



Templemore, Co. Tipperary Tel: 0504-56600 Email: childcare@sheelan.ie

Policies and procedures

Mission statement

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St. Sheelans Community Childcare Centre is a non-profit organization aiming to provide affordable, accessible, high quality and safe childcare for the immediate and surrounding areas of Templemore. We endeavor to support children to see equality and diversity as a natural part of our setting and world. We Endeavour to value the ability, individuality and cultural background of all children by providing each child with the opportunities they need to reach their full potential as active learners within an inclusive ethos/culture

The Purpose of St. Sheelan's Community Childcare Service is to provide quality, affordable, accessible, early education to children from 8 months to 5 years, in the local community.

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Curriculum Statement

Our curriculum, which is inclusive to all children and families, promotes each child's independence, curiosity, and language skills. This is done through following the child's lead and interest and building upon an emergent curriculum. This is done in partnership with the child, parents and all professionals who support and scaffold the learning of each child in our service. We use daily small group and individual activities to support each child and also use visual aids, as these are an important communication strategy.

Here at St. Sheelan's Childcare Centre, we use a play based emergent curriculum. We believe that by using this curriculum, we are supporting children's holistic learning and development. Our curriculum is infused with both Aistear and Siolta, which are our national frameworks for early childhood education and care in Ireland.

Much of children's early learning and development takes place through play and hands-on experiences. Through these experiences, children explore social, physical and imaginary worlds. These experiences help them to manage their feelings and emotions, develop as thinkers and language users, develop socially, be creative and imaginative and lay the foundations for becoming effective communicators and learners (NCCA 2009,p.11).

Our regular documentation of each child's learning, which we complete in our learning journals and communication app for parents, provides us with evidence that our curriculum works. We are supporting each child within our service to be confident and competent to begin their learning journey.

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Statement of Purpose and Function

The Purpose of St Sheelan's Community Childcare Service is to provide quality, affordable early education to children from 8months to 5years, in the local Community. It is a community service and is classified as a full-day care/sessional and part-time service under the Childcare Act 1991 (Early years Services) Regulations 2016. We are open for 50 weeks per year from September 01- September 30th. We can cater for 60 children at any one time.

We have a

Baby room subject to numbers with Max 3 babies per year

Wobbler Room with max 10 children per year

Toddler Room with Max 12 children per year

Preschool Junior Room with Max 11 per year, during ECCE time.

Preschool Senior Room with Max 22 per year During ECCE Time, and 16 per year after ECCE time.

Principle:

This Policy is underwritten by The Childcare Act 1991(Early Years Services) Regulations 2016

Mission of Service

St. Sheelans Community Childcare Centre is a non-profit organization aiming to provide affordable, accessible, high quality and safe childcare for the immediate and surrounding areas of Templemore. We endeavor to support children to see equality and diversity as a natural part of our setting and world.

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We Endeavour to value the ability, individuality and cultural background of all children by providing each child with the opportunities they need to reach their full potential as active learners within an inclusive ethos/culture

Setting Details

Name of Setting	St Sheelans Community Childcare Centre
Address	Richmond Templemore, Co.Tipperary
Eircode	E41NY60
Registered Provider	Linda Nesbitt
Person In Charge	Simone Simmons
Deputy Person in Charge	Maria Campbell
Contact Telephone Number	050456600
Email Address	childcare@sheelan.ie

Description of Setting

Type of setting	Fulltime/ Part-time/ Sessional service
Who the service is aimed at	Children from all different cultural and religious backgrounds
Community or Private	Community Service
Age Range of Children	8months-5years
Curriculum Followed	National Aistear and Siolta playbased curriculum
Number of weeks open	50
Opening hours	8.00am-6.00pm

Number of Children and Staff

Full Day Care/Part Time Day Care	Number of Children	Adult Child Ratio
0-1yrs	3	1:3
1-2yrs	10	1:5

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2-3yrs	12	1:6
3-6yrs	16	1:8
Sessional Preschool		
2.5-5yrs	11	1:11

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Social Media Policy
Child Protection And Welfare Policy

Person Responsible: Simone Simmons

This Policy was Adopted by: St Sheelans Community Childcare Service on 26/11/19

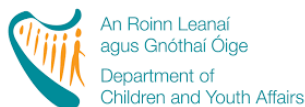
Review Date: 26/May/ 2020

St. Sheelans Childcare Centre A Brief History

St. Sheelans Community Childcare Services Ltd is a community based company with charitable status, which grew out of St. Sheelans Community Childcare Services, a community based organisation formed in July 2001 with a view to providing high quality affordable childcare facilities to the Templemore community and surrounding areas.

The committee conducted a feasibility study on the needs of the area in relation to childcare and subsequently made an application to the equal opportunities childcare programme (EOCP) for funding for a childcare centre. A site was provided at St. Sheelans College Templemore and a committee was founded to oversee the application process and build of the centre. St. Sheelan Community Childcare Services Ltd. has worked very closely with statutory and voluntary agencies in

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developing St. Sheelans Childcare Centre and has continued to do so since the service opened in 2007. Among those with who we were working closely have been;

- North Tipperary Childcare Committee
- HSE Mid West
- Templemore Community Services
- North Tipperary VEC
- St. Sheelans College
- Ceim Eile (Youthreach programme based in Templemore)
- County Development Board
- Roscrea 2000
- Templemore Town Council
- LDSIP

St. Sheelans Crèche

St. Sheelans crèche aspire s to provide a high quality childcare environment that promotes the development of each individual child and supports each child to reach his/her potential

The “Aims” of St. Sheelans Childcare Centre are outline as follows:

- To provide an affordable, accessible, high quality and safe childcare provision for the locality of St Sheelans Childcare Centre and surrounding areas.
- To provide equal access to low income Parents / Carers by providing an appropriate fee structure.
- To support holistic child development and learning through providing an educational and stimulating environment.
- To enable all children attending the Crèche to be

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- Happy
 - Confident
 - Respectful
 - Creative
 - Independent
 - Patient
 - Caring
- To work in partnership with all Parents / Carers of the children attending the Crèche.

St. Sheelans crèche endeavors to promote to following as the goals of St Sheelans Childcare Centre:

The “Objectives” of St. Sheelans Childcare Centre are outline as follows:

- To offer a safe, secure and loving environment for all children attending the Crèche.
- To supply an educational and stimulating environment which encourages all children to fulfill their potential in learning through a play based curriculum.
- To embrace and value all children regardless of their race, gender, age, language, disability, culture, nationality, class or religion.
- To understand and appreciate the uniqueness of each child and treat them as individuals.
- To always remain respectful of the fact that all Parents / Carers are their child’s primary educator and care giver.
- To build good relations with all Parents / Carers.
- To build good relations with all agencies involved with the Crèche

Child Registration Policy

St. Sheelans Crèche believes that every child has the right to a place in the facility and will do the upmost to ensure equality and an anti-bias approach. Once a child has been offered a place in St Sheelan’s Childcare Centre there are certain procedures to be followed before the child can commence in the Crèche. The following give an overview of the steps that need to be taken to enroll a child.

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- The Parent (s) / Carer (s) should meet with the crèche Manager to discuss their child's own arrangements and to ask any questions they feel relevant to their child attending the Crèche.
- An Admissions form must be completed. This form must include the following information as requested under the childcare regulations:
 - The child's full name, address and telephone number.
 - The child's gender and date of Birth
 - The child's commencement date in the Crèche.
 - Both Parents / Carers names, address and telephone numbers if different from above. *Please note that if a lone Parent / Carer do not wish to divulge the second Parent / Carer's name they are under no obligation to do so.*
 - Mobile numbers if relevant.
 - Email Address.
 - Work place name, address and telephone number of the Parent / Carer (s)
 - Name, address and telephone number of the emergency contact person. *(The above two points are in place in case the Parents / Carers can not be contacted when needed. Parents / Carers should endeavour to be contactable at all times when their child is present in the Crèche.*
 - The name, address and telephone number of the child's G.P.
 - Details of all immunizations that the child has received to date.
 - Details of any medical conditions or allergies that the child may suffer from.
 - Details of any dietary requirements that the child may have.
 - Names of any siblings or other close relationships to the child.
 - Parental / Carers written consent for Outings.
 - Parental / Carers written consent for the Staff to act on the Parents / Carers behalf in the event of an accident or emergency.
 - Parental Carers written consent for their child to be photographed whilst in the Crèche. These photographs will only be used within the Crèche for children's development profiles e.t.c.
 - Parental Consent for Facebook
 - Parental consent for use of sunscreen in the event it was forgotten

The Crèche Manager will discuss the Crèche's 'Settling in Policy' with the Parents / Carers. Please note that the 'Settling in Policy' must be followed and that the Crèche reserves the right to admit the child only when the staff feel the child has completely

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settled. This is for the benefit of the child and will be done in conjunction with the Parents / Carers wherever possible.

Settling in Policy

St Sheelan's Childcare center is committed to the smooth transitions of the children and parents /guardians/carers into our childcare service. Settling in should be a positive experience as it influences children's self-confidence, attitude to relationships and socialising and lays the foundation for lifelong learning. Settling in is a collaborative process between parents/guardians/ carers. Staff and Children. Family involvement will be encouraged to assist all children to develop secure relationships as we recognise that children's most important educators are their families.

Addendum to Settling in Policy

This Policy is underwritten by the child care Act 1991(EARLY YEARS SERVICES) Regulations 2016

We would like to welcome you and your family to St Sheelan's community childcare service. We hope that you get to know us and have a happy and successful time with us.

Pre-Admission

The service will provide information on the Settling-in policy to the parent or guardian on initial enquiry.

- Services will learn from parent or guardian about child's feeding and sleeping routine and rituals, preferences, and will create close links with home, bringing familiar items/photos.
- Parents/guardians/carers must have completed a /Registration Form with all the relevant details about the child, **especially contact and collection information in accordance with the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.**
- Parents and guardians will be encouraged to drop-in at a time that suits during opening hours with their children to familiarise the children and themselves with the routine, the setting and staff.
- An information session for parents and guardians with the manager will be held to discuss issues and concerns around the process of settling-in (i.e. different stages - clinging, crying, not talking, needing security blanket, are all a normal part of separation anxiety).

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- Parents and guardians will be advised to make work arrangements to facilitate the settling-in process.
- Starting days and times for new children will be introduced to facilitate the integration of the child into the group.

Helping your child settle in:

Children settle into our service in lots of different ways. Some children will confidently move into the crèche as soon as they come in. Other children may be nervous and anxious about leaving their Parent. Most Children will be in between. Please try not to worry if your child experiences difficulties- it is a very normal part of a child's development to be anxious, nervous or angry about starting crèche/preschool. We also recognise that many parents will find this a difficult and sometimes upsetting process. We hope that we can use our experience to support you and your child in whatever way suits you. Please remember that we require all parents and carers to help children settle in. In our experience all children benefit greatly when the service works closely with parents on settling in.

The settling in period:

Different Children need different amounts of time to settle in. We recommend that you plan for one week to support your child. The settling in period is a time for your child to get to know the staff in their room with the reassurance you will be back after a short time. We start the process off at 1hr stay for the first day and gradually building it up over the week This is free of charge. As the relationship develops your child will be able to trust that:

- *The staff working with them are able to meet his or her needs*
- *They can be helpful, comforting and deal with any problems.*
- *They can provide interesting experiences which make it worthwhile to come to the service.*

The settling in process gives you a chance to:

- *Check out what type of service it is*
- *How the staff work*
- *What kinds of experiences we offer to the children*
- *You will be able to see how we play/talk and have fun together.*

At any stage during this process- if you would like to talk to someone, or need support please speak to the manager or the room leader.

Settling in Procedures

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- Orientation meetings and visits will occur prior to the child commencing care. These meetings enable educators and families to discuss ideas, routines, procedures and policies and any child allergy or medical condition.
- Managers and Room Leaders will use the Registration and settling in policy during the orientation process.
- Verbal and written communication channels are established between families and educators to outline children's routines and share daily events
- Feedback about the child's day is provided to families after each attendance.
 - Regular social events for families (e.g. Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day and Grandparents' Day, Graduation for children going to school) are held.
- Families are welcomed to share information about their child's interests and experiences outside of the setting.
- Families are included in decision making about their child's day at the setting.
 - Informal and formal meetings between families and educators can be arranged to discuss children's learning and development, and to express any concerns that may arise at home or at the setting.
 - When families from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds are enrolled at the setting, the manager will make every effort to provide translations of policies and procedures.
- Educators participate in a range of professional development to improve the quality of the service provided.
- Any family involvement is welcome and appreciated. We encourage families to get involved in the curriculum and share their knowledge and/or skills where appropriate. Families also have the option of not being involved (beyond a minimum level of communication with educators each day) if that is their preference.
- Educators create a welcoming environment where the diversity of families and communities, and the aspirations they hold for their children, are respected.
- Family photos and other aspects of children's home life are incorporated into the environment and the curriculum.
- Staff will ensure that all transitions and progressions within the setting adhere to the settling in procedure.
- Links are made with the local primary schools to ensure smooth transitions for all children.
 - An invitation is made to the primary school teachers from the local schools to visit the children in the preschool prior to their first day in September. All staff will work cooperatively with the teachers to design an appropriate plan. It should be noted that Garda Vetting is not required for parents/guardians/carers who are settling-in their children.

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This policy links with our –

- Child Registration Policy
- **Equal Opportunities Policy.**
- Partnership with Parents/Carers Policy
- Anti-Bias Inclusion Policy
- Covid-19 Policy and procedures

Partnership with Parents/ Carers Policy

St Sheelans Childcare Center fully endorses the importance of good relations, good communications and continuity between the Crèche and the child's home. It acknowledges the parent/ Guardian as the primary carer and endeavors to link and work in cooperation. To achieve a dynamic partnership with close communication and supports the following suggestion will hope to support the process.

- All staff and Parents /Carers must have respect and understand each other in their roles in respect of the child.
- All staff will Endeavour to have good communication with all Parents / Carers which should be an open and honest two way exchange of views about the child's health and general well being. **The staff will complete a daily care plan through our Little Vista Family App on each child reporting on such issues as meal and sleep times, nappy changes and the child's general well being throughout the day. This can be viewed on the app each day. All parents should provide relevant information to the staff members and inform them of any changes at home. Due to Covid 19 all communications with Staff need to be made through the app or by phone call to the service.**
- All staff will endeavour to support and empower Parents / Carers, never undermining them or belittling their status. Parents should respect each staff member as a qualified professional.
- All staff appreciates the need to communicate on a regular basis with Parents / Carers about their child's development such as toilet training, weaning etc. All parents should inform staff of any techniques used at home that support the child's development.
- All staff will endeavour to look at issues from the Parents / Carers perspective and all parents must respect the staff at all times, aggression towards staff may result

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- in you being asked to leave the service and may result in you losing your child's place.
- All staff must respect that every family is different, that they have distinctive needs, traditions and cultures as an anti bias approach is policy. Parents are reminded that the facility has an anti bias policy for all.

Separated and Divorced Parents

Married parents are automatically joint guardians of their children. Neither separation nor divorce changes this.

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 provision is not retrospective, so guardianship will only be acquired automatically where the parents live together for at least 12 months (applies to children born after 18 January 2016.)

