities for the family and child to get to know you before the child starts daycare. A key person may make home visits where the child can meet them in the child's secure surroundings. Invite the parents/carers to bring the child in on a gradual schedule to allow them to adjust to daycare in a gentle way. Maybe only an hour the first day, two hours the next, until the child is comfortable remaining in care the full day.

Reinforce a sense of trust with the child – Young children's separation anxiety is often closely tied to fears of abandonment. It is important that they will know that the parent will be returning for them at a designated time. With an older child you can even point out on the clock when they will return or give them a concrete milestone such as, 'Mammy/Daddy will be back for you right after lunch time'. It may also be helpful to discuss with the child where they will be and what they will be doing during the time of separation. In any case remind the child that they will indeed return.

Let them bring something from home – Sometimes called transitional objects, 'blankies', teddies and other objects of comfort can help a child feel secure. An object that helps the child remember the parent is of great benefit. These 'remembrance' objects may include photos or an object of the parent's/carer's clothing.

Communicate with the parent – Be sure to let them know if you have any specific concerns and needs. Don't be afraid to specifically ask how you can be of assistance.

Say goodbye – You may wish to warn the child that the parent/carer will be leaving in five minutes, or that after the story they will be going to work. When it is time for the parent/carer to go, encourage the parent/carer to say goodbye and go. Continued extensions to the separation seem to only add to anxiety and make the separation more difficult. Discourage the parent/carer from 'sneaking' out. Regardless of how upset the child is, sneaking out only adds to their anxiety, increases fear of abandonment, and breaks down the child's sense of trust. You may want to help the parents/carers establish a routine for saying goodbye e.g. three hugs and a wave from the window.



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Remember, overcoming separation anxiety and adjusting to daycare, like any major life change, is a gradual process.

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/CARERS

Recognise your own feelings – Your child is sensitive to your emotional state and attitudes. If you are apprehensive about how your child will adjust, you may unwillingly convey this to your child. It is important that you have taken great care in choosing childcare that you are personally comfortable with. Also be sure to always talk to your child about daycare as a positive and exciting thing. Avoid apologising to your child about enrolling them in daycare.

Recognise your child's temperament – You know your child better than anyone else. Let your knowledge about your child's personality and temperament guide how you approach this new transition. If your child is naturally somewhat shy and slow to warm up, then you will know that you may need to take extra time in introducing your child to a new environment and new people.

Prepare your child in advance – Your child will have less anxiety if they know what to expect and are familiar with the Centre and caregivers. Bring the child along when you visit the Centre or meet the childcare provider. Try to visit at least once where you can remain with the child as they explore the new surroundings.

Make the first day a first week – One of the most successful strategies for alleviating separation anxiety is to make the break slowly. If at all possible, start your child's daycare experience slowly. Maybe only an hour the first day, two hours the next, until the child is comfortable remaining in care the full day.

Reinforce a sense of trust with your child – Young children's separation anxiety is often closely tied to fears of abandonment. It is important that they will know that you will be returning for them at a designated time. With an older child you can even point out on the clock when you will return or give them a concrete milestone such as, 'I will be back for you straight after lunch'. It may also be helpful to discuss with your child where you will be and what you will be doing during the time of separation. In any case, remind your child that you will indeed return.

Leave something behind – Sometimes called transitional objects, 'blankies', teddies and other objects of comfort can help a child feel secure. Many parents/carers find that an object that helps the child remember the parent is of great benefit. These 'remembrance' objects may include photos or an object of the parent's/carers' clothing.

Communicate with the Key Person – They are your greatest ally in making the separation a smooth and calm experience. Be sure to let them know if you have any specific concerns and needs. Don't be afraid to specifically request their assistance or guidance.

Say goodbye – You may wish to warn your child that you will be leaving in five minutes, or that after the story you will be going to work. When it is time to go, say goodbye and go. Continued extensions to the separation seem to only add to anxiety and make the separation more difficult. It is never suggested to 'sneak' out. Regardless of how upset the child is, sneaking out only adds to their anxiety, increases fear of abandonment, and breaks down the child's sense of trust.