# Parents Handbook



Inspiring land of eternal youth



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# Afterschool facility

Ardagh NS



#### **TALK TO US**

Register- Jacinta O'Malley Manager - Caroline Doherty Maughan Phone - +353 (87) 475 4764 Email - ardagh@tirnanognorthmayo.com

### Statement of purpose

Seasonal after school community facility
Open 38 weeks of the year
From 8:00am - 9:20am and 2 pm to 6 pm Monday to Friday

#### Aim and ethos of the service

Our aim is to provide a safe, engaging, and supportive environment for children after regular school hours. We aim to create a space where children can socialise, learn new skills, receive homework help and participate in recreational activities.

#### **Programme of activities**

Breakfast
Homework help
Arts & Crafts
Sports and Physical Activities
STEM Activities
Music & Dance
Cooking classes
Outdoor play

Maximum number of children and staff 24 children and 2 staff
School Aged Children from 4 – 12 years old
The Adult to Child Ratio is 1:12

#### Policies and procedures

Complaints policy
Policy on administration of medication
Policy on infection control
policy on managing behaviour
policy on drop off and pick up
Child safeguarding statement

### Anti - bullying Policy

TIr Na Nog is committed to be a safe and friendly place for all children. We expect all children and staff to be treated with respect and kindness at all times. Bullying is not tolerated, and we have specific steps we follow in the event of bullying. Tir Na Nog seeks to identify, respond and manage bullying in a timely and sensitive manner.

Bullying can include different types of actions:

- Verbal actions
- · Gestures or signs
- Physical actions
- · Taking or breaking other people's belongings
- · Leaving people out of games or any other type of exclusion
- Cyber bullying



This is not an exhaustive list and there are other things that could happen that are considered bullying.

All incidents of bullying witnessed should be reported to the manager as soon as possible.

The manager will investigate any bullying allegations. This might involve speaking to the children involved, gathering information on who is involved and in the case of cyber bullying recording any posts online. All bullying investigations are handled sensitively. Parents are informed of any bullying investigation. On occasion, it may be necessary for Tir Na Nog to liaise with the child/children's school. If a bullying issue is also ongoing at school, Tir Na Nog and the school will communicate about the approach.

Following identification of a bullying issue, Tir na nog will implement an intervention that is determined by the nature of the bullying and the children involved. All staff are fully trained on the appropriate interventions.

Intervention might include:

- · Negotiating agreements between pupils
- · Working with parents and guardians
- Mediation
- Buddy/peer mentoring

### Complaint Form

Name of person making complaint:	
Address of person making complaint:	
Phone number:	
Preferred method of communication:	
Date and time complaint was made:	
Date and time of incident (if applicable):	
Name of person to whom complaint was first made:	
Name of Registered Provider: Jacinta O'Malley	
Details of Complaint:	
Signature of Complainant:	
Date:	
Signature of manager receiving complaint:	
Date:	





#### Child Friendly Complaints Policy



You are welcome to come and talk to us any time

As a child/young person attending Named Service, is there anything you are unhappy about? If you have a comment or complaint about Tir Na Nog, please tell us as soon as possible. You can speak to your leader directly or speak to \_\_\_\_\_\_, the manager or Jacinta. We are always here to listen to you.

If you would prefer to write it down, you can give Manager Name a letter, send us an email (email tirnanogcrossmolina@gmail.com) or send us a text (087 475 4764). You can also ask your mum or dad, granny or grandad, aunt or uncle to make a complaint to Tir Na Nog.



If you need help with making a complaint, please ask any staff member in Tir Na Nog. We will acknowledge any complaint you make as soon as possible, no more than 5 days after you have made the complaint.

When we receive a complaint from you, we will investigate that complaint in the same way that we would investigate a complaint that comes in from an adult. We take all complaints seriously and we will listen to all children that make a complaint about Tir Na Nog. We will try to make improvements based on complaints and always try to resolve the issue that is causing you concern.

Tir Na Nog aims to deal with all complaints within 1 month. You will always be kept informed about your complaint, please let us know how you would like us to update you.

We will talk to you about your complaint if we have questions or need to find out more about what happened. After our investigation in to the complaint we will let you know what we find out and the changes, if any, we are going to make in Tir Na Nog because of the complaint.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of your complaint, please let us know and you will have an opportunity to appeal it. The appeal of the complaint will be looked after by different people in Tir Na Nog than those who looked after the complaint the first time.