- 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 is any legal documents i.e. custody order, barring order we would ask you to provide us with a copy to keep on file.

Policy updated 29/05/2020
Review as needed

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Code of Conduct Policy for Parents/Guardians and carers

Policy Statement

St Sheelan's Community Childcare Services Aim to provide a friendly, safe respectful environment for all children, staff, families' and volunteers. Our educators have a duty to follow the staff Code of conduct Standards in the service and in turn we would like parents/guardians and carers to take note of their responsibilities to ensure our ethos is continued.

Parents have a responsibility around their interactions with children, their own, others and with the educators/management of the service. It is expected that parents will support the respectful ethos of our creche by setting a good example in their own speech and attitude towards all members of our community.

Please do.

- Share information with educators on your child's development, health, and wellbeing.
- Let educators know if you have given your child medication in the previous 24 hours or of any illness they may have had once they left creche.
- Be familiar with the crèche infection control and child sickness policy/ covid-19 response plan.
- Let us know if someone else is collecting your child and if it is someone the creche are not familiar with they will be required to bring 1 form of ID, acceptable are passport/drivers license/public service card.
- Drop and collect your child/children on time, if you are going to be unavoidably late, please contact the creche to let them know or arrange collection with someone else.
- Discuss concerns, worries, complaints with the leaders in your child's room only or with the Manager as appropriate. See the complaints policy for more guidance. If you have a pressing issue, please phone the creche and arrange a time to speak with the manager/ room leader. Drop off and collection is not appropriate to discuss concerns/issues.
- Do tell staff if you feel they are doing a good job.
- Always be respectful to staff and management.
- Use appropriate car seats to collect children at all times.
- Label all children's belongings to avoid loss or mixups.

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Please Refrain from

- Shouting at, physically punishing your child or another whilst on the creche grounds.
- Using inappropriate tones/language or displaying aggressive or intimidating behaviour towards staff/management/children or other parents/guardians/carers either in person, on the phone or in writing.
- Collecting your child from creche if you have consumed alcohol, medication or other substances that may affect your judgement or responses.
- Defamatory, offensive, or derogatory comments regarding the creche, children, parents, staff, or management of the creche on face book or social media sites.
- Smoking in the car with your children present.
- Allowing a child under 18 collect your child or bring them to creche.

Breach of this code of conduct

- Will be treated promptly and taken very seriously. The management/board of management will endeavor to determine the appropriate course of action which may include.
- Investigation of the incident by the manager/Board of Management
- Withdrawal of permission for the relevant person to be on creche premises, which will prevent that person from dropping or collecting the child to the creche grounds.
- The suspension and possible permanent withdrawal of a child's place. This action will only be taken if all other avenues have been explored or if the behaviour is violent and the board of management feel it is the only possible course of action left open to them.

If Educators are presented with a difficult or volatile situation and they feel that an individual is at immediate risk of harm, then the Gardai will be contacted, and their assistance requested to help deal with the situation.

The Staff of St Sheelans Childcare are legally obliged to report to Tusla and/or An Garda Síochana any incidents of the above points which is not an exhaustive list. We ask all Parents Guardians to be vigilant of the above points.

Remember

The Early Years Educators in St Sheelan's do the best they can on a daily basis in ever changing, pressuring circumstances by creating a loving caring environment for your child/children to feel at home in everyday. They do not create the policies and procedures of the service. These are developed under the guidance of Tusla /Canavan Byrne HR/ HSPC Management of infectious illnesses and diseases in childcare facilities and tailored to the needs of the service based on our own experiences and pattern of transmissions throughout the years. They are then approved or denied by the Board of management. Please see complaints policy for any grievances.

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Created: 12/11/2021
Implemented 3/12/2021
Approved by Board: 2/12/2021
Review: 26/04/2023

Drop Off and Collection Policy

Statement

The safety and welfare of children attending St Sheelan's Childcare Centre is of paramount importance. At St Sheelan's Childcare Centre, we have established procedures for the drop off/ collection of children, to ensure a smooth transition and effective time keeping within our service. All procedures follow legislative requirements as per the Child Care (Pre-school Services) Regulations 2006.

Due to Covid –19 St Sheelans are required to Make necessary changes to our policies to ensure compliance with government guidelines, We will be operating on a phased basis until further notice, the session will run 8.15-5.00pm Monday- Friday this will allow us to still provide 5 days childcare to people who need it and allow us time to deep clean after each session this will remain until Government guidance allows otherwise

Procedures

Dropping off a child

- The front door must be kept locked at all times to ensure the safety of all children and staff.
- Only staff are permitted to open the door to parents and visitors to the service.
- Children must be taken into the service and 'signed in' on arrival by staff in the registration book located in the baby room in the early morning and in each child's room after 8.30am

We will not be asking Parents to sign in for the duration of the pandemic

- Children must not be left in the foyer at any time or left outside the service prior to the opening hours of the service.
- On arrival parents should inform the staff on duty or staff from that child's room of any information that is relevant to their child's care for that day/session. e.g any medications received the night before, the child's form, sleepless night etc. **Please send into the app in advance, or call the service from 8.00am.**

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Staff will meet children at the drop off points each morning and for collection. Parents will not be allowed to enter the service, any communications should be made in advance through the app or by phone call

- Parents and children are encouraged to say goodbye to each other before they leave.

Collecting a child

- Parents / carers must inform staff they are here to collect a child so that the staff member can sign the child out
- On returning to collect a child, parents are encouraged to meet with staff from the child's room where possible to be updated on the child's day and receive the child's communication book.
- A person collecting a child must be aged 16 years or over.
- A person collecting a child must be named on the child's enrolment form as an authorised person. If a person collecting a child is not named on the child's enrolment form as an authorised person, written or verbal permission from the parent must be provided to a staff member, before collection. On the first occasion, the person collecting the child must supply identification, for example, driver's license.
- The service will not release a child to anyone who is not authorised without prior consent from the parent.

Late collection of children

- Where a parent knows they will be late collecting their child after the agreed time, they are required to consult with the service to make alternative arrangements. If a parent is going to be late and it is coming to closing time 6.00pm, you need to phone the crèche to tell staff how late you will be, a late fee of 10.00 plus the 5 euro hourly charge will apply from 5.00pm-5.15, from 5.20 onwards a fee of 20.00 plus the 5.00e hourly charge applies. Any Child not collected by a parent 30 minutes after the agreed time the service will attempt to contact the parents or the emergency contact persons.
- Regulations require two members of staff (or a staff member and another adult) to be in present at all times when children are on the premises.

Non-collection of children

- If a child is not collected at the end of the session/day and the service is unable to contact both the parent and the emergency contacts, after 1 hour the following procedures apply;

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- A child will stay at the service in the care of two fully-vetted staff members until the premises close, or staff are no longer available to care for the child
- Staff will follow procedures outlined in the Child Protection Policy. Contact Health Service Executive, Child Protection and Social Work Services.
- A full written report of the incident is recorded.

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 services premises. (A copy of a Court Order currently in place must be shown to the service Manager).
- If the parent who has been denied access becomes threatening and insists on attempting to remove a child from the service, the manager will call An Garda Síochána.

Attempted collection by a parent who is adversely affected by alcohol or drugs

- The service will not release a child who is deemed to be at risk, if a parent or authorised person arrives at the service and staff are concerned that they are in an unfit state due to drugs or alcohol.
- Staff will explain to the parent or the authorised person who is unfit, why the child should not leave with them and offer to assist them by; contacting the other parent or a person from the emergency contact/s.
- If the parent refuses assistance and insists on taking the child with them and the staff believe the child will be at risk, the manager will call An Garda Síochána immediately.

FEE POLICY

- Fees must be paid by standing order weekly into the creche account by Thursday morning each week.
- Failure to pay fees may result in you losing your child's place. Please contact the manager if you are struggling with fees to set up a payment plan.
- If a fee payment is missed and no contact made your child will not be permitted to attend until the payment is made or until a plan is put in place.
- Consistently missing payments will result in a withdrawal of services to your family.
- 1 weeks deposit required on booking, this deposit will be offset against your first weeks fee in the service. The deposit is non refundable if you cancel your place.
- Please ensure you use your child's name when setting up a standing order for the crèche.
- If your child is sick or unable to attend the centre the fee remains the same.
- If the crèche is closed on public holidays or bank holidays fee's will remain the same this is to help with the maintenance and running of the centre throughout the year.
- Emergency closures i.e power outage/ weather warning closures/ flooding etc are charged for

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- Room closures are charged for but will be reviewed on a case by case basis pending board of management consultation. The Board ultimately have the final say.
- If your child is taken out of the crèche for holidays/ sick days fees must be paid in order to keep your child's place. Allowances are made in the summer months to reduce hours of attendance or withdraw services but parents must be aware your space may be at risk if you do so... 4 weeks notice in writing is required to the manager to withdraw services /reduce hours. If you decide to remove your child from the centre for a number of weeks/ months we cannot guarantee that a place will be available when you decide to return and you may have to go on a waiting list.
- If your child is ill or isolating with Covid 19 fees still apply.
- **LATE FEE'S**
If a person is late on collection between 6.00pm-6.15pm a fee of 10.00e plus the 5euro hourly rate will apply 15.00e. From 6.20pm onwards a fee of 20.00e plus the 5 euro hourly rate will apply. Consistent lateness may result in withdrawal of services to your family.

Fees list can be found on parents notice board with subsidies from the different programmes we run.

Full Day Care under 1 year	180.00e
Full day care over 1 year non ECCE	155.00e
Part-time Day Care 5 hours non ECCE	113.00
Full day care ECCE	90.50e
Part-time day care 5 hours ECCE	48.50
ECCE Session 3 hours	00.00
Session 9.00am -12.00pm 5 days non ECCE	64.5
Session 2.00-5.00pm 5 days non ECCE	64.50
5.00e per hour after ECCE session) when not booked in.	5.00e
2.50 to stay for dinner until 12.30 after ECCE session (needs to be booked in advance)	2.50e

Days we charge for are public holidays/ bank holidays, days you take your child out of crèche e.g. midterms/ holidays/ sick days. We do not charge for Good Friday and the 4 days at Christmas that are not public/bank holidays. We close for one week in April good Friday and the week following this. (Dates will be sent out each September) When the time comes it is the responsibility to the person paying the standing order to stop the payment for these days. St Sheelan's unfortunately will not be able to write out cheques for everyone in these situations.

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In the event of closure due to unforeseen circumstances where it would impact on the care given to children in the centre or cause serious harm or risk to staff or children e.g. National weather warnings, serious staff shortage due to treacherous weather, no electricity etc. fees will still be required for those days as these are issues out of our control. Some closures may be reviewed by the Board of Management

ECCE (ECCE only runs for 38 weeks per year)

	Normal Rate	Ecce rate
Ecce Full day	155.00	90.50
Part- Time ecce 5 hours	113.00	48.50
Session ecce 9.00-12.00	64.50	0.00

NCS

	<u>Time</u>	<u>Based on hours of care</u>	<u>Days</u>	<u>Normal Rate</u>	<u>Universal Rate</u>
Baby Full day care	8:00am-6:00pm	X 45hrs	5	180.00	157.50
1-3yr Full daycare	8:00am-6:00pm	X 45hrs	5	155.00	132.50
Parttime care 1-3yr	9:00am-2:00pm	X 25hrs	5	113.00	100.50
Sessional care	9:00am-12:00pm	X 15	5	64.50	57.00

<u>Childs Age</u>	<u>Minimum subsidy per hour</u>	<u>Max subsidy per hour</u>
Less than 12 months	<u>0.50c</u>	<u>5.10</u>
12-35 months	<u>0.50c</u>	<u>4.35</u>
3yrs or more but do not qualify for ECCE	<u>0.50C</u>	<u>3.95</u>

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3yrs old and more who do qualify for ECCE	<u>0.00</u>	<u>3.95</u>
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Income assessed subsidy not included in the above prices this must be applied for by the parent

National Childcare Scheme.
The National childcare Scheme Provides subsidies to all parents through a universal and or Income assessed subsidy. The subsidy is offset against your crèche fee.

NATIONAL CHILDCARE SCHEME STEPS FOR REGISTRATION

- Go to local social welfare office to obtain a public service card.
- Create an account on www.mygov.ie.
- You will be given a pin on my gov.ie
- Go to google and type in NCS I am a parent.
- Check on the subsidy calculator located at the top of the page to see what you are entitled to.
- Register your child on the NCS and you will receive a **CHICK ID**.
- Send the **CHICK ID** to childcare@sheelan.ie. So we can register your child.
- Once we input all the child's information a notification will be sent back to you on the NCS site to approve the place.

Max of 45hours only can be claimed. Anything outside of this is charged for. If you are approved for 45 hrs childcare unfortunately this does not mean we will have 45 hours available.

Adverse Weather Policy/ closure due to unforeseen circumstances

Statement

St Sheelan's Childcare Centre recognizes the fact that inclement weather and other emergencies can affect the company's ability to open for business and the employee's ability to get to work. The safety of our employees and children is paramount in any emergency situation. No policy can cover every potential emergency situation, so this policy covers the most common.

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Fortunately, unforeseen closures/emergencies and inclement weather days are infrequent, but these are the guidelines for when they occur.

Company Closure

When an emergency such as these examples occurs, the company is closed.

- Snow and Ice that effects staff getting to work safely or not being able to safely follow ratios in the service.
- Electricity is out for a period of hours where the centre cannot provide, hot food, water, adequate toileting needs.
- Adequate heating in the winter is not available.
- Flooding that may risk damage to the service and an inability to run the service accordingly.
- Break ins/ burglaries where we are not permitted to enter the premises.
- Yellow weather alert, all staff will endeavour to come to work, closure will be at the discretion of the Manager/ Board of Management, heeding warnings and ensuring the safety of staff and children at all times.
- Orange Status alert, discretion of the Manager/ Board of Management, heeding warnings and ensuring staff and children's safety at all times.
- Red Weather Alert- Automatic Closure of the service.
- Room Closures- in the event rooms cannot open due to adult/ child ratio issues, the room may open partially or may close until ratios can be maintained again- fees will apply initially and a decision from the board will be made on a case by case basis.
- In the event of a partial room closure- vulnerable children will be prioritised first and then children of working parents next. Children's names will be placed in a random selector app and chosen, based on the spaces we have available.

We will endeavour to try and avoid closures where possible, through late openings/ early closures. Decisions will be based on the local area, where staff have to travel to/ from, and the risk of harm to any person attending the centre.

Charges for Parents,

Red Alert- Fees still apply to all parents.

Orange Alerts- Fees still apply to all parents for the first two closure days on the third day parents can stop payment.

Yellow Alerts- Fees still apply to all parents for the first two closure days on the third day parents can stop payment.

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Loss of Heating/electricity. Flooding/ Burglaries- Full fees apply

Notification

In an emergency, The Manager will make every effort to notify Staff and Parents by Email, Text messaging, Social Media and Local Radio Station Tipp Fm.

