

StartBright

St Ronans

Early Learning for Our Community

Parents Handbook

Our Mission Statement

We will develop, deliver and champion early learning services for children, particularly for those living in communities experiencing disadvantage. We will communicate our vision and values more clearly and develop our organisation so that we deliver excellent services in an open and honest way.

Our Services

At StartBright ELC, we provide a range of childcare services to meet the needs of families in the area. We may cater for children aged 2.5 years upwards. Parents may choose part time day care or sessional care subject to availability. We also cater for Afterschool.

Our Session Times are:

09.00am – 12.00pm

13.30pm – 16.00/17.00pm

14.30pm – 16.00/17.00pm

13.30pm-14.30pm

14.30pm-15.30pm

StartBright ELC will ensure that the admissions policy is adhered to at all times.

Objectives

- The voice of the child is respected, valued and frames our whole curriculum.
- A child led, emergent curriculum is delivered which addresses children's well-being, identity and belonging, communication and exploring and thinking. This is supported by the principles of Aistear and Síolta.
- The role of the educator is one of researcher, collaborator and facilitator. We work alongside children offering support in their learning journey.
- Partnerships with family and communities are valued. Parents are the first educator of the child and communities play an important role in our culture and identity.
- The environments and resources are chosen with children's interests and development in mind. They are the third educator.
- Observing, planning, documenting and assessing learning are important to provide a holistic, child focused curriculum.

Policies and Procedures

To help us provide a quality, safe and happy environment we have developed a comprehensive range of policies and procedures. All staff are required to adhere to these policies. A full list of our policies and procedures are found both in the service and online.

Admissions



Being a committed provider of equal opportunities, we support the philosophy of access to our Service regardless of race, religion, gender or ability. This will be achieved by:

Ensuring the existence of the Centre is widely known in all communities through advertising.

- Making our Equal Opportunities Policy widely known.
- Having an open and transparent system in relation to the allocation of places.
- Siblings are given priority and then admissions will be on a first come, first served basis and in accordance with place availability.
- Management reserves the right to review and change how places are allocated.
- Requiring parents to complete StartBright ELC registration form. A waiting list is established when all places are taken up and the child at the top of the list are given the first available place.
- Ensuring a maximum enrolment, according to Child Care Preschool Services Regulations 2006
- Endeavouring to meet any additional needs that children might have within our limited availability and expertise.

Registration

At registration you will be asked to complete several forms. You will also be asked to read this Parent Handbook and agree to adhere to its content.

Accidents and Incidents

The Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act, 2005 and the Childcare (Preschool Services) Regulations, 2006 are the governing legislation. StartBright ELC will ensure every effort is taken to ensure a safe environment for children and staff in order to minimise the risk of accidents, hazards and spillages.

For more information please see our full policy.

Arrival and Departure

Parents should ensure that their child is registered upon arrival within their designated room, there are sign in sheets in each room. Parents should support their child to remove coats and to find their coat pegs.

Please ensure that all external doors are securely closed for the safety of all the children.

When collecting your children please ensure you get to speak to a staff member. Staff will give each parent a hand-over of the child's day, the activities and learning they took part in. The staff member will sign your child out of the service when leaving.

Due to Covid 19 restrictions please see amended policy on this



Car Parking

There are a limited number of parking spaces available in the car park. We ask parents to be aware that these places available are only to be used for drop off and pick up only. Further information will be given at enrollment.

- At StartBright ELC we cannot accept responsibility for cars parked, or damage done while parking
- Parents must accompany their child onto the premises
- We request that parents do not cause obstruction when parking
- Parents are advised not to leave their car running while dropping off or collecting a child
- We suggest that parents do quick drop off/and pick up to avoid road and parking congestion
- We advise that children are not left in cars unattended
- Please do not park where you be a hazard to other road users



Child Development

It is widely accepted that children develop holistically and to enhance their whole development we must provide them with a comprehensive programme that gives them active learning experiences. All children should be supported in their learning and their experiences extended in a variety of ways that are appropriate to their stage of development.