Persons who have access to the record of complaints: Sarah O'Malley and Jacinta O'M	ialley
Person Responsible: Jacinta O'Malley	
This policy was adopted by Tir Na Nog on Date: 19/06/2024	1-
Signed by:	0
On behalf of Management (Manager, Owner, Chairperson)	-4

Review Date: 19/06/2025

# Fee's

- The hourly cost will be €5 per hour.
- Transport via car is €5
- Fee's have to be paid regardless of weather or not your child attends the service on days/hours booked.
- You will also have to pay for school holidays, which include Christmas/Easter/mid-term/staff days/bank holidays.
- You do not pay for the summer holidays
- There will be a €50 refundable deposit to hold your child place during the summer
- There is a €3 charge if you would like us to provide a snack during the duration of your child's/children's stay with us.
- There is a 10% discount for each additional sibling.
- Fees must be paid weekly.
- Fees can be paid by standing order, cash (up to €500) or cheque.
- Fees must be paid to the 'person in charge' by cash.
- A receipt will be issued upon request.

#### Non-payment of Fees

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



#### Late Collection of Child/Children from Tir Na Nog

Parents/guardians should note that due to legislative requirements under the Childcare 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.

We understand that you could be late from time to time however we will enforce the late collection fee after numerous late collections and we will tell you ahead of time.

The Late Collection Fee is €10 after 15 minutes late.

#### Withdrawal of Children:

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

- Give notice, in writing that the child/children are leaving the service
- Give 4 weeks' notice or pay 4 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.

# Childcare Scheme's

#### NCS - National Childcare Scheme

What is the National Childcare Scheme?

The National Childcare Scheme (NCS) launched in November 2019 to provide financial support for parents towards the cost of their childcare. The introduction of the NCS was a landmark moment for making high quality childcare more affordable and accessible to families in Ireland. Further enhancements to the scheme were provided for under Budget 23/24 and came into effect on the 1st of September 2024.

The NCS is a streamlined scheme where parents continue to have access to a subsidy to meet the cost of their childcare.

There are two types of subsidies available to apply for under the National Childcare Scheme.

#### Subsidy Types

#### **Universal Subsidies**

These are available to all families with children between 24 weeks and 15 years of age. This subsidy is not means tested and provides €2.14 per hour towards the cost of a registered childcare place for a maximum of 45 hours per week. Parents can only claim for the hours that their child attends the service.

What you will need to apply online:
A verified MyGovID account
Your children's information such as date of
birth and PPSN
Your employment and income related details
Your partner's PPSN\*\*
Your partner's employment and income
related details, if you are a member of a
couple, to see what you might be eligible for
you can use the Childcare Subsidy Calculator.

#### **Income Assessed Subsidies**

These are available to families with children aged between 24 weeks and 15 years. This subsidy is means tested and will be calculated based on your individual circumstances. Your rate will vary depending on your level of family income, your child's age and educational stage, and the number of children in your family. If you (and your partner, if you have one) are working, studying or training, the maximum number of subsidised hours available per week are 45. If you (or your partner, if you have one) are not working, studying or training, the maximum number of subsidised hours available per week are 20. Your subsidy can be used outside of school or ECCE hours, for example:

childcare used before preschool or school starts in the morning (e.g. breakfast club) after-school childcare

childcare used outside of preschool or school term weeks

Again, you can only apply for the number of hours your child attends the service.

The Scheme is suitable for children, in the necessary age bracket, who are attending any participating Tusla registered childcare service, including any Tusla registered childminder.

There will be 2 subsidies available under the National Childcare Scheme:

- 1. Universal Subsidies are available to all families with children under three years old. This subsidy is not means tested.
- 2. Income Assessed Subsidies. This subsidy is means tested and will be calculated based on your individual circumstances. Your rate will vary depending on your level of family income, your child's age and educational stage, and the number of children in your family.



### Administration of medication

#### **Emergency medication:**

- An individual care plan is in place for each child in the service who has an allergy/asthma/a condition that requires emergency medication. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that emergency medication is supplied to Tir Na Nog and replenished when necessary.
- · If a child requires emergency medication in an anaphylaxis/asthma emergency, the emergency services and the child's parents/guardians are notified as soon as possible.
- The emergency medication plan of your service should be included here in this policy.

#### Individual care plans:

- All children with medical conditions enrolled in Tir Na Nog they need to have individual care plans are prepared by the child's doctor.
- · If a child has an individual care plan, the plan is available to all staff caring for the child. The plan is stored confidentially and is only shared with staff on a need to know basis.

#### **Emergency contact details:**

- Parents/guardians must provide contact details to Tir Na Nog when their child is enrolled.
- Parents/guardians will be requested to notify Tir Na Nog if their emergency contact details change.
- Emergency contact details for parents/guardians of all children in the service will be kept on file and updated as needed.
- The phone number of the Poison Line, local GP, Pharmacist and Public Health Nurse are readily available to all staff. Emergency contact numbers 999 or 112 are available to staff and there is always a working phone on the premises.
- In the event of an emergency an ambulance will be called. The parents/guardians of a child will be informed immediately.