Staff Payment/Leave

Staff will be paid for the first two closure days in the centre for any reason. After this period Annual leave/ Time in Lieu can be used. When the company closure ends, all employees are expected to report to work whether the closure ends on day two or thereafter. Payment of salary or hourly wages ends on the day the company reopens, if the employee does not show up for work or can't make it in, it will be deducted from Annual Leave or Time in Lieu or the employee can opt for a non- payment of wages for the day/days missed.

Employees who cannot return to work at the end of the company closure must arrange additional time off with their Manager as early as possible. If the employee has used up paid time off. Days missed will be deducted from their weekly wage.

Staff who had booked annual leave during the company closure will be given the first two days back after which annual leave will resume.

Part-Day Closure

If an emergency event such as inclement weather or a power outage occurs, the Manager/ Board of Management may determine that the company will close during working hours. When the company closes, employees are encouraged to leave as soon as possible when all children have left the premises, so that the conditions do not further deteriorate and affect their ability to safely travel.

Employees who had taken the day off will have the day subtracted from their allotted PTO as would have occurred if the company did not close.

The Company Is Open and the Employee Cannot Get to Work

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Individual employee circumstances may affect an employee's ability to come to work. The key to assessing the situation on a case-by-case basis is the communication between the employee and his or her manager.

The company recognizes that in a severe national or regional disaster, all methods of communication may be unavailable, but employees should persist, by any method possible, to reach their manager to discuss individual circumstances.

All pay, leave, and [attendance policies](#) included here will apply, regardless of the circumstances of the absenteeism.

The Employee Needs Time for Repairs

The company is aware that in emergency situations or inclement weather emergencies, employees may lose family members. They may lose their home and all regular activities such as school and day-care. In any circumstances, all pay, leave, and attendance policies included here will apply, regardless of the circumstances of the absenteeism.

The company terms of employment will apply in the case of the death of a family member.

Quarantine or isolation due to covid-19 fees still apply.

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RATIOS/ UNDERSTAFFED POLICY

Statement:

St Sheelan's Community Childcare Service provide an early years care and education service to the local community and surrounding areas. Adult to child ratios are adhered to as required by the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016, and in line with the recent Covid-19 Pandemic measures have to be put in place to deal with staff shortages due to illness or isolation measures or a Covid outbreak within the service.

Ratios are based on the amount of children one adult can look after at any one time in the service, see below. For example in the wobblers the ratio is 1 adult to 5 children. This does not include breaks, nappy changes etc.

Wobblers 1:5,

Toddlers 1:6,

Preschool 1:11 morning 1:8 after 12:00pm

Preschool J 1:11 9-12 1:8 after 12:00pm

In the event that St Sheelan's due to Covid- 19 and/or other exceptional circumstances or critical incidences has low staff numbers and are unable to fulfil ratios, and In order to comply with regulations, we will not be able to accept children into the service. In this instance priority is given to children who attend full time each day.

We will begin by asking parents to volunteer their child to stay home for the day, if this is unsuccessful we will begin informing parents of children who attend sessional times **3hrs or less in a random selection process this will be done by choosing a random number in order of your child's number place on our Little Vista App to ensure fairness to all.**

If necessary this will progress to part-time children. **5 hours or less in a random selection process,** followed by full time children if necessary.

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We understand this may be an inconvenience to our parents/ families/guardians. However, this is necessary to ensure the smooth and safe running of the service and to comply with Tusla and the Pre School Regulations (2016).

If there is positive cases of Covid-19 in the service, The Board of Management will have to take necessary precautions, resulting in the possible closure of pods or the service until it is safe to reopen. The service will at all times be guided by the HSE/HSPC guidelines.

St Sheelan's has planned and implemented all necessary policies and procedures to keep the service Covid Free.

In the case that your child is sent home or asked not to attend the service due to staff absence, you will not be charged for that day (*this does not apply in the case of a covid outbreak in the service please see emergency closure policy for more details*)

In the case that the service needs to close for a period of time due to covid-19 fees still apply as per our parental agreement signed upon return to the crèche after the covid-closure.

This policy ties in with our adverse weather and unforeseen closures policy and all procedures still apply to the fees for that policy.

COVID-19 Policy and Procedures

Statement:

St Sheelan's Childcare Centre Understands that these are very difficult and new times upon us and we would like to ensure that everyone who attends St Sheelan's Childcare Centre are protected to the very best of our ability and that we have followed and implemented all government advice and protocol in our effort to prevent the spread/transmission of Covid-19 in our service.

This policy is underpinned by the government's key recommendations to reduce the risk of transmission of Corona Virus: good hand hygiene: social distancing and regular cleaning. It is subject to change based on government guidance.

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This guidance is in addition and complimentary to Regulation 23 Safeguarding, Health, Safety and Welfare of the Child of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services Regulations) 2016 and is in addition to the Services Infection Control Policy.

KEY FACTS

COVID -19 is an illness that can affect the lungs and airways and is caused by a new virus called the Coronavirus.

Coronavirus is spread in sneeze or cough droplets. To infect you, it has to get from an infected person's nose or mouth into your eyes, nose or mouth. This can be direct or indirect (on hands, objects, surfaces).

The most common symptoms are:

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

There are a range of key actions that the Irish Government, the Health Service Executive and the Return to Work Safely Protocol have recommended to reduce the risk of coronavirus transmission including the workplace.

- **wash your hands frequently** with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub if your hands are not visibly dirty
- **practice good respiratory hygiene**, that is, when coughing and sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue, discard tissue immediately into a closed bin and clean your hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- **maintain social or physical distancing**, that is, leave at least 2 metres (6 feet) distance between yourself and other people, particularly those who are coughing, sneezing and have a fever.
- **avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.** if you touch your eyes, nose or mouth with your contaminated hands, you can transfer the virus from the surface to yourself

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Attendance at the Service

COVID-19 is a notifiable disease and St Sheelan's must follow procedures as set out in the services Infection Control policy for notifying Tusla, HSE Preschool Environmental Health Officer and the Public Health Department. If there is a confirmed case in the service. If two or more children or staff test positive for COVID-19 in the same time period contact the Department of Public Health, HSE or Tusla for advice.

Children

- Any child who is unwell with a fever, have a cold, influenza or infectious respiratory symptoms of any kind or displaying any of the symptoms of coronavirus need to stay at home, contact their GP and seek their guidance on referral for coronavirus testing.

.Any child with symptoms of coronavirus or who tests positive should quarantine at home for **3 days** with day 1 counted as day zero and only return to the service when the symptoms have fully resolved and with a doctors certificate stating that the child is no longer infectious.

- Any child who is a close contact of a person who has or is suspected to have COVID-19 as long as they show no symptoms can attend creche.

Parents

- Only parents or carers who are well and have no symptoms of COVID-19 or who have served the required quarantine time of 7 days where advised should be allowed to drop off and collect children

General

- There will be designated drop off and collection points in the service, only children and staff may enter. Parents can ask to enter the service to view children once they arrange with a staff member.
- Visitors or contractors will only be permitted to enter the service on essential business e.g. essential maintenance, and they will be asked to make these visits outside

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of the usual operational hours when able. Their contact details will be collected i.e. name, address, mobile, email address.

- people who are in the high risk or vulnerable categories will not be permitted access to the creche.

Dealing with a suspected case of COVID-19 in the service

To safely manage a situation whereby a staff member or a child becomes unwell while in the service and may be presenting as a suspected case of COVID-19 St Sheelans have a response plan in place see below:

- The Manager/ Deputy Manager of St Sheelan's will deal with suspected cases of Covid-19.
- St Sheelan's will arrange for appropriate cleaning and disinfection of the isolation area or any other area.

Child

If a child becomes unwell and presents as a suspected case of COVID-19 while at the service

- The child will be brought to the isolation area by a staff member via the isolation route, keeping the child at least 2 meters apart from the staff member.
- Depending on the age provide a mask for the child and tissues if required and use the dedicated waste bin, as necessary.
- The staff member caring for the child in isolation will wear personal protective equipment i.e. face mask, disposable apron and gloves.
- The child should be encouraged not to touch surfaces, people or any objects.
- Contact the child's parents immediately and ask them to collect the child and to contact their GP. Public transport of any kind should not be used.
- The child can only return to the service with a Doctors certificate to say they do not have coronavirus and are not infectious. Children over 4 a negative antigen test will be required.

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- We will Carry out an assessment of the incident which will form any part of follow up actions.
- Arrange for appropriate cleaning and disinfection of the isolation area or any other area.

Arrival and departure procedures

- Parents will drop off/ collect children at specific points. Wobblers and Toddlers through the main creche entrance, Pre-School at the Side Door
- Please refrain from leaving equipment such as buggies, car seats, scooters in the premises, we would ask you to bring them home.
- Everyone who arrives to the service will be required to use the hand sanitizer gel available at drop off points. Children will be required to wash hands upon arrival to the service.
- Communication will be limited at drop off and collection so we would advise any queries or concerns you have to contact the manager through email or the Little Vista app or to the staff in your child's room through the app. If you need to inform staff of anything important upon arrival please message it into the app before arrival or ring the centre and ask to speak to a staff member in charge.

Hand hygiene

- St Sheelan's will ensure that there is liquid soap and running water throughout the premises for access by children and staff.
- If hands are physically dirty, then they need to be washed with liquid soap and warm water and children and staff will have to go to the nearest sink or bathroom.
- Staff and children will be encouraged to regularly wash their hands with soap and water including on arrival at the service, before and after snacks or meals and before after using the toilet and should dry their hands thoroughly with paper towel or a hand drier
- St Sheelan's will be proactive about the importance of handwashing and ensure that staff and children know how to wash their hands correctly as advised by the HSE

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and provide training where necessary. This NHS video is a child friendly video demonstrating hand washing <https://youtu.be/S9VjeIWLnEg>

- **How to wash your hands with soap and water (HSE)**
- Wet your hands with warm water and apply soap.
- Rub your hands together until the soap forms a lather.
- Rub the top of your hands, between your fingers and under your fingernails.
- Do this for about 20 seconds.
- Rinse your hands under running water.
- Dry your hands with a clean towel or paper towel.
- **Children should wash their hands**
- When they arrive at the centre and before they go home
- Before eating and drinking
- After a nappy change or using the toilet
- After playing outside
- After sneezing or coughing into their hands
- Whenever hands are visibly dirt
- **Staff should wash their hand**
- When they arrive at the centre and before they go home
- After coughing and sneezing
- Before handling food, preparing bottles or feeding children
- Between handling raw and cooked food
- Before and after eating your own food – breaks/lunches
- Before and after giving or applying medication or ointment to a child

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- After changing nappies, assisting a child to use the toilet or using the toilet themselves
- If they move from one room to another room or from inside to outside areas
- If they have physical contact with a child from another group other than their own group
- After contact with bodily fluids (runny nose, spit, vomit, blood, faeces)
- After cleaning tasks
- After removing gloves
- After handling rubbish
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty
- If in contact with someone who is displaying any COVID -19 symptoms
- Before and after being on public transport [if using it]
- Before and after being in a crowd
- Before having a cigarette or vaping [staff are reminded the service is a non-smoking area]

Respiratory hygiene

- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or into a tissue
- Make tissues readily accessible throughout the service with a dedicated pedal operated bin provided in each of the rooms and in the outdoor areas for easy disposal of used tissues.
- Wash your hands after coughing or sneezing

Staff must:

- Adopt good respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette
- Ensure they are familiar with and follow respiratory hygiene guidance.

Face masks

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- It is not recommended currently in Ireland for the public to wear face masks as a mitigation strategy against the transmission of the coronavirus. It is currently the opinion of public health that their use, especially among young children, has the potential to cause more harm than good. This recommendation may change so it is important to keep up to date with any new advice from the government.

Vaccination

- It may be recommended by the government that children, staff and parents are encouraged have the seasonal influenza vaccination this coming winter in order to minimise the risks associated with a possible resurgence of Covid-19 during the annual influenza season next winter 2022

Children's learning and play spaces

- Social distancing of 2 meters or 6 feet within childcare settings with very young children will be hard to maintain. Staff should implement social distancing as far as they are able, whilst ensuring children are kept safe and well cared for within their settings. Babies and toddlers will continue to need personal care and comforting.

- **Groups of children**

- Organise children in fixed groups or 'PODS', so that children are with the same children each day and try to group friends together. This grouping of children helps to keep track of who has had contact with whom. Where possible we will have two dedicated staff members with each group or 'POD'.
- Reduce circulation of children in the service and manage their movement in their groups or 'bubbles' between their room, the toilets, the outdoor area and any other areas of the service.
- Ensure that children remain within their group or 'POD' and do not mix with children from other groups.
- Use markings on the ground and other ways to divide indoor and outdoor physical areas so as to support and guide children's safe movement within their groups or 'bubbles' and reduce contact with children in other groups.

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- Help children to learn about social distancing by creating games e.g. spreading their arms out and not touching their friends in their group (more suited developmentally to preschool children)
- **Environment**
- Consider the set-up of the room and the placement of activities, play material, toys and books throughout the room so as encourage space between children in their groups or 'PODS'.
- Consider the spacing of cots, highchairs and chairs and keep them well apart.
- Consider the table and chair set up for tabletop activities. Consider having less children at each table, use more tables and space out the chairs
- Ventilate the environment as much as possible and within temperature requirements e.g. through opening windows in advance of children being in the room or while they are outside
- **Activities**
- Plan individual activities, small group activities, staggered mealtimes and staggered indoor and outdoor play opportunities for the children in their groups or 'PODS'.
- Do not have large group activities at this time so as to reduce the risk of transmission of the coronavirus.
- Limit the use of playdough, gloop or other similar play materials (on a temporary basis during this Covid-19 emergency) so as to reduce hand to hand contact between the children and cross contamination.
- Limit food preparation activities (on a temporary basis during this Covid-19 emergency) where children take turns in preparing and later eating the food so as to reduce cross contamination.
- Use the outdoor space as much as possible when the weather permits. This increases the space for activities to be set up and increases the space between children.
- **Trips**

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- Trips or outings should not be undertaken at this time as this exposes staff and children to further risks of transmission of the coronavirus which are difficult to predict and control

Personal care

- When providing personal care to babies such as nappy changing or supporting toddlers with toileting, staff will wear personal protective equipment i.e. disposable aprons and gloves.

Cleaning

- Current evidence indicates that the virus causing COVID-19 can live on surfaces and objects from a few hours to a few days, so updated/enhanced cleaning schedules should be developed.
- At least twice daily cleaning of surfaces and objects that are regularly touched is very important e.g. door handles, light switches, desks, tables, presses, cupboards, toilets, taps, sinks, phones, remote controls, computer keyboards, printing equipment, kitchen surfaces and floors.
- Children's rooms, staff offices, kitchen, washrooms and communal areas should be cleaned twice daily and whenever the areas are visibly dirty.
- If disinfection of an area is required, it must be performed in addition to cleaning and never as a substitute.
- Order and ensure that the service has a good supply of liquid soap, hand gel (70% alcohol at least), face masks, gloves and disposable aprons, cleaning and disinfectant products .
- Before services re-open they should perform a deep clean of the premises both indoor and outdoor.
- Services should maintain adherence to the regular cleaning programme which is documented and signed off.
- Wash play items and toys daily and dry completely.