The Childcare (Preschool Services) Amendment Regulations, 2006 apply to the operation of a childcare service since September 2007. Part II Section 5 of the 2006 Regulations together with the Whole Child Perspective as set out in the National Children’s Strategy are the references used in relation to child development.

StartBright ELC is committed to developing a curriculum that incorporates child development and creates a child centred play-based environment, which enables young children to actively pursue their own learning.

Our Curriculum

StartBright ELC provides a play-based learning curriculum. This is supported by the Dept. of Education and the National Curriculum Council. Aistear – The National Curriculum Framework for Early Childhood Education and Síolta – The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education provide a base for all our work.

StartBright recognises that children learn best through play and a child led curriculum. We provide a balance between structured and unstructured opportunities and intentional strategies to enable lots of play-based learning. We champion that a quality and holistic early learning experience at a StartBright centre supports a positive beginning to every child’s learning journey.



The **daily routine** is flexible to ensure that there is time for:

Free play, indoors and outdoors – where children choose their activities and explore and experiment with the materials around them, either on their own or in collaboration with other children

Small Group time – when children further explore issues and interests that arise in play. For example, if a group of children are playing holidays, the educator might pursue this interest by discussing holidays and travel with children to extend their knowledge and skills.

Large Group time – this could be a time for stories, songs, rhyme and movement.

Personal care, resetting the environment and mealtimes are also an important part of the learning experience for children.

The Role of our Educators

At StartBright we only employ the best educators to support our vision for Early Education. We look for passionate, experienced and dynamic educators because we truly believe your children deserve only the best.

Educators are seen as the researcher, collaborator and facilitator. We do not see ourselves as holding all the answers, but we engage and intertwine our own discovery with that of the children's. We follow their questions and thinking, challenging them to theorize, hypothesize and wonder. Their voice leads the way, the educators merely guide and support them along the journey. We offer provocations to deepen their understanding and open their mind to opportunities and possibilities. Educators do not offer the answers, they lead the children to their own answers.

Settling In

At StartBright ELC we aim to ensure children feel safe and secure in the absence of their parents/carers. StartBright ELC will therefore endeavour to make the settling-in process a positive experience for children and will work closely in partnership with parents/carers to ensure this is achieved.

We recognise that in some cases there may be particular difficulties experienced by children, parents/carers, and staff during the settling-in period and we are prepared to explore and consider various ways of settling children into the service. All children are individuals and we plan to meet their individual needs and resolve any difficulties quickly and smoothly.

Children's Work

The children's creative work is always valued, and we regularly display examples around the Centre. Artwork that is not displayed is stored in the children's folders and you are free to take this home

Nappy Changing and Toileting

In line with Child Protection Guidelines, health and safety and best practice StartBright ELC has a strict procedure in relation to nappy changing and toileting.

For more information please see our full policy.



Sleep and Rest

StartBright ELC will ensure every effort is taken to ensure a safe sleep and rest environment for children.

For more information please see our full policy.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is essential to early childhood development. Children learn social skills by interacting with other children, with adults, and even with objects and natural materials found in the environment. The outdoor environment exposes children to opportunities to explore, question, and develop theories about how things work. Negotiation, language, and co-operation are all skills that develop through a well-planned outdoor curriculum. Outdoor play, physical activity and fresh air are important to children's overall health and wellbeing.

Outdoor play is an important part of our daily curriculum. We aim to ensure that children play outdoors every day. Our intention, through our outdoor programme is to enhance gross motor skills, co-ordination, and balance and body awareness. It also gives children opportunities to socialise freely and use imagination and initiative.

It is important that children are dressed appropriately for outdoor activity. At StartBright we supply wet gear. However, Parents are asked to ensure their children have the appropriate attire for the weather. Spare clothes and wellies. Please ensure your child has sun cream on before attending StartBright in the warmer months.

Outings

StartBright ELC is committed to planning and undertaking appropriate supervised outings. It is part of the child's development to experience fresh air and access to a variety of outdoor experiences. It also gives children a sense of belonging in their community and shows our respect for them being active citizens.