#### Sunscreen:

- · Sunscreen has to be supplied by parents does not require consent.
- Sunscreen supplied by parents is labelled with the child's name and is only used for that child.
- · A record of when sunscreen is applied is kept for all children.
- Sunscreen is stored out of children's reach and labelled with the date it was first opened.
- · Sunscreen is brought on outings as needed.



### Infectious illness

#### **ILLNESS AND EXCLUSUIONS:**

You have entrusted your child into our care and we aim to ensure this environment is as healthy as possible and we want to minimise your child's risk of infection. We encourage you to get your child immunised according to the HSE recommendations.

Children with the following cannot be admitted to the service:

- Acute symptoms of food poisoning/gastro-enteritis.
- An oral temperature over 37.5 degrees C. Children that have a temperature will not be allowed to come to the centre and will be sent home.
- If a child develops a temperature while at the centre and it will not come down the parents will be called and the child will be monitored and temperature recorded until their arrival.
- An earache.
- A deep, hacking cough.
- Severe congestion.
- Difficulty breathing or untreated wheezing.
- An unexplained rash.
- Vomiting (in last 48 hours). Children who vomit in the centre and are sent home will not be allowed back into the centre until at least 48 hours has passed
- Diarrhoea (in last 48 hours).
- Complaints of a stiff neck and headache with one or more of the above symptoms
- Lice or nits
- An infectious /contagious condition.
- A child who is on an antibiotic for less than 48 hours

If a child becomes ill at the service parents will be contacted so that the child can be taken home. If, for some reason, the parent cannot collect they should organise an authorised adult to collect their child. All children must provide up to date record of immunisations. Should there be an outbreak of any infectious disease or incident you will be informed.

#### **Head Lice:**

Head-lice are very common amongst children. All parents should check their child's head regularly for lice. If there is an outbreak you will be informed. If your child is infected, you will be asked to refrain from bringing your child to the service until it is cleared.

For a full list of exclusions see our Illness and Exclusions policy.

#### **MEDICATION:**

We do not routinely administer 'Calpol' or other nonprescription/prescription medications. We only administer medicines with the correct signed permission.

Medicines must only be brought into this service for administration by the staff when it is essential. This means where it would be detrimental to the child's health if it were not to be administered. Medicine should be in its original container with the doctor's instructions. We cannot administer medication without its original packaging. We cannot administer medication not licensed for the age of your child or where the instructions are not written in English. If your child has an allergy or a medical condition such as diabetes, epilepsy etc. you will be asked to completed a medical emergency care plan

#### **INFECTION CONTROL:**

We aim to promote and maintain the health of children and staff through the control of infectious illnesses. We aim to control infection by providing on- going infection control training for staff.

It is our aim to minimise the spread of infection for staff and children through the implementation of controls that reduce the transmission and spread of germs. We aim to promote and maintain the health of children and staff through the control of infectious illnesses.

- We follow exclusion guidelines as recommended by the Environmental Health Officer apply in the case of all suspected infectious conditions. These guidelines are contained in our policies and procedures and displayed in the service.
- Parents will be informed should staff, children or visitors to the service report the presence of any contagious condition to the manager

Any child or adult with symptoms of an infectious illness will be asked not to attend the service until they are no longer infectious. The management of the service will ensure all areas of the premises are thoroughly disinfected, including play areas, toilets, toys and all equipment.



# Homework Policy

It is the policy of the service to provide a period of time each day for homework. The service cannot guarantee that the homework is finished, as the afterschool is still offering out of school activities and is not only a homework club. This session will be scheduled to take place directly after children have had their snack/meal.

- Snack/Meal time is relaxed and leisurely to enable children to unwind, socialise and discuss daily events.
- Each child will get sufficient time to do their homework.
- Staff will contribute to a quiet relaxed atmosphere during homework sessions and encourage children to do the same and will be there to help children with their homework. However, staff will not be responsible for signing children's homework as it is very important that parents/guardians check each child's homework.
- The After School Service recognises the importance of the parent's role in homework support and encourages them to check work completed, hear reading again etc. and play an active role in the homework supervision and support of their child.
- We are not obliged to finish the child's homework it is essential for a child well being to get a break in between the afterschool session.

#### **Over Subscription:**

In the event of places being full a waiting list will be kept. In addition, the following will apply when allocating a place.

- 1. Existing children
- 2. Priority to full time (5 days)
- 3. Siblings

The Manager will advise parents of their child's place on the waiting list upon request.

Each year of the scheme is treated completely separately by our service with enrolment required for each year.

All details regarding a child's Application Form must be completed and any relevant important information or specific diet or health requirements must be noted.

- We reserve the right to refuse admission.
- We reserve the right to terminate our services.
- Parents/guardians should familiarise themselves with our Policies and Procedures.