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- Toys used by babies and young children, which have been placed in their mouths, should be washed before reuse by another child.
- Offer toys that can be easily cleaned and dried on a daily basis and remove toys and materials that are difficult to clean e.g. dress up clothes or soft toys during this temporary Covid-19 emergency.
- Ask parents and children not to bring toys from home into the centre.
- Regularly empty bins and use gloves when doing so.
- Use warm water, household detergents and common disinfectants to clean surfaces

Crèche Security Policy

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St. Sheelans Crèche believe in the welfare and safety of all children, staff and Parents / Carers within the facility and as such the necessary security is in place to endeavour to adhere to the security needs. Crèche are of paramount importance, St Sheelans Childcare Centre prides itself on being **very** security conscious. To enable the facility to keep security to a high level the following points indicate how we monitor and manage the security:

- External doors to the Crèche are locked and work on a buzzer system. The main door has a camera system installed so that staff inside the centre can see who is waiting to come in.
- The Crèche staff are the only personnel who should open this door. Persons collecting children from the Crèche must be identified to the staff. If a person collecting a child is not recorded on the child's admissions form or are unknown to the staff, prior warning must be given to the staff with a visual description and on collection some form of identification. *However it is 'good practice for all Parents / Carers to inform the Crèche staff of who will be collecting the child on a daily basis.*
- The boundary of the facility is fenced.
- All emergency doors have push bar lock installed.
- Side gates are locked and keys kept in each room.
- Emergency doors are not to be used except in emergencies.
- All doors and windows are checked in the morning and evening and any discrepancies are noted.
- Maintenance of security locks etc are done on a monthly bases or when required.
- All outside areas are checked each morning by the crèche manager or senior member of staff to ensure that they are no unwanted item present prior to the children being given access to the garden

‘Open Door’ Policy

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Due to Covid 19 We cannot allow parents enter the service until allowed to do so by the government, you will be able to see how children are doing through our Little Vista Family App or by calling the service and looking for the member of staff you need.

St Sheelans Childcare Center believe that parents/ guardians should be able to enter the crèche at any time to interact with their children unless legal issues limit this. In order to facilitate this the facility has implemented an open door Policy which states that all parents/ guardians should have the opportunity to visit their children whilst attending the facility, in order to do this and keep safety and welfare a priority the following points must be observed.

Implementation of the **‘Open Door’** Policy.

- ↪ This policy works on the principal that **ALL** Parents / Carers will be made to feel welcome in the Crèche at **ALL** times.
- ↪ We are fully aware of the stresses and strains that leaving a child in a Crèche like environment can have on a Parent / Carer, especially if it is for the first time. Therefore what can be done to ease this process for the Parents / Carers and for the child will be implemented fully.
- ↪ Parents / Carers are encouraged to drop in or telephone the Crèche whenever they feel the need too. This will **not** create any problems for the staff or for the daily routine of the Crèche. However Parents / Carers should be aware that visiting the Crèche at a time when their child is not being dropped off or collected **may** lead to their child becoming upset.
- ↪ Parents must present themselves at the door, sign in and inform the staff of their intentions so that the process can be as smooth as possible.
- ↪ Staff may indicate whether or not the child (taking into consideration other in the environment) would benefit or be detrimental to the child as the priority is to the child in the first instance.
- ↪ Once the parent has presented themselves and a process agreed then the parent can enter the room where the child is and engage in any activity that the child is engaged in, as long as this does not upset other children in the room.
- ↪ The parent must inform the child prior to departure and say good bye when leaving.
- ↪ The parent will be escorted to the door and sign out before exiting the building.

At all times the children needs take priority.

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Infection Control Policy

Policy Statement

It is the priority of St Sheelan's Childcare Centre to protect all pre-school attending our service and all persons working in our service from the transmission of infections. The health and well-being of all children, staff and visitors to our service is paramount and our aim is to prevent and manage any infection which may be present in the service. This policy is communicated to all staff and a version of this policy is given to parents.

Principle

This policy is underwritten by the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Tusla (2018) Quality and Regulatory Framework.

Rationale

Infection can lead to serious ill-health for young children. Infection control procedures seek to reduce the risk of children and staff contracting an illness in Named Service by ensuring good hygiene is followed at all times and the risk of infection is minimised. We aim to promote good hygiene practices that children and parents can implement at home. Preventing the spread of infection Risk Assessments • Risk assessments are undertaken by staff to assess if activities, actions or environments pose risks from an infection control standpoint to the children and staff of named service. Actions are implemented to eliminate or reduce the risk identified through risk assessment.

Hand washing

•St Sheelan's Childcare Centre has a hand washing policy in place which all staff promote and model for children. Staff wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating/preparing food, after wiping noses, after waste disposal and mopping up spills, after assisting children going to

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the toilet, after caring for sick children, after handling soiled clothing, after dealing with waste and after removing disposable gloves.

A wash hand basin is available in all bathrooms and kitchens with a constant supply of hot (no greater than 43c) and cold running water, liquid anti-bacterial soap and paper towels. A wash hand basin is available in all bathrooms and kitchens.

- In St Sheelan's Childcare Centre, Children are encouraged to wash their hands with warm water and liquid soap under supervision after visiting the toilet, before eating, after sneezing, coughing or blowing noses, after handling animals, after touching a cut or sore and after outside play and activities. Clear guidance on handwashing is outlined for children and staff in our service.
- Staff will supervise and assist children to encourage effective handwashing.

Food preparation Note:

- Our staff always wear gloves when preparing and serving food and wash hands after removing gloves.
- Our Staff always wash their hands after removing waste food and materials.
- Appropriate food hygiene practices are followed at all times.

Perishable food is kept in a refrigerator, between temperatures of 0 and 5 Celsius. Any perishable food left at room temperature for more than 2 hours will be discarded safely.

- Staff involved in helping children with toileting or nappy changing will not be involved in preparing food.

Nappy Changing and Toileting

- We have 3 nappy changing rooms in St Sheelans' Childcare Centre. Nappy changing rooms do not communicate with any occupied room or room where food is stored.
- The nappy changing room is adequately ventilated, by window/mechanical ventilation. Where possible, the door to the nappy changing room is kept closed at all times.

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- A wash basin is included in the nappy changing room and has hot and cold running water and access to liquid soap and paper towel dispensers.
- Children’s hands will be washed and dried after nappy changing, staff will also ensure that they have thoroughly washed their own hands before and after nappy changing.
- Staff that are changing nappies use powder free, synthetic vinyl or latex gloves.
- All nappy changing mats used in Named Service are waterproof, in good condition i.e. no exposed stuffing or foam and have an easily cleanable cover. Nappy changing mats are wiped down by staff after each nappy change.
- All nappies are disposed of in a way which will not risk infection. Soiled nappies are stored in an airtight, sealed container that is removed from the premises at least once per day. Nappy disposal containers are kept away from children and out of their reach. Nappy changing units are cleaned thoroughly on a regular basis.
- All staff are be fully trained and briefed in nappy changing and infection control.

Cleaning and the premises

- All staff are aware of their role in maintaining high standards of hygiene.
- St Sheelan’s Childcare Centre encourages best practice regarding keeping the environment and premises clean and safe.
- Spillages of blood, faeces, urine, vomit or other bodily fluids or excretions are cleaned immediately and with priority. Mops are not be used for these and extreme caution is exercised at all times.
- Daily, weekly and monthly cleaning schedules are in place and records kept. Cleaning records are located in each room.
- St Sheelan’s Childcare Centre has a contract with a bin removal company for the removal and disposal of all waste at **Ryans Brothers Environmental Services**.
- Our premises are free from pests and rodents and we have a contract with an external agent who checks our premises on a monthly basis.

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- We maintain a good stock of cleaning products and tools to ensure that hygiene practices can be carried out at all times. Adequate supplies for cleaning are provided to be used, like clean cloths, gloves, aprons, mops, buckets and detergents. Cleaning products and supplies are stored in a locked press that is not accessible to children.
- Toys and play materials are cleaned daily, with attention placed on especially soiled items. Toys are not brought into toilet or changing areas.
- Toilets, floors, shelves storing bags, tables and chairs and other areas are cleaned daily to help decrease the spread of infection, cleaning agents used are detailed on our cleaning schedules.
- All linen is washed once per week and more frequently if necessary. Children do not share bed clothes and all sheets and blankets are stored separately. These items are washed at the hottest wash the fabric will tolerate. ©Early Childhood Ireland 2019
- Like linen, all children have individual hairbrushes, toothbrushes, dental products, clothing and towels. These items are not shared. Any soiled clothes are placed in a plastic bag, sealed and sent home with parents/guardians, parents and guardians are informed at collection if clothes being sent home are soiled.
- At least once a day, even in winter, all rooms in the service are aired out.
- All staff receive regular support & supervision in relation to infection control and training is provided.

Immunisation

- Our immunisation policy is followed at all times with all children and staff.
- On enrolment, parents are asked for their child's immunisation record, this information is recorded on the child's record card.
- Parents/guardians of children who are not immunised are made aware of the dangers of infectious diseases. Parents are encouraged to keep to up to date with current vaccination requirements and to ensure that the service is kept informed and the child's record updated when required.

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- Parents/guardians are not required to have their children immunised to gain admission to the service but where a child's immunisation record is not up-to-date parents/guardians are encouraged to have their child vaccinated.
- If a child is not immunised, parents/guardians are advised that their children will be excluded from the service during outbreaks of some vaccine preventable diseases such as Measles, Whooping Cough etc., even if their child is well. This is to protect their non immunised child.
- We provide information leaflets on immunisation schedules, oral hygiene and prevention of infection to parents.

Animals and pets

- Handwashing and drying procedures are followed before and after handling any animals and pets that are present in St Sheelan's or that we meet on outings.
- All animals and pets are managed in accordance with required and appropriate instructions for their care.
- Children are supervised with animals at all times.
- All animals visiting St Sheelan's Childcare Centre are regularly checked with vets.

Illness

- If a child is unwell, St Sheelan's Childcare Centre requests that the child is kept at home if they are unable to participate in normal activities and/or if they may be at risk of passing the infection to another child or adult in the service.
- If a child becomes ill while in St Sheelan's Childcare Centre we request that the child's parent/guardian or person authorised to collect will collect the child within 30/40 minutes. Sick children are separated from well children where possible in St Sheelan's Childcare Centre.
- If St Sheelan's cannot contact the parents/guardians/emergency contact for a child it may be necessary to transfer the child to hospital via ambulance depending on the severity of their symptoms.
- Unwell children, with a temperature and/or specific signs and symptoms, will be excluded from the service until a diagnosis can be made. Staff can and will use their discretion when

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admitting a child back into St Sheelan's Childcare Centre, if they believe the child is still ill and cannot take part in their normal activities they will request that the parent/guardian keeps the child at home.

- Children/Staff must remain at home for at least 48 hours following the last episode of infectious diarrhoea/vomiting, and 24 hrs after last temperature.
- Unwell children and staff should only return to St Sheelan's Childcare Centre when they have fully recovered. The exclusion notes in **Management of Infectious Disease in Childcare Facilities and Other Childcare Settings are followed.**
- Staff will report any illness to the manager/designated person in charge.
- A plan will be drawn up to help prevent the spread of the illness and the HSE guidelines: Managing an infectious disease in childcare setting will be followed in the case of a child in the service contracting an infectious illness

Child Sickness Policy

St. Sheelans crèche believes that all children may become unwell at any time and to endeavour that the child receives the necessary help and support during these times, that upon a child becoming unwell the child will be given the extra care required and that the child's parent/guardian will be informed as soon as possible.

St Sheelans Early Years Educators are not qualified medical professionals and although have experience with several illnesses that present in creche, cannot safely look after a sick child for a long period of time and attend the other children under their care without risk of transmission of infectious illnesses, they will always err on the side of caution. Children becoming sick is unavoidable and we recommend that someone is available to care for your child in these circumstances.

In the interest and wellbeing of all the children cared for in St Sheelan's Childcare Centre we would greatly appreciate that all Parents / Carers read and adhere to the following:

- In the event of a child being sick at home, it is our policy to request that the child be kept at home. This is for the benefit of the sick child and for the others attending the Crèche.
- If the child should become sick whilst in the care of the Crèche, we will contact the child's Parents / Carers and request that the child be taken home as soon as possible and

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appropriate treatment obtained. It is expected that the child in question is collected within a 40 minute/ 1hour timeframe, following notification to the Parents / Carers.

- If a child is running a temperature of 100.4 F / 38 C or above, the parents/ carers will be requested to collect the child from the crèche. Appropriate steps will be taken by a qualified staff member to reduce the temperature but medication like calpol or nurofen will not be administered unless a consent form is signed indicating that it may be given to your child under these circumstances and the parent will be rang prior to administration to give additional consent. Children have to stay home for **24 hours** after the last temperature. If the temperature is followed by other symptoms i.e cough/green running nose exclusion will be **48hrs symptom free** or where symptoms have significantly resolved i.e clear running nose residual cough that does not affect participation in activities.
- If a suppository is required for your child a parent/ carer must come and administer it themselves, under no circumstances will a staff member administer a suppository.
- **NB Parents / Carers please note that teething may cause a child's temperature to be slightly higher, however as a rule, does not cause high fever and diarrhoea/ vomiting. A teething child will not be permitted to stay in creche with a temperature of 38 or more** If your child does develop a fever during this period it is probably due to some other reason and therefore, we would advise that you contact your G.P. for a letter/note stating that what your child is suffering is not contagious or infectious to other staff and children in the room.
- If the child has suffered from an illness whilst absent from the Crèche (i.e. whilst on holidays, overnight etc,) the staff must be informed on their return. Declarations will continue to be implemented upon return after illness or holiday from the service as advised by TUSLA.
- Should your child be prescribed antibiotics for an infection it is our policy that they be kept at home for a minimum of **24 hours**, this in order for the medication to enter the child's system adequately and to reduce the spread of infection to others and most importantly to monitor for any allergic reactions as advised by TUSLA, regardless of whether the child has taken the medicine before.
- No medication will be administered by staff unless the child has already been given this medication by a parent / guardian.

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- All medicines administered will be done under the direction of the Medication Administration Policy only. It is also necessary for all Parents / Carers to inform the Crèche staff of any medication given to the child before their arrival at the Crèche. This is to avoid overdosing.
- Prescribed medication will not be administered to a child without the following,
 - The child's name and date of birth present on the bottle.
 - The Dosage of the medication
 - The leaflet of information is presented with the medication for staff reference.
 - The medication is in date.

As part of our infection control policy we ask that all parents be familiar with our exclusion policy for certain illnesses, these are drawn up in consultation with HSE guidelines Managing infectious illness/diseases in Childcare Facilities and

- **Infections diarrhea / gastrointestinal symptoms accompanied by symptoms of fever, nausea and vomiting. 3 runny nappies in one day in creche in a short space of time that is unusual or 3 runny nappies in 24hr period that is not usual. Toilet trained children are in a different cohort to this if they have more than 1 bout of Diarrhoea which is unusual for them and they are not eating/ lethargic/ not participating we will ask for them to be collected.**
- **In the event of an outbreak of vomiting Diarrhoea or any type of contagious illness based on guidance and advice issued by Public Health where more than 4 children in one room or the building is affected or a pattern of transmission develops, St Sheelans will implement the following:** Children who present with one runny nappy/ one vomit will be sent home and asked to be monitored for 48hrs. Children can not return until normal functions resume for a full 48hrs. This exclusion will apply until the threat of high transmission passes. In the event of a closure by public health for deep cleaning etc, Normal fees apply.