A consent form will be given to and signed by a Parent/Carer before children can participate in trips or outings such as visits to the library or park

Clothing

It is important that children are dressed appropriately for outdoor activity. Parents are asked to ensure their children have the appropriate attire for the weather. As children will be involved in a variety of activities including sensory play, we ask that parents do not put their best clothes on when coming to crèche and provide a spare change if possible. Staff will aim to ensure that aprons are worn to minimise the children's clothes getting dirty. All children's clothes need to be labelled.

Children's Behaviour

We believe in children's ability to control their own lives, to make choices and accept responsibility for their actions. We also believe that all children have the right to expect positive approaches to behaviour management which are consistent with these goals. Any form of punishment that humiliates, attacks children's sense of self or makes them feel helpless, is damaging and should NEVER be permitted in early years settings.



StartBright ELC sets high expectations of behaviour through encouraging and praising good behaviour. We apply simple rules fairly and consistently. Under no circumstances do we use any form of punishment. We encourage children to respect themselves, each other and the environments. We aim to provide a happy, caring environment with challenging activities. In the case of a particular incident or persistent unacceptable behaviour we always discuss ways forward with parents.

Child Protection

Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Our Duty to Care published by the Department of Health and Children form the basis of our child protection policy and procedures. A copy of these publications is in the office. Report forms are also kept in the Administrator's office.

All staff and persons who work for StartBright ELC must observe the following policy and procedures. Clarification on any point may be sought from the Project Leader. It is not the role of childcare staff in StartBright ELC to investigate a child protection case. This is the role of the Health Services Executive personnel in the area.

All childcare staff in StartBright ELC will receive training provided by the HSE, in due course, and will be thoroughly versed in the procedures applicable in relation to 'Children First' and the child protection policy and procedure of StartBright ELC.

All staff have been Garda vetted.

For more information please see our full policy.

Working with Parents/Carers

It is our policy to work in close collaboration with parents. We recognise and value the role of parents in managing children's behaviour. It is our policy to inform parents, at the enrolment stage, of the policies and procedures in relation to behaviour. Management will explain how behaviour is dealt with so a consistent approach can be adopted.



Parents are encouraged to tell staff of any difficulties that they are experiencing at home and to inform them of any situation that might impact on a child's behaviour such as bereavement, illness, relationship breakdown, a new baby etc.

If a parent needs to be contacted in relation to a concern about behaviour it is our policy to do this in a consultative rather than a complaining manner and staff will endeavour to work in partnership with the parent to develop a strategy for dealing with the situation.

For more information please see our full policy.

Partnership with Parents/Carers

StartBright ELC recognises the importance of working in partnership with parents/carers to promote the best interests of children and that parents play a key role in the education of their children. The Centre will work in partnership with and support parents in this role. Therefore, we have an "open door" policy where families are always welcome but where the needs of all of the children in our care



are always the first priority

The Centre will adopt the following procedures:

- Ensure parents/carers are given regular information about their child's progress through informal and formal feedback –verbal and written. A communication book will be used.
- Welcome the contribution of parents/carers and consult with parents/carers on a regular basis e.g. questionnaire, comment book.
- Opening hours will reflect the needs of working parents. Opening hours will be reviewed from time-to-time
- Have meetings at times and in venues which are accessible and appropriate for all.
- Have a compliments and complaints policy.
- Ensure that all parents/carers are informed about meetings and any other activities being organised by the Centre.
- Encourage parents/carers to be actively involved in the Centre
- Families to be given opportunity to have input regarding policies & procedures.
- Inform parents/carers of the procedures for registering comments or complaints.
- Ensure all parents/carers are aware of the Centre's policies and procedures through the handbook.
- Encourage parents/carers to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests through curriculum activities in the Centre.
- Provide parents/carers with regular updated information by way of parent's booklet, notice board, and newsletters.
- Parents/carers will sign a Contract at registration.
- Covid 19 may affect some of these guidelines, please see the policy for more information.

Children's Charter

The Code has been developed to inform and guide the decisions and behaviour of all StartBright ELC staff. Young children are especially vulnerable and rely on responsible adults to care and protect them. Our staff at StartBright are in a relationship of special trust – one that is powerful and important. We recognise that our role is multi-faceted, and we have developed this code of ethics to assist us provide the best quality service possible.