They will be reviewed, and changed accordingly, to incorporate any new developments from Tusla, the Child and Family Agency.

 No uniform is necessary, children can bring a change of clothes if they wish. We also ask to have an old large tshirt on site for days we will be painting. No hoop or long earrings.

#### **INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS:**

This service is committed to:

- Providing all children with the opportunity to access our service regardless of their ability but within the expertise and resources available and in accordance with the best interests of the child.
- Respecting the rights of all children to participate in a quality children's programme.
- Providing a family-based approach which recognises that parents know their children best and want the best for their children.
- Recognising that families are different and unique.
- Recognising that all children learn in different ways and at different rates.
- Parents/guardians need to be aware that it may be required for them to provide a special needs assistant when necessary.
- A child's right to social inclusion.



#### 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.
- 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 you 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 you 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 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 Gardaí. 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 This provision is not retrospective, so guardianship will only be acquired automatically by Tir Na Nog.

#### **Birthdays:**

Celebration of birthdays and other special occasions, e.g. Easter, Chinese New Year etc., focus on the sense of occasion rather than simply the provision of rich, sugary food and drinks.

We will provide snacks and drinks to celebrate birthdays. On Birthdays if a parent wants to bring in a cake/cupcakes please speak to management before to be aware of any allergies there might be in the facility.

#### **OUTINGS:**

It is part of the child's development to experience fresh air and access to a variety of outdoor experiences. This service is committed to planning and undertaking appropriate supervised outings. The location for the outing will be familiar to staff and a risk assessment will be carried out prior to the visit with the children. Risk assessment forms are completed and kept for inspection. Parents are always notified in advanced and are required to complete an authorisation form.

#### **Extra Curricular Activities**

There will be different activities throughout the year that the children can participate in, this will include music, yoga etc There will be a small fee for these activities.

#### **Transport**

If your child has football or another activity in Crossmolina a member of staff can bring them to it at a small fee.

If your child is being collected some days and also walking home some days, can you let us know which days your child will be walking.



#### **SECURITY**

- Parents are requested not to admit anyone else into the service whilst entering or leaving unless they know them and to check that all doors are securely closed behind them, at all times.
- Safety checks are done regularly to ensure that no child can leave the premises undetected.
- We ask that all potential collectors be introduced to the Manager in advance or have valid ID.
- If a child is being collected by anyone other than the parents or usual designated person, the staff must be informed. This is to ensure our children's safety.



#### **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 at this service are trained in First Aid and will treat minor injuries. If a child needs to attend hospital a staff member will travel too.

#### **FIRE SAFETY:**

All our staff are trained in fire prevention and evacuation. Your child will participate in monthly fire drills.

#### PHOTOGRAPHS AND OTHER RECORDINGS:

We occasionally take photographs or video recordings of the children and these may be displayed within the service.

- If you do not want your child's photo to be taken please let us know.
- Parents are only permitted to take photos or video record their own child at the discretion of the Manager.
- You will be asked to sign a photo consent form upon registration.

#### **DATA PROTECTION:**

Under the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 this service has appointed a "Data Controller" to manage the storage of personal information about staff, children and families in its computerised and manual records. All data is stored confidentially.

#### STAFF MANAGEMENT

Staff Ratios:

The adult/child ratios are governed by Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016. We will not work outside ratio.





#### **Recruitment:**

It is the policy of this service to recruit and select the best candidate for any vacant position within our Service. Our employees are one of the key resources we have in achieving our aims and objectives of providing good quality care to the children in our Service.

Our primary concern is selecting the right candidate that will cherish the children in our care and help each one of them to reach their potential. This is achieved through a rigorous interview and vetting process.

#### **Garda Vetting:**

It is the purpose of this service to ensure that appropriate vetting of all staff, students and volunteers who have access to children is carried out. This requires getting references from past employers and completing Garda vetting through the National Vetting Bureau (NVB).

#### **Staff Absences:**

We have a panel of relief staff available to cover absences, including sick leave. Relief staff are Garda vetted and suitable personnel who can be contacted at times of emergency. This service will not operate if the appropriate number of staff is not available. This service will always operate within the appropriate ratios.

#### **Staff Training:**

We are committed to training and development of staff in order to meet and exceed our customers' expectations. Staff are expected to engage in ongoing education and training programmes in accordance with the Child Care (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016. All staff are expected to hold qualifications required by law or required by any funding scheme.

#### **Supervision:**

We aim to provide a clear and focused supportive framework for employees to work within so that they can continually improve their practice and provide the best education and care to the children attending our service. All staff attending our service go through probation, induction and continuous evaluation and appraisal. See our full Recruitment, Staff Absence, Training, Supervision and Garda vetting policies for more information