Children should remain at home until the acute symptoms have resolved usually **48 hours** after last episode of illness. A case of shigellosis must be treated with a course of antibiotics before returning to the Crèche.

- **Covid-19-** Children who develop symptoms of Covid-19 should remain home with parents monitoring symptoms for 48hrs. Children who test positive for

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covid-19 need to self-isolate for 7 full days with the 1st day of the positive test counted as day 0, children's symptoms must have significantly improved for the last two days of isolation before returning on day 9.

➤ **Colds and Flu.**

- Children should remain at home if they are too ill to participate in regular activities. Staff will make an informed decision by monitoring the child over a period of time. Children need to remain home with green running noses as this is a sign of infection.

Respiratory syncytial Virus- Confirmed cases of RSV must stay home until main symptoms clear i.e Temperature/ severe coughing causing them to be caught for breath and unable to participate. for a period of 24hrs and are to participate in normal daily activities again.

➤ **Chicken Pox.**

Children should remain at home until the spots have crusted (about 5-7 days after rash appears).

➤ **Scarlet fever**

Children can return 24 hours after commencing antibiotic treatment once they are well and able to participate

➤ **Diphtheria.**

All children should remain at home until they have received appropriate treatment and at least two cultures of their nose and throat have tested negative for diphtheria.

➤ **Whooping Cough.**

Symptomatic children with a severe cough should remain at home until they have completed a five day course of antibiotics and are well enough to return and to participate in regular activities in the crèche or 21 days if no antibiotic treatment is given.

➤ **Measles.**

All children should remain at home until the fifth day after the appearance of the rash.

➤ **German measles.**

Children can return after 6 days from onset of rash.

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- **Unknown Rashes.** If your child breaks out in a rash while under our care and it seems to be spreading after a monitoring period, staff will call you to collect your child right away, this is necessary as we do not know the origin of the rash the cause of it, if its an allergic reaction or if it may be contagious to others. If the rash is something your child is prone to regularly a GP letter stating it is not contagious/ or appropriate medical treatment to be given will be requested to be kept on your child's file.

- **Impetigo.**

Children must stay at home until lesions are crusted and healed or **24hrs** after commencing antibiotic treatment.

- **Conjunctivitis.**

Children with a pussy discharge from their eye (s) should remain at home until they have received treatment and there is no discharge from their eyes.

- **Hand foot and mouth**

- **Severe cases-** ie temperature, sore throat, lack of appetite, blistered spots on face, hands, legs, torso, buttocks area- exclusion is anywhere from 3-5days until children are well and all blisters have crusted over

- **Mild cases-** Spots that appear on the body and have no blisters, as long as children are well and can participate in normal activities they can attend as normal.

- **High Temperature.**

If a child is running a temperature of **101F/38 C** or above parents/carers will be requested to collect the child from the crèche.

- Children will not be permitted to stay in the service with a temperature of **38/39/40 degrees** these are classed as high and can cause febrile convulsions. Appropriate steps will be taken by a qualified staff member to reduce the temperature but medication will not be administered unless a consent form is signed indicating that it may be given to your child under these circumstances,(See child record) and the parent/ emergency contact will be rang prior to administration to give additional consent. Children can not attend crèche for **24 hrs** after last temperature and **24hrs** after last dosage of antifebrile medication.

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- In the event of a child's safety or well-being where no parent/ guardian can be contacted with the child's temperature is increasing. Management will give the permission for the child to receive a dose of calpol to try reduce temperature. ***All parents need to ensure they let educators know if the child has received medication that morning for this reason and to avoid overdosing.***
- Staff are not permitted to give antifebrile medication without cause or reason even with direction from parent, this is to ensure illness is not masked by medication. If children are showing no signs of illness medication will not be administered. St Sheelans have the ultimate responsibility for your child while under our care.

NB Even though a doctor might say your child is not infectious and can attend crèche this does not mean your child is well enough to attend the service and participate in normal activities. We will still require you to follow our exclusion periods.

➤ **Low grade temperature**

If a child running a low grade temperature above **98F/ 37.0 C** and under **100.4F/ 38C** Staff will take steps to reduce temperature by:

- Removing their outer clothing. This allows extra heat to escape from their body.

After 15 minutes staff will recheck the temperature and if still low or rising but still below 100.4F/38C. Staff will then:

- Sponge the child down with tepid water and a sponge/cloth and allow the skin to dry. This may reduce the temperature
- Encourage your child to drink lots of fluids such as water or their regular milk feed.

If after 15 minutes again the temperature is continuing to rise or not receding staff will then call you to consent to administering anti-febrile medication to your child and you will be required to collect them. As stated in the high temperature protocol above.

As it is in the interest off ALL children, staff and Parents / Carers involved with the Crèche, we would greatly appreciate your co-operation to our Child Sickness Policy.

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Notifiable Diseases

- Staff are aware of diseases classified as notifiable diseases by the Department of Public Health, a list is available from the HSE.
- St Sheelan’s Childcare Centre, is informed by the Department of Public Health of a diagnosis of a child attending the service or an employee, unpaid worker, contractor or other person working in the service, as suffering from an infectious disease, the service will notify the Tusla Early Years Inspectorate by filling out the Notification of Incidents Form.
- St Sheelan’s Childcare Centre will contact the Department of Public Health if there is a concern about a communicable disease or infection or if there is an outbreak of infectious disease in the service. The Department of Public Health will also be contacted before sending letters to parents/guardians about an infectious disease. The advice of the Department of Public Health will be followed at all times in regard to the management of infectious diseases.
- Parents will be informed verbally and in writing if an outbreak has occurred – all reasonable information on the outbreak will be provided to them.

This policy links with our –

- Administration of Medication Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Staff absence Policy
- Policy on safe sleep
- Risk management Policy
- Staff training Policy
- Supervision Policy

Covid19 policies and procedures

Person Responsible: Simone Simmons

Updated: 20/07/23

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Administration of Medication Policy

Statement:

St Sheelan's Community Childcare Service is committed to supporting each child's health and well-being. St Sheelan's will work in consultation with Parents/ Guardians to ensure the safe storage and administration of medication if:

1. A child is taking prescribed medication, with the prior written permission of their parent(s) or guardian(s)
2. A child is taking non-prescribed medication, with the prior written permission of their parent(s) or guardian(s)
3. A child becomes unwell while attending the setting and, only with the prior written permission of their parent(s) or guardian(s), is given pain relief or temperature reducing medication.

Principle:

This Policy is underwritten by the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and the Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Quality Regulatory Framework.

We are Committed to:

- ❖ **Storing Medication safely and appropriately.**
- ❖ **Implementing a procedure to ensure that the right child receives the medication, dosage, route, and timing authorized by staff.**
- ❖ **Documenting the administration of medication accurately.**
- ❖ **Providing a copy of the administration of medication policy to all parents/guardians and recording that parents/guardians have reviewed the policy.**
- ❖ **Incorporating staff feedback in to the future policy development.**

Parental Consent

- ❖ **Written parental permission for temperature reducing/anti-febrile medication administration in the event of a child's high temperature will be obtained on enrolment. This permission will be reviewed annually.**
- ❖ **The Medical History of each child will be sought when a child begins in St Sheelan's Childcare Centre. This will be updated as needed.**

Procedure for children's prescription medication

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- ❖ Prescription Medication is administered only if required. Only staff that have the required competency (knowledge, skills and training) will administer prescription medication to children.
- ❖ Medication (prescription or non- prescription) will never be administered without written permission from parent(s) or guardian(s). Parents/Guardians must complete the required consent form if prescription medication is to be administered.
- ❖ The child must have received the prescription medication for 24hours prior to it being given in St Sheelan’s Childcare Centre.
- ❖ Where a child has a chronic/ ongoing condition, which requires regular prescription medication, the written parental consent and a written care and administration plan will be obtained on enrolment and be reviewed regularly(as necessary). St Sheelan’s will seek training from medical professionals through parents as needed for the administration of prescription medication. Parental consent must be updated when there is any change to prescription medication required by a child.
- ❖ All prescription medications received by the service will be stored safely and appropriately in line with instructions provided(e.g.in the fridge). Prescription medication provided to the service must always be in date. Prescription medication received, administered and returned to parent/guardian is always recorded by the service. All prescription medication must be appropriately labelled with the child’s name.

Medication Administration Procedure

- ❖ Medication is only administered by staff who have been authorized by the manager to do so and who are appropriately trained.
- ❖ Non-Prescription medications will be given per the manufacturers instructions unless a health care professional provides written instruction otherwise.
- ❖ Staff will always read and understand the leaflet enclosed with medication before administering the medication.
- ❖ Medications are accepted for use only when they are within their expiration period. The medication must be labelled with the child’s name and be in the original container.
- ❖ Medication will not be added to a child’s bottle or food unless a medical professional has directed that this is how it should be administered. Staff are aware of how the medication reacts with food/fluid/other medications.
- ❖ There is a named person responsible for administration of medication in St Sheelan’s Childcare Centre.
- ❖ The second named person who checks medication and the dosage when administered.
- ❖ Ointments for nappy rash are not applied unless for treatment purposes and where a health care professional has directed their use for the child on whom they are being used.

Before administration of Medication

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In Services where there are at least two staff members, there must always be two members of staff present for the administration of medication.

Before Medication is administered the following is checked:

- Consent has been received from parent/guardian to administer medication
- The Child is identified
- Recipients name is on the medication
- Prescribed dose
- Expiry of medication
- Written instructions of prescriber
- Any possible side effects
- Date and time the medication was last given.

Staff can only administer medication that has been prescribed for a particular child. Staff are aware of the contra indications relating to the medicine being administered

When administering medication

- The appropriate equipment is used to administer the medication e.g. dosing spoon/oral dropper. Medical devices are thoroughly cleaned after each use.
- The child's dignity and privacy are ensured as appropriate e.g. if the method of administering the medication is not orally. (note St Sheelan's Staff are not permitted to give suppositories to children attending the service unless in the case of life threatening illnesses).
- If there is any doubt about any of the procedures, the member of staff will check with parents/guardians or a health professional before taking further action.

After Administration of medication

- Staff involved will keep records each time they administer medication. This record is signed by both staff members administering the medication.
- A record of the outcome of the administration of medication is maintained. For example, were there any adverse effects/did the temperature come down.?
- The medication is returned to its appropriate storage.

Incidents involving medication:

- If a child refuses to take medication- parents/guardians are informed straight away.
- If there is a mistake administering medication a doctor is called immediately.
- Emergency numbers including the national poison line are readily available.

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

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that emergency medication is supplied to St Sheelan's Childcare Centre 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.

Individual Care Plans:

- All children with medical conditions enrolled in St Sheelan's Childcare Centre, have an individual care plan that outlines any medication needs they 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.

Medication administration records:

- The authorised person giving the medication will ensure that they document the medication administration times and dosage precisely and have the process witnessed and signed by another authorised member of staff. Any administration of medication will be documented on a record sheet and signed by parents/carers and placed in the child's file.
- The following will be documented by the staff member administering medication
 - Child's name
 - Check that consent was received
 - Check the child's identity before medication administration
 - Check the administration instructions
 - The date and time the medication was administered
 - Route and dose of medication
 - Signature of person who administered medication and signature of witness
 - Any side-effects or adverse reactions are recorded
- A record will also be kept of the date and time the parent was contacted before administration of medication in the case of anti-febrile or pain relieving medicines.

Procedures for the storage of medications:

- All medications brought into the childcare setting should have child-proof caps and will be stored:
 - At the proper temperature (according to label)
 - Away from food
 - Out of reach of children

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- In accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- With the child's full name and expiry date on the medication container.
- Medications requiring refrigeration will be clearly marked and separated from food in an airtight container marked Medications. Access to the fridge will be restricted to authorized staff only.
- Inhalers will be stored in a safe location known to staff that allows them access quickly in case of emergency, they will be labelled with the child's name.
- Epi-Pens will be stored in an accessible, safe location known to staff and labelled with the child's name. A copy of parent/guardian consent and the emergency care plan are stored with the epi-pen
- Emergency medication is stored in a safe and accessible location that is known to all staff.
- All medication brought into St Sheelan's must be labelled with the child's name.
- Medicines, creams and ointments are not stored in the first aid box. Medications that are applied to skin are kept separate from medications that are injected into the body or the mouth.
- The manufacturer's instructions are followed at all times for the safe storage of medication.

Anti-Febrile (temperature reducing) medication

- St Sheelan's Childcare Centre has a supply of anti-febrile medication Calpol and Nurofen, in liquid suspension form, in child-proof containers and with the appropriate measuring device. These medications are stored in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions in a safe location not accessible to children e.g. locked box in the fridge.
- The date the medication was opened to be clearly labelled on the medication
- Medication with illegible labels or medications which have been opened over 6 months will be discarded.
- Medication in tablet form will never be administered to children under 5 years.
- Parents/ guardians provide written consent on enrolment for anti-febrile medication to be given to their child in the event of a high temperature.
- Parents will be contacted by telephone before these medications are administered, to ensure that the correct time frame is adhered to between doses.
- If a child has a suspected temperature, their temperature will be taken using a clean thermometer. The child's temperature will be recorded and if the body temperature of the child rises beyond a safe limit (38 degrees Celsius or higher), an anti-febrile medication will be administered by staff.
- The child's record form will be checked before administration of anti-febrile medication to ensure that there is parental consent and there is no recorded allergies to anti-febrile medication for the child.

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Sunscreen:

- Parental consent is required when a sunscreen supplied by the service is used, this is found in the child record form given on enrolment. When providing consent parents are informed of the exact brand and type of suncream used by St Sheelans Childcare Centre.
- Sunscreen supplied by parents does not require consent. Sunscreen supplied by parents is labelled with the child's name and used for that child only.
- 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.

This Policy Links with our:

- Risk Management Policy
- Policy on Staff Absences
- Staff Training Policy
- Supervision policy
- Policy on safe sleep
- Policy on infection control
- Outings policy
- Sickness policy

Supporting document links

- Tusla Quality and Regulatory Framework
- Childcare Act 1991(Early Years Service) Regulations 2016

Contact Person

Name: Simone Simmons Phone number: 050456600 Email: Childcare@sheelan.ie

Date Implemented: 15/01/2020

Document Approved by: _____

Signed by: _____ chair person Board of Management.

Sun Protection Policy

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Statement

St Sheelan's childcare centre endeavour to ensure that all children attending the centre are safe from skin damage caused by the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun. As children's skin is extremely sensitive at this young age this policy must be carefully considered throughout the whole year, but especially during the warmer summer months.

During the warmer summer months babies/ toddlers/ wobblers attending the service are required to wear light, loose clothing, Parents are required to provide sun hats with neck protectors. Suncream needs to be applied before entering the crèche each morning in case of allergies. No suncream will be applied belonging to another child. New sunscreen must be applied at home first before the centre will apply in case of allergic reactions.

Each pre-school child attending the service during the summer months are required to wear light T-Shirts and to have their own sun hat which protects their face, neck and ears. No suncream will be applied belonging to another child.