This Code of Ethics is underpinned by the following principles:

- The wellbeing of the individual child is of fundamental importance.
- We acknowledge the uniqueness of each child attending the Service.



- We take into account the critical impact of self-esteem on the individual child’s development.
- We base practice on sound knowledge, research and theories, while at the same time recognising the limitations and uncertainties of these.
- We work to fulfil the right of all children and their families for access to services of high quality.



Based on the above principles StartBright ELC has developed the following Children’s Charter.

- Children’s welfare and their rights to secure, healthy and happy childhood are paramount.
- The experiences children receive in their early years are critically important in terms of future development.
- Children are entitled to expect that all adults will respect, uphold and preserve their rights and to ensure that their feelings and wishes are taken into account.
- Children should have the opportunity to make choices and develop a sense of responsibility for their own actions appropriate to their age.
- Children, parents and carers should not be discriminated against, particularly in relation to colour, age, race, religion, gender, disability medical conditions or background.
- Parents should be recognised and respected as children’s first and continuing educators.

Complaints and Comments

It is the policy of StartBright ELC to welcome children’s and parents’ views in the development of the service. We will give careful attention and prompt and courteous response to any suggestions, comments and complaints, ensuring the development of a high-quality service. A comment can be made verbally or in writing.

Confidentiality is of the utmost importance when dealing with complaints and comments.

For more information please see our full policy and policy for children regards this.

Confidentiality

StartBright ELC respects the right for all information, records and observations to be treated with respect and with due attention to confidentiality and privacy.

For more information please see our full policies

Equal Opportunities

StartBright ELC is committed to promoting equality of opportunity. We promote equal opportunities through a wide range of policies and procedures which are reflected in the practice of our early years setting. These include admissions, partnership with parents and nutrition and food.



We provide equal opportunities by ensuring that:

Meetings:

The Service will convene meetings at a time and venue that enable the majority of parents/carers to attend and to ensure equal access to information and involvement in the Service.

Language and Information:

Members of the community are informed of the location and opening times of the Service through regular advertising in the local media and shopping centres, post offices. Information, spoken and written, will be communicated in as many methods as possible.

Access:

Everyone in the community regardless of religious affiliation, political background, race, culture, linguistic needs, disability, sexual orientation or age, has access to the Service.

The Curriculum:

All children are to be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and the use of play equipment should offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Through the proactive use of planning and curriculum development opportunities will be given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Resources:

All materials are to reflect cultural and racial diversity positively and accurately. These materials should help children to develop their self-respect and respect other people by voiding stereotypes. Boys and girls are to have equal opportunity and are actively encouraged to use all activities.

Discriminatory Behaviour/Remarks:

Any discrimination (language, behaviour or remarks) by children, parents/carers or staff/volunteers is unacceptable in the Service.

Discrimination will be positively challenged by supporting the victim and helping those responsible to understand and overcome their prejudices.

Festivals:

We aim to show respect for and awareness of all major events in the lives of the children and families in the Service and in the wider society. We have a sensitive approach to Mother's and Father's days. We try celebrating festivals and celebrations authentically as we can.

Fee Payment Information

Some childcare places within StartBright ELC may be paid for by another agency or Fees scheme. These places may be limited.

• The Schemes are as follows:

1. Free Pre-School Year in Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE Scheme) under the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA):
2. National Childcare Scheme (NCS). Parents will qualify for reduced childcare fees where they meet the criteria.

See Fees Policy for further details of all the above schemes



- Parents/Guardians are required to pay every Friday, for the following week.
- Parents will be updated at end of each month, if there is any outstanding fees due to pay. This must be paid to ensure continued admission for your child's place.
- Parents must give one month's notice and sign a form to confirm final date of attendance.
- Fees are payable for fifty-one/ fifty-two weeks of the year.
- Fees are payable to your attending StartBright by Direct Debit, standing order or by Bank Card. Fees are payable weekly in advance. (StartBright Bawnogue, StartBright Greenhills, StartBright Deansrath, StartBright St. Ronan's, Start Bright Balgaddy)
- StartBright ELC issues receipts for all payments of fees by Bank Card. All other payments can receive receipts, upon request.