The staff at St Sheelan's will act as role models and promote the use of appropriate factor sunscreen, wearing suitable outdoor clothing and being in the shade wherever possible.

A broad-spectrum, sunscreen must be provided by parents for each child's use. Children will be given an understanding of the importance of skin care from the sun and this will also be reinforced through notes sent home and notice boards.

Parents of any child that have asthma, eczema or any form of skin irritations must advise crèche staff of the doctor's advice on what type of sun cream and factor, if any, can be applied to your child.

Staff will apply sufficient sunscreen to the younger children while the older age groups will be encouraged and helped to apply sunscreen to themselves. Staff will ensure that it is applied properly and will apply it to the more difficult areas of the child for example the neck, face and ears.

Staff at St Sheelan's Childcare Centre are unable to apply another child's sun cream on your child if they don't have a bottle of sun cream in the Crèche. This practice is in place in case children are allergic to that particular sun cream.

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It is really important that a labelled bottle of sun cream for your child is kept in the Crèche at all times. We do not have enough staff to keep a child indoors if they have no sun cream, they will have to go outdoors. Every effort will be made to ensure that the child stays in a shady part of the Crèche playground. If you forget to bring sunscreen on a day, St Sheelans will have their own bottle of factor 50 sunscreen in the crèche as a spare but a consent form will need to be signed giving permission to staff to apply to your child. Staff will use gloves to apply sunscreen. In the event that you forget to tell staff they will ring you for permission and an authorization slip will be made available for you to sign on collection.

Some parents for different reasons do not want sun cream applied to their child. When this occurs parents will be required to sign a form stating that they do not wish staff to apply sun cream to their child but that they are still permitted outdoors providing they are dressed appropriately using hats, and light long sleeved tops.

Record Keeping Policy

Policy Statement

At St Sheelan's we endeavour to maintain all records according to the Child Care(Pre-school services) Regulations 2006 to ensure the health and safety of staff and children, and to promote the learning development of all children who attend our service.

- All records will be factual and written impartially.
- Under *the freedom of information act 1997*, parents will have access to all records pertaining to their child alone.
- Staff members will only have access to records of children in their care and will be used to inform staff on how best to meet the needs of each child and plan for further learning.
- The Early Years(Preschool) inspectorate will have access to files for inspection purposes.

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- The service will only share information with other professionals or agencies, with consent from parents or without their consent in terms of legal responsibility in relation to child protection and welfare of the child.
- Staff follow *Aistear and Siolta the national quality guidelines and framework for early childhood education* in relation to various aspects of record keeping within the service
- Where there is child protection or welfare concerns, observations /records will be kept on an ongoing basis and information shared with the Child and Family Agency as appropriate. These records will be stored and locked into a filing cabinet in the Managers office.
- **Health and Safety**
 - Records will be maintained in relation to medical administration and accident report forms which will be co signed by parents / guardians and staff.
 - Written parental consent is obtained to allow the service to seek medical assistance for a child in case of an emergency.
 - Information on children’s allergies will be displayed in their play area and in the kitchen so that all staff are aware of allergies.
 - The daily arrival and departure time of each child is recorded in the “sign in book” which is situated at the worktop in each room.

Records relating to children

Register of Pre-School Children

- *A register of every child attending the service is maintained*
- *The information on the register will be updated accordingly.*

Observation, Assessment and Programme Planning

- Staff use regular observation and assessment as a means of supporting and planning for children’s learning and development. Observations and assessments are recorded in the form of written observations and discussion, photos and the use of children’s work in individual scrap books for each child. These will in turn be shared regularly with staff and parents to ensure a cohesive approach to ensuring the needs of each child are met.

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- A record of the planned programme / activities is clearly documented through short, medium and long term plans. Observations and assessment records are used to inform the plans and ensure that activities are suitable for the age, stage and interests of children in the service.
- Daily information will be recorded and shared with parents / guardians in the baby and wobbler rooms outlining settling in periods, food and drink, nappy changes, sleep etc. Staff Records
- A recruitment policy and procedure is in place.
- Records outlining the name, position, qualification and experience of each staff member, volunteer and student are maintained.
- Records are kept in relation to all documents and records relating to Garda vetting and references from previous employers for all staff members.
- Written records are kept relating to staff appraisals and supervision.
- The daily arrival, departure and meal break times of each staff member is recorded
- All staff records are strictly confidential (see confidentiality policy).

Records Related to the Running of the Service Include:

- Details of the maximum number of children catered for at any one time.
 - Details of the type of service and age range of children using the service
 - Staff/Child ratio's within the service..
 - An outline of the type of programme under which the service operates
 - Opening hours and fees.
 - Policies and procedures currently in place. • Daily attendance register of all children present in the centre.
 - Staff roster.
 - Details of any accident, injury or incident involving any of the children attending the service.
- Fire Safety:

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- A written record will be kept of (a) All fire drills which take place on the premises (b) The number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.. Hygiene: • A cleaning programme and schedule for furniture, work and play equipment is in place. (See Appendices 2 and 3).
- Food hygiene practices are guided and recorded under the principles of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) and the Food Hygiene Regulations 1950 – 89 and the European Communities (Hygiene of Foodstuffs) Regulations 2000.
- Each child has their own linen for use during sleep / rest periods. In cases where cots or mattresses are shared, linen is changed each time it is used. All linen changes are documented.

Policy adopted: 14/03/2018

Review date: 02/06/2020

ACCIDENT / INCIDENT POLICY

Policy Statement

At St Sheelan’s Childcare Centre, It is our policy to promote the health, well-being and safety of all the children in our service through the implementation of robust policies and procedures and by developing and regularly reviewing accident prevention procedures and fire safety. Although we adhere to all safety precautions and guidelines, accidents may occur.

However, in the event of an accidents / incidents occurring relevant staff have been fully trained in PHECC First Aid Response, and we have a protocols in place to deal with these situations. In the event that an accident/incident occurring the following procedures are enacted:

Due to Covid-19, St Sheelan’s will not require Parents to sign the accident book at this time. Any Incidents or Accidents will be notified verbally to the parent by a staff in your child’s pod when they come to collect. A copy of the accident report will be sent home with the parent. One copy filed and the other remaining in the accident book. Parents are asked to acknowledge receipt of the accident form by

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sending an email to the creche at childcare@sheelan.ie before the child next attends the service. The acknowledgement will be added to the child's record.

Responding to an Accident or Incident

- First aid will be directly administered, from the smallest bump to more serious injuries, by a qualified First Aider. If there is a need for medical attention then the parents of a child will be contact and the same time as further medical attention, in the form of a doctor or ambulance.
 - We will ensure that all personnel are aware of emergency numbers and that they are prominently displayed.
 - We will ensure that all relevant personnel have up to date First Aid Training and that a complete First Aid Box is accessible.
 - The safety and welfare of the child is always the first consideration if a child is injured or an accident occurs.
- After an accident, as soon as practicable, the accident Report Form is completed and recorded in the accident book/log. The member (s) of staff who dealt with the situation will be required to complete the Accident / Incident Report Book.
- The Accident / Incident Report Book will require such information:
- the individual's name
 - home address
 - the date and time of the accident / incident
 - a description of the accident / incident
 - the location where the accident / incident occurred
 - a perceived cause of the accident / incident
 - what staff members and other adults were present
 - what immediate action was taken and by whom

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- what remedial action was taken
 - the name of the individual's Parent / Carer if applicable,
 - who informed the individual's Parent / Carer if applicable
- The staff member, manager and parents will be asked to sign the report.
- A copy of this report will be put in the individual's file e.g. if they are a member of staff or a child attending the Crèche.
- The manager/owner/chairperson is informed of serious accidents or incidents.
 - Parents are always informed of incidents or accidents involving their child and requested to sign the relevant form.
 - A risk assessment will be carried out after each accident/ incident.

The Manager will review the accident and incident reports annually

Accident at home that involve breaks or sprains

In line with our company ethos and our duty to keep all children safe in the service, if your child

Behaviour Management Policy

St. Sheelans crèche understand that all children need to be taught society graces and as part of this, behaviour is an important part. However, all Parents / Carers have their own attitudes and ways in relation to managing their own child's behaviour, although we will fully respect this, we feel that it vitally important to all that while the children are attending our facility that the St. Sheelans Childcare Centre's policy on managing children's behaviour is adhered to by all.

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As each child's welfare is of importance to us and our aim is to encourage the children to have in the first instance respect for themselves and for others, self-discipline and consideration for each other, the surroundings and for the property. All children will be treated with respect and dignity and their rights will be acknowledged at all times. Abusive or degrading behaviour towards children, Parents/Carers and staff will not be tolerated by anyone at anytime while on the premises.

To achieve our goals the following points will underpin our commitment:

- The staff will endeavour to be "good role models" for the children.
- Staff will interact frequently and positively with children.
- Be available and responsive to the children
- Treat all children, regardless of race, religion, family background, culture, gender or ability with respect and consideration.
- We will encourage independence in children as they are ready
- The Crèche will promote equality and diversity within its facility.
- The Crèche promotes teamwork and cooperation and any actions that make a person feel isolated or rejected would deem contrary to centre policy.
- The Crèche deem any actions of physically or verbally harassment to another person as contrary to centre policy.
- The Crèche promotes an anti-bias approach would deem any action displaying bias as unacceptable.
- In the Crèche prohibits the use of corporal punishment by anyone on the premises. Nor will anyone on the premises be subject to humiliation, exclusion or frightening treatment.
- No one within the Crèche environment will shout or raise their voices in a threatening way to the children, Parent / Carers or other staff members. The use of the words "bold" and "naughty" is not to be used, instead adults should inform the children that the manner in which they are behaving is "not nice" or "not good".
- The Crèche considers any abusive, intimidating, offensive, threatening or physical behaviour that is directed at any member of staff as unacceptable. The Crèche staff reserve the right to request that a person presenting such behaviour leave the building and if deemed necessary, inform the Gardai.
- Staff members will engage children, one to one, face to face interactions talk in a pleasant soothing voice and make frequent eye contact.
- Children's feelings about separation will be acknowledged.

St Sheelans are completely committed to ensuring that we follow all of the recommendations in this policy even withstanding Covid-19 restrictions. We believe that warm nurturing interactions between adults and children form a

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pivotal part of their well-being and development. Whilst all precautions will be taken to ensure that public health advice is followed and adhered to, we are fully resolute in our aim to enrich the relationships and interactions with the children in our care

Managing Challenging Behaviour Policy

St. Sheelans crèche recognises that all children are different and that each child will develop at their own pace and it is important that at each stage of development that the child is given the social graces to be able to conduct themselves in society. All appropriate behaviour is positively acknowledged and improper behaviour is dealt with by explaining to the child why it is not suitable. The following outline some suggestion for supporting positive reinforcement:

- Any behavioural problems that may arise will be handled in a developmentally appropriate fashion, respecting and remembering that each individual child has a differing level of understanding and maturity.
- The children will be given one-to-one adult support in working together towards more appropriate behaviour. This may be achieved by the child having time out with an adult or removing the child from a stressful situation.
- Staff will encourage and support children to understand that fighting, bullying and hurting one another is not acceptable behaviour.
- Children will be encouraged to apologise for any unacceptable behaviour shown toward one another and to adults.
- The Crèche staff will discuss the child's behaviour with their parents / Carers, so that if there are any difficulties the staff and Parents / Carers can work together, therefore ensuring consistency between home and the Crèche.
- Staff will support and encourage all children to have a sense of their own identity within their racial, cultural and social groups.
- All children will be given the opportunity to learn about their own environment.
- Staff will promote positive attitudes at all times to the children and their families.
- Children will be given every opportunity to express their feelings in a creative manner through physical exertion i.e. music and movement, outdoor play etc. The staff will also provide the child with the arena to discuss such feelings and work through them together.

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Biting Policy

Policy Statement

St Sheelans Childcare Centre understand that even in the best child care center, periodic outbreaks of biting occur among infants, toddlers and sometimes preschoolers and occasionally older children. This is an unavoidable consequence of grouping young children together. When it happens, it can be scary and very frustrating for children, parents, and teachers. Understanding the reason for biting is the first step to changing a child's behavior. Children bite for a variety of reasons: teething, simple sensory exploration, cause and effect, imitation, crowding, seeking attention, frustration, and stress. Childcare group situations are difficult: dealing with others constantly around, sharing attention and toys, and too much or too little stimulation are all very difficult for children. Biting is not something to blame on children, their parents, or their teachers. When biting breaks out, a high quality childcare program immediately takes action, not to blame the biters but to change the environment and help children change their behavior.

It is important that the caregivers remain calm and in control of their emotions when biting occurs. Staff should not show anger or frustration towards the child. The caregiver should calmly respond to the child, letting them know that biting is not ok. In addition the following steps will be taken.

- 1. The staff will remove the child from the situation and focus caring attention on the child who was bitten.**
- 2. Encourage the biter to help take care of the child that was bitten (hold ice pack, comfort the child).**
- 3. The care giver should talk to the child who bit (if able to communicate) and talk about different strategies that the child can use next time (give them appropriate words-if able) instead of biting. This should be done in a short simple way.**

It is important to explore the reasons for biting when it occurs. Staff need to work with parents to gather information about the child's behavior and begin observations to determine the reasons for biting. Examples of some triggers would be: communication deficits, transitions, hunger, lack of sleep, need for oral stimulation or teething pain. Once triggers are identified, staff can work on prevention strategies and start teaching replacement skills. Below are some examples of how the teacher will begin this assessment.

- 1. The staff will examine the context in which the biting is occurring and look for patterns. The staff will use the Center Action Plan for documentation and ask the following questions:**

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- Was the space too crowded
 - Were there too few toys
 - Was there too little to do or too much waiting
 - Was the child who bit getting the attention and care he/she deserved at other times, other than when he/she was biting
2. The staff will change the environment, routines or activities if necessary
 3. The staff will work with the child who is biting to resolve conflicts and frustrations in more appropriate manners, including using words, if they are capable of them.
 4. The staff will observe the child, to get an idea of why and when they are likely to bite.
 5. The staff will identify children likely to be bitten and make special efforts to reduce their chance of being bitten.
 6. The staff, and parent will meet regularly to regulate an action plan and to measure the outcome of these changes.
 7. If biting continues the staff will observe the group more closely and work with the parents to seek out additional resources as necessary to shadow the child who is biting.

First Aid in response to biting (both child and adult)

1. Wear gloves, clean wound with soap and water. Run water over wound for 5 minutes.
2. Apply ice or cool compress to help reduce the pain or swelling.
3. Bandage the wound as necessary.
4. Write a detailed incident report for both children involved with the incident.

First Aid if bite breaks the skin. (both child and adult)

1. Wear gloves, clean wound with soap and water. Run water over the wound for 5 minutes.
2. Control the bleeding.
3. Cover the wound with sterile dressing and bandage.
4. Contact parent of BOTH children involved and encourage them to contact their healthcare provider to determine if they need to be seen.
5. Write a detailed incident report for both children involved with the incident.

When children bite, their parents are informed personally and privately the same day. All information is confidential and names of the children involved in the incident are not shared between parents. In addition, biting is always documented on our standard incident form which is completed and signed by staff, parents and management, parents and an administrator is notified. A copy of the incident is kept on the child's file.

When biting occurs, here's what you can expect from us:

- We will put the child's safety first and provide first aid as well as comfort, support and advice to any child who is bitten.
- We will provide appropriate programming for children to help prevent biting.

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- We will make current information and resources on biting available to you.
- We will provide staff with adequate knowledge and training to deal properly and effectively with biting.
- We will take your concerns seriously and treat them with understanding and respect.
- We will tell you what specific steps we are taking to address biting and explain the reasoning behind those steps.
- We will respond to your questions, concerns and suggestions—even when our response to some suggestions is no.
- We will work to schedule conferences about biting with you, at a time you can attend.
- We will keep your child’s identity confidential if he or she bites. This helps avoid labeling or confrontations that may prolong the behavior.

We wish we could guarantee that biting will never happen in our centre, but we know there is no such guarantee. You can count on us to deal appropriately with biting so it will end as quickly as possible. We want the best for all the children in our program. If you want more information on biting or have questions or concerns, please let us know—we are here to help you and your child on their journey to independence.

Nutrition in the Crèche Policy

St Sheelans Childcare Centre fully appreciates the importance of providing a plan nutritious diet and this is organized by the use of meals recommended by the *HSE*, by used the food pyramid especially design for children and we employ an HACCP trained staff. All the food provided in the Crèche will be chosen from the ‘children’s food pyramid’. A variety of foods from the four main food groups will be selected each day. These food groups are as follows:

- Bread, cereals, rice, pasta and potatoes
- Fruit and vegetables
- Milk and dairy products
- Meat, fish and alternatives

These are developed into a workable three week menu with alteration for children with allergies. The following is how we endeavor to maintain high quality.

Food Preparation

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- All the food preparation is carried out in the Crèche's well equipped kitchen and is fully compliant with all food regulations as stated by the H.S.E.
- The Crèche is regularly inspected by an Environment Health Officer who ensures that all practices are of the highest standard.

HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points)

- It is the obligation of the Crèche to introduce and ensure that a 'Food Safety System' is followed in order to show that the food provided is produced safely. Therefore a HACCAP Plan has been implemented and the relevant staff members trained on this matter.

Mealtimes

- Each mealtime is viewed as an opportunity for social interaction between the children and staff and will help to develop positive attitudes towards food.
- The children will receive regular snacks, meals and adequate fluids throughout their day in the Crèche.
- Food texture and the size of the portions each child receives is age appropriate.
- Any child attending the Crèche for longer than 5 hours will be provided with a hot meal which is considered as their main meal of the day.
- A variety of fresh fruit will always be readily available for all children.
- Sweets, cakes and fizzy drinks will not be part of the children's daily diet. These products will only be provided as an occasional treat.

Mealtimes Routines

- Meals will be served in each child's room and will be ready before the children are seated.
- Children will be encouraged to wash their hands before every mealtime.
- Children will always be encouraged to eat at their own pace and will not be rushed.
- Staff will interact with the children and view this time as a social occasion.

Special Dietary Requirements

- Any special dietary requirements that a child may have will be respected at all times, as will the wishes of each child's Parent / Carers.
- Cultural diversity will be respected at all times and relevant information should be given to staff.

Menus

- A four week menu plan is developed and reviewed on ongoing bases.
- The weekly menus displayed on the Crèche's notice board and will be rotated on a three week basis.

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- All Parents / Carers are encouraged to make suggestions regarding the food that is provided for their children and the menus.
- Menus are extracted from the food pyramid and from suggestions given by a nutritionist in the *HSE*.
- If a parent feels a need to provide an extra snack for their child we would advise that it would be kept to a piece of fruit/cheese or vegetable so as to keep in line with our healthy eating policy.

Outdoor Play Policy

St. Sheelans endeavours to give the children as much experience of playing outside as is possible and it is of great importance that all children have access to outdoor play every day. Whether it raining, snowing or glorious sunshine, fresh air and exercise will benefit and enhance the well being of each and every child. To this end it is important that all children have appropriate clothing and footwear to enable the facility to accomplish this. The following information gives a brief description of outside facilities and procedures that enable their use.

Outdoor Play Facilities

St Sheelans Childcare Centre outdoor play area is an area which is completely secure, preventing any unauthorized access. This area is equipped with the following:

- Age appropriate toys which include: Pedal tricycles, Prams, Footballs Hoops, See-saws etc.
- Impact Absorption Flooring
- A sandpit and garden area.

Outdoor Play Procedures:

- The outdoor play area is inspected on a daily basis for any objects that do not belong there e.g. plastic bags. Drink cans, needles, glass and other sharp objects.
- Our pest control policy also supports this safety and security of the out door activities.
- Staff must wear gloves and dispose of such items in a suitable container.
- All equipment is checked on a regular basis to ensure its serviceability and safety.
- All equipment which requires adult supervision e.g. swings, slide and trampoline will be supervised closely by a staff member designated to that specific area.

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- All toys to be cleaned on a regular basis
- Risk assessments filled out everyday for the outside area

All children are supervised at all times.

- Parents / Carers should provide suitable clothing and footwear for their child in the event of adverse weather conditions e.g. Wellington boots for rainy weather and sunhats for sunny weather.
- Parents should provide loose fitting clothes in hot weather as this will help to keep all children cooler, especially babies.
- Parents / Carers must provide a complete sun block lotion which the staff apply regularly in sunny and hot weather. It is advisable for all Parents / Carers to do a patch test on their children's skin in order to determine any allergies a child may have towards the sun block, prior to sending the lotion into the crèche.
- Children will only play outside for intervals of 30 minutes in sunny and hot weather conditions.
- Babies under 12 months will be kept out of the sun and in the shade provided by a canopy at all times.
- Frequent drinks will be provided for the children in hot weather to help prevent dehydration.

We feel that these simple guidelines and precautions will ensure that all children can enjoy outdoor play more safely.

Outings policy

St Sheelan's Childcare Centre aims to provide children with a varied and wide experience and from time to time the service may organize day trips and outings. It is our policy to ensure the safety and well-being of children during these activities through planning, risk assessment, engagement and supervision of the activity

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managing Routine Outings

St Sheelan's Service uses the facilities in park/playground/ library when weather permits. In managing and planning these activities we will:

- Inform parents at enrolment of the proposed activity, method of travel and supervision in place
- Seek written consent from the parents; children will not be able to participate in this activity unless this has been obtained
- Ensure an adequate number of personnel are present and that the children are supervised at all times
- Ensure that the person in charge will have access to a mobile phone in case of emergency
- A risk assessment of the venue/facility will be carried out and reviewed annually
- Ensure that adequate insurance is in place for the outing
- Ensure staff are familiar with emergency procedures
-

Managing and Planning Day Trips/Outings

This service aims to provide children with a varied and wide experience and from time to time the service will organize Day Trips. The following will be considered in planning these activities.

- All trips and outings will be planned in advance and a risk assessment will be carried out with regard to the following issues: safety in regard to method of transport, facilities, activities, accessibility for children with additional needs and emergencies.
- We will ensure that the method of transport complies with relevant safety requirements and insurance.
- We will ensure that adequate insurance is in place and that appropriate staff/child ratios are maintained in line with the pre-school regulations and the risk assessment.

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- An outline of the details of the trip and related activities will be supplied in writing to parents and written consent by a parent specifically for each trip will be obtained. Parents will be asked to provide information about any allergies that their child has.
- Where appropriate, parents may be invited to accompany their children on trips.
- If all staff are leaving the service, emergency contacts for all children will be brought on the trip.
- Children will be appropriately supervised at all times and the relevant adult/child ratios maintained.
- Safety Measures such as frequent head counts/roll calls at key stages, name tags, hats, armbands may be used as appropriate.
- Before leaving the outings book must be filled in stating;
 - Names of staff and children
 - Time they are going
 - Where they are going
 - Telephone numbers they can be contacted at.
- Staff must make sure that all the children have suitable clothing and allow for weather changes.
- A role call will be done;
 - On leaving the center
 - On arrival at the destination
 - On leaving the destination
 - On return to the center.

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Managing Emergencies and Critical Incidents

- A first aid box will be brought and a person with a First Aid certificate will be present
- The person in charge will have access to the service mobile phone in case of emergency
- The service does its up most to minimize risk and ensure the safety of all children at all times. However, it is important that staff are prepared for any emergencies that may arise and in this regard, a plan to deal with emergencies (such as critical incidents or an incident involving a missing child) will be developed for each outing. Staff will be reminded of any relevant policies and procedures prior to the day trip.

Safe Sleep Policy

Policy Statement

St Sheelan's Childcare Centre knows the importance of sleep and rest for all children in the service. We will ensure children get sleep and rest when they may need it regardless of their age. We will work with the family on their child's sleep/rest patterns and will always work in the best interest of the children. In keeping with best practice, we will also ensure that the cots we use are inspected regularly and maintained to a high standard. This policy is available and communicated to all parents.

Principle

This policy is underwritten by the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016, the Tusla Safety Alert on cots (4th July 2016), the Questions asked to Tusla Early Years Inspectorate with regard to the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Tusla's Quality and Regulatory Framework.

Procedure

Safe Sleep Practices for all children

- Staff will be given clear guidance on appropriate safe sleep practices at induction. Staff who care for children in St Sheelan's Childcare Centre are knowledgeable regarding safe sleep

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requirements and follow the required safe sleep practices. Ongoing safe sleep training is available to all staff.

• Children are allowed sleep/ rest when they are tired and not just at dedicated times of day. Children will never be denied sleep if they require it or fall asleep where they sit. They will be given a max of 1hour sleep the children's needs take priority over the parent's instruction in this case.

Children who are not asleep after 30/40 mins will be taken up from bed.

- Staff are aware of children's individual sleep needs.
- Staff communicate with parents/guardians about children's sleep needs and their sleep when in St Sheelan's Childcare Centre.
- Children are never placed to sleep in a buggy or a travel cot
- If slings are to be used, they are used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Children will always be provided with suitable sleeping facilities away from the main play areas.
- Children's bed sheets are only used by individual children and laundered on a weekly basis or more often if they are dirty. Children's bed sheets are stored separately. Children's bed sheets are never shared.
- Children are always supervised when sleeping. Depending on the number of children sleeping a staff member may remain in the room where the children are sleeping. If there is no staff member in the room the staff have visibility of the children through a viewing panel in to the sleep room and a baby monitor and physically go in to the room every 10 minutes to observe each child.
- If there is a safety risk staff will be in the room while children are sleeping.
- 10-minute sleep checks are conducted, and staff complete a sleep record for each child, the sleep record contains the following information:
 - o Time of the check
 - o Who carried out the check
 - o The sleep position of the child
 - o Any change in the child's skin colour

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- o Any change in the child's breathing pattern
- o The sleep room temperature (it should be between 16-20 degrees)
 - The sleep room is well ventilated, and the air is regularly changed in the room. If the sleep room is not between the required temperature (16-20 degrees), actions are taken to adjust the temperature in the room e.g. opening windows/doors, bringing in a fan or turning on a radiator or heater.
 - Cots are spaced at least 50 centimetres (half a meter) apart.
 - Lighting is adjustable to ensure a relaxed sleepy environment for the children.
 - The sleeping practices in St Sheelan's Childcare Centre have been discussed with the local fire officer and comply with fire safety requirements.
 - All rooms in St Sheelan's Childcare Centre include a rest area where children can relax away from the main activity. Safe Sleep Practices for children under 2 years:
 - Children under two years of age have access to a standard cot which will be located away from the main play areas. These cots meet EU safety standards. We have 11 standard cots in St Sheelan's Childcare Centre. These cots are located in a separate sleep room.
 - All mattresses in St Sheelan's Childcare Centre comply with EU/CE standards and have no more than a 2.5 cm gap between the mattress and the cot bars. In addition, the cot mattresses have a waterproof covering.
 - Cot mattresses are cleaned (disinfected) on a daily basis.
 - Cots and mattresses are checked on a monthly basis to ensure they are in good condition, clean and fit for purposes. Cots and mattresses are replaced as needed.

Safe Sleep Practices for children over 2 years:

- Children over two years of age will have access to a stackable bed/a sleeping mat. These meet EU safety standards. We have 12 stackable beds.
- Sleeping mats and beds are spaced at least 50 centimetres (half a meter) apart. So that staff can easily manoeuvre around the sleeping mat to provide for the children's care needs.
- Staff will ensure no objects of strangulation or choking are present in or near the sleeping area. For example, soother cords. Leads or wires.

Procedures for placing under 2's to sleep in a cot:

- Infants will always be placed on their backs to sleep
- Infants feet will be placed at the foot of the cot to sleep

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- Infants clothes are loose and light
 - No bibs, bottles or soft toys are permitted in the cot (soft toys are supervised by staff and removed once child is asleep.)
 - No duvets, pillows or cot bumpers
 - Soothers are used appropriately
- Infants are never placed to sleep with a bottle
 - Bottles are never propped up
 - Only cellular blankets are used/baby sleep gro bags- (provided by parents) children under 12months or who are walking around the cot are not permitted to use a grow bag for safety purposes.
 - The infants head is never covered. Cot mattresses cannot be elevated in any way for any reason.
 - No cots adjacent to a heater, curtains, blinds or anything which is a danger to the child.
 - Controls are implemented to ensure the child does not overheat during sleep.

Amber Beads are not permitted for use in our service for safety reasons

Procedure for managing an emergency if a sleeping child is unresponsive:

1. First aid is administered, and the emergency services are contacted.
2. The Manager or the person who is in charge at that time notifies the child's parents/guardians as soon as possible of the current situation.
3. The person who found the child and has been resuscitating the child gives a detailed account of events to the paramedics on their arrival.
4. Staff follow the direction of the paramedical staff.
5. The scene is to be left as it is. An Garda Síochána may need to investigate.
6. Families of the other children attending the childcare service may need to be notified of the incident by the Manager
7. Staff support is essential following any such incident.

Supporting documents and links:

- Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016

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- Tusla: Quality and Regulatory Framework
- HSE Safe Sleep for Your Baby: Reduce the Risk of Cot Death 2016
- Safe Sleep for Under 2's Monaghan, Cavan and Louth County Childcare Committees
- Reduce the Risks of Cot Death: Early Years Safe Sleeping Guide for Childminders, Foster Carers or a Nursery Setting Scottish Cot Death Trust, 2017
- Tusla Safety Alert: Cots

Nappy changing Policy

St. Sheelans crèche provides for the basic needs of each child and as part of fulfilling these duties, hygiene is of high importance and as nappy changing is a basic need of every child and in the interest of health and hygiene, it is extremely important that all children's nappies are changed on a regular basis. Equally as important is the safe guarding of the staff member carrying out this procedure, not only for the health and welfare of the staff but for the health and welfare of the child as well. Therefore it is essential that the procedures are followed to at all times.