Reviewing Fees

- Fees may be reviewed annually in May of each year.
- Parents/Guardians/Carers will be informed by giving one months' notice of any increase in fees.
- Increase in fees each year will be related to the cost of living increases and/or exceptional cost circumstances.

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

- There is no reduction in fees for absence through illness. In the case of a long term, medically certified illness of a child, parents/ guardians are advised to keep in contact with the Project Leader on a regular basis. In this situation further arrangements will be discussed with the Parent/Guardian
- Parents/Guardians/Carers will be required to pay for any other days/ week's that their child/children do not attend StartBright ELC.
- There is no reduction in fees for Public/Bank Holidays.

Withdrawal of Children from the Pre-school

Parents wishing to terminate their place at StartBright ELC should:

- Give notice, in writing that the child/children are leaving the service
- Give StartBright ELC one month's notice or pay StartBright ELC one month's fees.

Non Payment of Fees

Management reserves the right to request Parents/ Guardians to withdraw their child/children from the Centre if there is non-compliance with the terms of the Parents Fee Agreement Policy & Collection Policy. The Project Leader should refer to the Manager, in such circumstances.

Late Collections

At StartBright ELC we quite understand that sometimes a parent is unavoidably delayed when coming to collect their child. We will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause



as little distress as possible. Parents in this situation must contact the Centre to say that they will be late and arrange with staff what to do. Children are only released from pre-school to individuals named by the parent. **I.D will be requested.**

Persistent late collections will result in a surcharge being imposed.

- A fee of every €5.00 for every 5 minutes past the agreed collection time.
- A ten-minute discretion is allowed for a first offence.
- The parent's name will be recorded in the late book for record purposes.
- The child must stay with a member of staff (there should always be two staff members) until the parent arrives. When the parent arrives the staff member will remind them of the late collection policy and if the first offence no payment is required. If this is not the first late collection pick up, then the staff member will inform the parent of the late collection payment.
- The late collection payment will be added to the parent's weekly fee in the following week and must be paid in full to ensure continued admission for your child's place.
- If the child is not collected within one hour and the parent or other nominated collection persons are not available, then the procedure outlined in the Arrivals & Collections policy will apply.
- In extreme circumstances an arrangement may be made to reimburse the parent the money paid in the late collection fees. This is at the discretion of the Project Leader.

Fire Safety

The following legislation governs fire safety The Fire Services Act, 1981, the Childcare (Preschool Services) Regulations, 2006 – Section 27, the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005. At StartBright ELC, we will ensure that they comply with all the relevant legislation. We will also ensure we follow the 'Guide to Fire Safety in the Premises used for Pre-school Services' from the Department of the Environment. This is to ensure the safety, health and welfare of the children, staff and parents who are in the service. The children will take part in regular fire drills -the designated Fire safety person is Geraldine Egan and Karen Murphy.

First Aid

StartBright ELC will ensure that it meets the requirements set out in the legislation regarding the number of qualified first aiders in the Centre.

- The First Aid Officers are Senior Childcare workers on duty, and they will be responsible for carrying out minor First Aid.
- A First Aid report must be filled in and kept in the First Aid file.
- A First Aid Officer will supervise children who are under observation, as a result of accidents/sickness while on the premises.



- A First Aid Officer will keep an up to date list of contact numbers for parents, doctors and hospitals in an easy, accessible place.
- A First Aid Officer will be responsible for re-stocking the First Aid kit at regular intervals, at least once a month and report faulty electrical equipment immediately.
- Daily attendance records are kept.
- All flammable materials are safely stored outside of children's areas.

For more information please see our full policy.



Food Hygiene

Food Hygiene is governed by the Childcare (Preschool Services) Regulations, 2006 and the European Union Hygiene of Foodstuffs Regulations, 1998 & 2000. StartBright will comply with the above legislation in the provision of food and food hygiene.

Article 26 (2) of the Pre-school Regulation stipulate the “where food is consumed on the premises by a pre-school child, the person carrying on the pre-school service shall ensure that there are:

- Adequate and suitable facilities for the storage, preparation, cooking and serving of food.
- Adequate and suitable eating utensils, hand washing, wash-up and sterilising facilities are provided.
- All food is cooked on the premises.
- All waste and other refuse must be stored hygienically and disposed of frequently and hygienically and in a manner as not to cause a nuisance.

For more information please see our full policy.

Healthy Eating

StartBright ELC is committed to promoting children's health and to encourage healthy eating habits.

The Centre will endeavour to provide meals, which are healthy and nutritious and help to provide children with the energy and nutrients they need.

- Well-balanced and nutritious meals are provided for the children.
- A sample menu is displayed in the entrance hall on Parents Notice Board.
- Menus are reviewed and changed seasonally to ensure a varied range of food choices for the children.
- Special therapeutic dietary needs are respected. Parents are requested to give Centre staff a copy



of the diet sheet provided by their dietician

- Cultural dietary habits are respected. Parents or carers are requested to provide details of foods eaten (and not eaten) by the child

The implementation of this Healthy Eating Policy will not only relate to the provision of healthy foods and drinks within the Centre, in order to promote the nutritional and general well-being of the children, but it will also address food related activities involving the children which should encourage and enable them to make healthy choices in the future.

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. Parents may supply a shop bought cake for birthdays if they wish.

For more information please see our full policy.

Illness and Infection Control

StartBright ELC has been entrusted by parents to care for their children. The Centre aims to provide as healthy an environment as possible for children. We will endeavour to minimise your child's exposure to infection by excluding sick children/adults. We will encourage parent's uptake of vaccinations. We will inform parents and the Health Service Executive where necessary of any infections in the Service.

StartBright ELC has, in line with good practice and health and safety named certain illnesses/conditions under which children are excluded from the service.

In order to ensure the safety and health of all our children those who have any of the following conditions will be excluded from the service:

- Acute symptoms of food poisoning/gastro-enteritis.
- An oral temperature over 37.5 degrees.
- An earache.
- A deep, hacking cough.
- Severe congestion.
- Difficulty breathing or untreated wheezing.
- An unexplained rash.
- Vomiting (more than one time in last 24 hours).
- Diarrhoea (more than two times in last 24 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 24 hours.
- Symptoms of Covid 19 (Must notify the centre)

If a child becomes ill while at the Centre parents will be contacted so that the child can be taken home. If, for some reason, the parent cannot collect within a two-hour period they should organise an authorised adult to collect their child.

Please see the attached Exclusion Procedure Sheet at the back of the Handbook



Children/adults with infectious diseases should not attend the service.

All children must provide up to date record of immunisations

Should there be an outbreak of any infectious disease or incident, a dated notice clearly stating the situation will be posted on the Parents Notice Board.

Parents should also be informed verbally and in writing. This notice should be updated when relevant.

Administering of Medication

If a child is in need of medication during his/her time at the Centre parents should discuss his/her requirements with the Project leader of StartBright ELC.

Prescribed drugs will be given at the discretion of the Management. Parents are required to complete and sign the relevant form, which authorises the Staff to administer prescribed and un-prescribed medication to a child prior to the administration of any medication.

Please ensure the name of your child and expiry date is clearly labelled on all medication. For prescription medication the Doctors name also.

Immunisations

We encourage parents to vaccinate. Parents are required to complete a vaccination form at registration stage.

MINIMUM PERIOD OF EXCLUSION FROM THE SERVICE FOR VOMITING/DIARRHOEA IS 48 HOURS FROM LAST EPISODE

Illness	Exclusion Period
Antibiotics Prescribed	24 hours and as directed by GP after this
Conjunctivitis	Until they recover i.e. eyes no longer weeping or on antibiotic for 24 hours
Diarrhoea and/or Vomiting	48 hours from the last episode of diarrhoea/vomiting
Chickenpox	Until scabs are dry, usually 5-7 days from onset of rash
Gastroenteritis/Food Poisoning	48 hours after last episode of diarrhoea or until authorised by Health Professional
Hepatitis A (infectious hepatitis)	7 days from onset of jaundice.
German Measles (Rubella)	7 days from onset of rash and whilst unwell
Measles	While child is infectious i.e. 4 days from onset of rash
Meningococcal Infection	Until recovered from illness
Mumps	5 days after onset of swelling
Pertussis (Whooping cough)	5 days from commencing antibiotics or 21 days from onset if no antibiotics
Poliomyelitis	Until declared free from infection by District Community Physician.
Scarlet fever and Streptococcal infection of the throat.	Until appropriate medical treatment has been given. Can return 24 hours after starting antibiotics provided they feel well enough
Impetigo	Until lesions are crusted and healed or 24 hours after commencing antibiotic treatment
Pediculosis (lice)	Until appropriate treatment has been given for live lice



Covid 19	Until after the 14 day isolation period is complete, negative test.
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You will be contacted and may be asked to bring your child home from StartBright ELC if the following occur:

A Temperature:	Over 37.5 degrees
Vomiting:	More than once in last 24 hours

The above list is not exhaustive and there are other symptoms that children may have where the Project Leader may require the child to remain at home until the condition has been treated.

Some of the following may fall into that category:

- Earache
- Deep persistent coughing
- Difficulty breathing or untreated wheezing
- Complaints of stiff neck and headache

Observation / Record Keeping and Assessment

StartBright ELC recognises that observation is a useful tool, which enables the assessment of a number of aspects of the early years setting that are directly relevant to the planning of the curriculum. In order to plan, prepare and organise for good quality care, adults need to observe children, review and evaluate the curriculum regularly and maintain systematic records.

By observing how children respond to activities, staff will be able to evaluate if the activities and resources they have provided meet the needs of all the children and helps them to plan a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum. Observations also enable staff to provide challenge and extension so that each child can progress. All observations / learning stories/ records / assessments will be treated with confidentiality. Sharing observations with parents/carers strengthens the partnership between the home and the Centre, giving understanding and information and allowing staff and parents/carers to do their best for each child. Your children’s records are available to view upon request.

We operate a key worker system here at StartBright ELC. This person will be introduced to the parent/carer when they have been assigned to a member of staff within the room. This person will address any issues or concerns that you may have and will build a close relationship with your child. It is this key worker who compiles observations on your child and works in partnership with the parents/carers to ensure consistency with the child’s care and development at the centre and at home.

Internet, Photographs and recording devices

We do take photographs and videos of the children while in the Centre for documentation and parent communication purposes. These are either shared (Little Vista) or displayed within the Centre. If you do not want your child’s photo to be taken please let us know. Parents are not permitted to take photos or video record in the Centre.

You will be asked to sign a photo consent form upon registration for both photographs and social media.

We always ask a parent’s permission before photos are used in any of our promotional literature.



Please see our GDPR policy, Social Media policy and Email Communication Policy.

Respecting Individuality

StartBright ELC is committed to promoting equality of opportunity:

- ✓ We encourage children to celebrate difference and multiculturalism
- ✓ We encourage children to show respect for all cultures, religions, races, abilities, disabilities, and genders
- ✓ We help children to become empathetic and considerate to their peers
- ✓ We foster a sense of fairness and respect and we will challenge any discrimination
- ✓ We nurture each child's identity and self-concept
- ✓ We try to use our curriculum and equipment to encourage acceptance of all others, irrespective of cultural background
- ✓ Children will be discouraged from gender stereotyping
- ✓ Boys and girls are to have equal opportunity and be actively encouraged to use all activities.
- ✓ Any discrimination (language, behaviour or remarks) by children, parents/carers or staff/volunteers is unacceptable in our service
- ✓ We aim to show respect for and awareness of all major events in the lives of the children and families in the pre-school and in the wider society.

Staff and Management

We have a rigorous recruitment and selection policy and all staff have been through Garda vetting. Our staff will work to ensure a very high standard of care for your children and have relevant childcare qualifications and experience. We provide ongoing professional development for our staff to ensure that they are up to date with current legislation and quality practices.

Staffing Structure

StartBright ELC is managed by a Manager appointed by StartBright Company Limited, Board of Directors. The Administrator takes responsibility for managing the administration and financial matters on a day to day basis. The Project Leader has overall responsibility for the daily management of the Centre supported by the Senior Educators and all staff are line managed by them.

Staff includes full-time and part-time Educators. All staff, apart from the "Relief" employee is assigned to a room but Management reserve the right to change room assignments according to the needs of the service.

Staff Qualifications

StartBright ELC strives to ensure that all staff have the appropriate qualifications. When employing staff, we only take staff with a minimum FETAC level 5.



- The Designated Child Protection Person in StartBright is Sharon Murray
- The Designated First Aid Person is Sharon Murray and Tracey Kelly
- The Designated Health & Safety Person is Sharon Murray and Tracey Kelly
- The Designated Fire Person is Sharon Murray and Tina Kelly

Staff Ratios

The adult/child ratios are governed by the Childcare (Preschool Services) Regulations, 2006. StartBright ELC will follow the adult/child ratios as defined in the below Regulations. The Service will follow the following adult/child ratios:

SERVICE	AGE	ADULT/CHILD RATIO
FULL DAY CARE	1 - 2 YEARS	1:5
	2 - 3 YEARS	1:6
	3 - 6 YEARS	1:8
PART TIME CARE	1-2 YEARS	1:5
	2-3 YEARS	1:6
	3-6 YEARS	1:8
ECCE CARE	2.5 - 6 YEARS	1:11
AFTERSCHOOL CARE	4- 12 YEARS	1:12

Staff Recruitment

StartBright ELC recruits and selects the best candidate for any vacant position within our service. Our educators and staff are one of the key resources we have in providing good quality education and care for the children in our service. Our primary concern is selecting the right candidate, one that is qualified and supports each child in our care to reach their full potential. (Childcare Act 1991 (Early years Services) Regulations 2016, Síolta Standard 5 – Organisation & management, Standard 11 – Child Protection)

Staff Absences

StartBright ELC has a very knowledgeable and supportive team of relief staff. These educators are familiar to the children and have relationships with the children in each room.

Working with Children

StartBright ELC will ensure staff are fully informed and knowledgeable about their critical role in the lives of the children in their care. Young children develop best through close affectionate relationships and positive, responsive interaction with others, particularly adults but also with other children. Warm relationships are fundamental to meeting the young child’s need for love, security, recognition and encouragement.



Garda Vetting

It is the purpose of StartBright ELC 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 Central Garda Vetting Unit (CGVU). StartBright ELC processes their Garda Vetting through the ECI. For more information please see our full policy.

Security

- At StartBright ELC the main door is locked for security reasons and there is no unauthorized access
- Parents are requested not to admit anyone else into the Centre whilst entering or leaving 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 staff and Project Leader in advance
- If a child is being collected by anyone other than the parents or usual designated person, the staff must be informed. Please inform the person collecting your child that they will be required to provide identification, to confirm who they are. This is to ensure our children's safety
- In the event of a parent collecting another fellow child prior arrangement must be made.
- Parents are requested not to bring in friends while collecting or dropping off children to avoid unnecessary congestion



StartBright ELC Terms and Conditions

Contract with Parents/Carers



- A fee is payable weekly in advance.
- When confirming a place in the Centre you will be asked to fill out an Enrolment Form and confirm induction and start dates.
- The fees must be paid irrespective of whether your child is present or not.
- Fee increases will be made on an annual basis on notice from the Management. Should your child have to give up their place in the Centre, a notice period of 4 weeks is required.
- Should the fees for your child's place be in arrears of more than two weeks, the Management has the right to terminate that place (Arrangements should be made to pay back arrears owing immediately)
- Children must be collected on time. A late collection fee applies
- The Centre will be closed on all the annual Public/Bank Holidays.
- Parents/carers must supply the service with emergency contact telephone numbers and these must always be up-to-date.
- The parent/carer has a responsibility to notify any change of workplace, home address or contact person.
- Parents/carers of children who are not potty trained will provide disposable nappies and wipes, although the staff team will give every support to toilet train the child.
- Parents should ensure that they leave a complete two changes of clothes for their child in the Centre. This is to ensure in the event of an accident (i.e. water play or toilet) that the child has clean clothes.
- Parents are obliged to read the Parent Handbook. Signing this contract confirms that you agree to adhere to your responsibilities as outlined in the Handbook.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Parent/Carer

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Project Leader