The Nappy Changing Procedures are:

WASH HANDS THOROUGHLY BEFORE AND AFTER GHANGING A CHILD'S NAPPY OR UNDERGARMENTS

- a) Ensure that all the equipment required to clean the Child is readily at hand before placing the child on the mat. **NEVER LEAVE A CHILD UNATTENDED ON THE MAT.**
- b) The staff member must put on a disposable apron and disposable gloves.
- c) Interact positively with the child during the whole process.
Once the child is on the changing mat remove necessary items of clothing. If an item of clothing is soiled, place that item in a nappy bag provided and double bag the item of clothing.
- d) Once the nappy has been removed place it in the peddle bin next to the changing mat. If you are removing soiled undergarments they too must be placed in nappy bags and stored in a bucket provided.

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- e) Now the member of staff can proceed to clean the Child using cleaning materials provided by parents.
- f) Only nappies, wipes, creams and powders supplied by the parent can be used on their child all items must be labelled by staff.
- g) The member of staff can replace the Child's nappy after which they can remove gloves and throw in the peddle bin provided, then proceed to re-dress the Child.
- h) The child can be taken back to their designated room by the member of staff, and the staff will return to clean down the mat with the sanitizer spray provided and wash hands before changing another child.
- i) The member of staff can now remove all protective clothing and dispose of them in the nappy bin.

CE staff: for the ce staff to be trained in toileting and nappy changing The Leader in the room must teach the CE worker the nappy/toileting procedure step by step. This will be done over a period of 4 weeks, and when the Room Leader and manager are happy that the CE worker is competent to change by themselves, the CE worker will be signed off by the leader and manager and the form kept on the CE workers file.

Toileting Procedure

1. When taking a child to the toilet you must always inform another member of staff and this should take as little time as possible.
2. A staff member will always accompany training children to the toilet. Doing so on regular occasions to avoid accidents and get the child familiar with the procedure and setting.
3. Pre –school children may go to the toilet on their own but must be supervised afterwards.
4. Children will be encouraged to be independent in removing clothing and redressing.
5. All children and Adults who attend them must wash their hands after using the toilet.
6. Children will learn how to dry their hand with the paper towels provided and to independently place same in the bin provided with minimum of mess.
7. Toilet training is achieved in co-operation with parents.
8. When a Child is being toilet trained a staff member will encourage him/her by asking him/her regularly to go to the toilet.

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9. Toilet accidents are dealt with without fuss.
10. Children are praised for correct toileting and are never “given out to” for accidents.
11. Staff will talk to children about going to the toilet books will be used to help children understand potty training such as “I want my potty” etc.

Potty Trainer Procedure

We support and assist Parents in their chosen method of toilet training. When a Parent is considering starting Training or when a Staff Member observes a Child showing signals of readiness for training Staff and Parents enter into a discussion and a coordinated consistent plan for the Child is put in place. Our Centre recommends parents begin potty training for the first four days at home where the parent can give the child the one on one time needed for training, this can be done from on a Friday- Saturday Sunday and Monday to limit the days missed from creche. The approach to training should be relaxed and Parents given extra support during this time. In the event of a Child / Parent becoming overly stressed the original plan should be collaboratively reviewed and the best decision for the Child should be made. On occasions, it may be wisest to postpone potty training for a period of time.

1. Each parent of a potty training child will provide a toilet seat for their child for use in the Crèche if it's a preferred method.
2. Each seat will have the child's name marked in indelible ink.
3. Each child will use his/her own seat for training.
4. Each Parent will provide ample extra changes of clothes during training time.
5. Each training child will let their Carer know when they need to use the potty.
6. The Carer will go to the bathroom with the child and get their seat from the press.
7. The seat will be used in the toilet cubicle with the staff member present. If using a potty the contents will then be disposed of in the toilet bowl and brushed clean with toilet brush.
8. Finally it will be sprayed with disinfectant before being placed back in the cupboard under the sink.

Trained Toilet Users Once a child is successfully toilet trained they will be encouraged to use the toilet independently. Staff members will monitor that children re-dress themselves, wash their hands using the antibacterial soap provided and dry them effectively with the paper towels in a tidy and responsible manner with pride, dignity and respect for themselves and the facilities they are using. The importance of handwashing will be highlighted and modelled by the Staff Member. The Tusla visual handwashing

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demonstration posters in the Children's toilet will be pointed out and used as a point of reference. It is important to demonstrate to the child how to pull the towelettes from the dispenser to avoid over pull or underpull.

Pest Control Policy

St. Sheelans Crèche believes in the welfare and safety of all children, staff and Parents / Carers within the facility and endeavour to ensure that access for pest is limited. Pest are defined as any unwanted insects or animals, such a list would include ants, mice cats etc.. To enable the facility to keep infestations to a minimum and eradicated as soon as possible the following points indicate how we monitor and manage pest control:

- The crèche manager will monitor and maintain a log of precaution to prevent where possible any infringement of pests of any kind.
- All outside areas are checked each morning by the crèche manager or senior member of staff to ensure that they are no unwanted item present prior to the children being given access to the garden.
- All parts of the building will be checked by the manager to ensure that any possible enter is limited.
- All fence work will be check for gaps or breakages.
- All drains and manhole covers will be checked on a daily bases to ensure that they are secure.
- The outside area will be checked by the manager to ensure that no evidence of pest is present including, animal faeces, is present and if present will be remove and area disinfected.
- Rentokil have effective pest control measures in place to identify and prevent infestations occurring.

All effort is made to ensure as high a security as possible.

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Policy for using the stairs

For safety reasons it is very important that EVERYONE adheres to this policy.

- **The stairs and landing areas of the stairs must be kept clear of any obstruction at all times.**
- **When using the stairs please use the handrail, and keep left.**
- **Children are **not** allowed to go up or down the stairs alone, we would advise parents/ carers to hold their child's hand or encourage them to hold on to the handrail.**
- **When the children are using the stairs in groups the appropriate staff ratios must be adhered to, groups should not be larger than 8 children.**
 - **Children are encouraged to walk slowly and carefully while holding the handrail under adult supervision.**
 - **Staff must ensure there is sufficient space between each child using the stairs, at least one step.**
 - **When going up the stairs the children gather behind the railing at the top of the stairs and are then guided through the door.**

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N.B. The management of St. Sheelans Childcare centre cannot be held responsible for accidents incurred by children on the premises while they are in their parents care.

Staff Sick Leave Policy

St. Sheelans crèche has procedures in place to minimise infection within the facility but recognizes that it cannot cover all eventuality, nor does it have any influence on things outside of its control. Therefore, it is inevitable that each staff member may become ill and the following procedures are an outline when absent from work due to illness but for full details please refer to your contract in the first instance and the staff handbook.:

- If a staff member is not able to attend work due to sickness or any other relevant reason, they must contact the Crèche (via a phone call) to report their absence by 8.00am on the day of absence. On making the phone call the staff member must request to speak with the senior person on duty.
- Each staff member is asked to make this phone call to the crèche unless otherwise indisposed e.g. if hospitalized.
- Calls from relatives will not be accepted except in extreme circumstances. If a call is made by the employee's partner/relative on behalf of an employee, the employee should make contact with the Manager at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Text messages, emails or voicemails are not considered an appropriate way to convey this information.

The staff member or caller must state the length of time they will be out and can discuss the illness on a need to know basis with senior staff/Manager they must also state the date of when they hope to return to work. If a return date cannot be given the staff member must contact the Crèche each day before 4.00pm to inform management, they will not be attending, this will give the company time to arrange cover for you. When a return to work date has been identified the staff member must inform the crèche as soon as possible and in the event of a contagious illness must provide a return to work cert from their doctor.

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Some staff members employed from 2017 and prior to this are entitled to 2 consecutive, uncertified sick leave days subject to a maximum of 7 days in any one period of twelve months beginning on the first day of absents.

Staff employed after 2017 are entitled to statutory sick leave.

Should a staff member be absent for more than 2 consecutive days they must submit a medical certificate to the senior staff member on duty within the first three days of illness.

If a staff member has more than 7 days sick leave in any 6 month period the Crèche Manager will council the employee. As further occurrences, may lead to the facility invoking disciplinary action.

All employees are entitled to the benefit of the Statutory Sick Pay scheme:

- Paid sick leave for up to 3 sick days in 2023, 5 days in 2024, 7 days in 2025 and 10 days in 2026.
- A rate of payment for statutory sick leave of 70% of normal wages to be paid by employers (up to a maximum €110 per day).

To be entitled to paid sick leave, the employee must be working with St Sheelans Childcare for at least 13 weeks. You will also need to be certified by a GP as unfit to work. Abuse of the sick leave policy will result in disciplinary action.

Employees are required to ensure the medical certificate supporting the illness should include:-

- i. Is given by a registered medical practitioner.
- ii. Dated by and bears address as well as the signature of such practitioner, and shows the probable date of resumption of duty.
- iii. Such certificate is furnished to the Manager not later than the 1st day of absence and on a weekly basis thereafter where relevant.
- iv. Gives the nature of the illness.
- v. The expected duration of the illness or incapacity
- vi. Date of issue
- vii. Signed by the Doctor. A rubber stamp without the doctor's signature is not acceptable.

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A medical certificate not containing the above information or certificates that are undated, illegible or otherwise dubious will not be accepted by the Company.

To apply for Disability Benefit, an employee should obtain a Social Welfare claim form from their doctor or hospital and submit it to the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. In the case of long-term illness, a medical certificate, signed by a medical practitioner (details as above) must be provided every week unless an alternative agreement has been approved by The Company. The Company reserves the right to refer an employee to a medical adviser.

Illness during Annual Leave

If an employee falls sick during a period of annual leave, and produces a doctor's medical certificate, the period of this sickness will be treated as sick leave and not annual leave.

Abuse of Sick Leave

Abuse of sick leave can lead to disciplinary action.

Accrual of Annual Leave on Certified Sick Leave

Employees on long term certified sick leave are entitled to retain annual leave they could not take due to illness. The employee has up to 15 months to take the leave after the end of the leave year in which the leave has accrued. [The leave year for calculation is the statutory leave year April to March]

Significant Sick Absences

An employee's career in St Sheelans Childcare can be affected if the pattern of absences indicates unreliability in terms of ability to be present at work. A high level of absence due to illness while on probation may result in the termination of the employment contract.

Attendance at Company Doctor

As noted above St Sheelans Childcare reserves the right to refer an employee who is absent through illness or where they are concerned about the health and wellbeing of an employee at work to a Doctor nominated by the company. This referral is to

- establish a potential return to work date and/or
- reason for their absence from work and/or

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- medical capacity to continue in employment and/or
- other reason as may be relevant.

This may involve a medical examination. An employee may also be referred to the company's Medical Adviser where they are returning to work after a prolonged or serious illness. The Medical Adviser will be required to report back to the Manager. The employee will be entitled to receive a copy of the Medical Advisers report. The Doctor will be remunerated by St Sheelans Childcare

Note: Company Doctor may be our GP or an Occupational medical adviser as appropriate.

Return to Work

When the employee is fit to resume duty s/he must make contact with the Manager on the day prior to return to work so that the Manager may make the necessary arrangements for return. Where the employee has been out on long term sick leave other arrangements may be put in place with the employee before returning to work i.e., the employee may be required to give a longer period of notice that they are looking to return to work. In such circumstances the employee will be referred to the company's medical adviser prior to their return to work.

On the morning of their return to work an employee if requested to do so shall complete a "Return to Work" form and shall arrange to meet with the Manager to discuss their absence.

At this meeting they shall discuss

- The reason for the absence from work
- Identify any possible underlying causes of absence that may be important for the employee.
- Identify if there are any health and safety or environmental issues in the workplace causing absenteeism.
- Bring the employee up to date on relevant workplace matters.

The Manager shall keep a record of the fact the discussion took place where appropriate.

Recording of Sick Leave

All sick leave absences are recorded and monitored. The Company reserves the right to discuss with employee unexplained or patterns of absenteeism. In situations where there are ongoing

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unexplained absences or patterns of absenteeism The Company may investigate such absences which may lead to invoking of the disciplinary policy and procedure. For example:

Where an employee may have three (3) or more unexplained absences or patterns of absenteeism in any one quarter (within a three (3) month period) this may lead to an investigation which may invoke the disciplinary procedure which includes warnings up to and including dismissal.

The Board of St Sheelans Childcare Centre reserves the right to request an independent medical examination and a report on the fitness of any staff member to work, during an illness period.

Confidentiality policy

St. Sheelans Crèche endeavour to provide a confidential service to all clients, especially children and staff. All staff, students and volunteers working in St. Sheelan's Childcare Centre are inducted on the importance of confidentiality and respect that anything confidential is not talk or acted on outside the facility. Therefore any information that a staff member, student or volunteer may receive is treated in the utmost confidence and must not be given to any other persons outside of the Crèche environment or indeed to any persons working within the Crèche that do not need to know such information, except in the case were abuse is indicated and in such case please refer the child protection policy.

The following are simple guidelines to support our policy but staff are reminded that the handbook will provide protocols for confidentiality:

- The Crèche staff, student or volunteer will not share any information about the provision, the children and their families, without the permission of the Parents / Carers concerned, except in the interests of child protection. (See 'Child Protection Policy).
- The Crèche staff, student or volunteer will not disclose or discuss any personal information in relation to the children and families of the Crèche in the presence of staff members who do not need to know such information.
- All confidential information will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Crèche office and only viewed by the Crèche Manager, relevant staff members and other relevant outside agencies, as appropriate.
- Should it become apparent to the Crèche Management that confidentiality is being abused or broken, disciplinary action will be taken (please see staff handbook).

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- The Crèche staff team, student or volunteer fully understand that both confidential and any other information is disclosed on a need to know basis.

Induction Policy

At St. Sheelans Childcare Centre we feel that a good induction programme helps to ensure that the children have a confident and competent team of carers, working together in a consistent manner and in such a way that their health, safety, welfare, education and care needs are met.

Induction for new employees, students and volunteers:

- As part of the induction process, all new management, staff, volunteers and students will be briefed on all the elements of the Child Protection and Welfare Policy including the ethos of the service, child centred practice and the Code of Behaviour, within the first week of employment.
- All management, staff, volunteers and students will be required to commit to and abide by the Child Protection and Welfare Policy. They are required to confirm that they have read and understand the Child Protection and Welfare Policy with their signature.

Training on Child Protection:

- The DLP and deputy DLP will be released to attend *Always Children First* Training and/or other relevant training as identified and we will ensure that the DLP and Deputy DLP attend child protection training every 3 years.
- All management, staff and volunteers will be encouraged to attend child protection and other relevant training as identified.
- Staff will be provided with information in relation to particular skills training to encourage professional development and best practice.

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Staff Supervision and Support

- Regular supervision and support is available to staff and volunteers, through one to one meetings or group meetings.
- Staff will be supported while dealing with a child protection concern and outside support will be sought where necessary, the costs of this will be borne by the company.

The initial part of the induction process will be carried out by the manager, on the premises prior to commencing work, this part of the programme will include;

- Showing the new employee, student or volunteer where everything is and what happens in each area.
- Introductions to the children, colleagues and as much as possible, the families of the children attending.
- Information about the services policies practises, routines and quality standards through the Staff Handbook, Policies and Procedures of the centre, Child Protection and Welfare Policy and Health and Safety information.
- Explaining our curriculum and how play and learning experiences in the centre are planned, implemented and evaluated.
- Clarify their roles, what the job will involve and what is expected of them, also to clarify the roles and responsibilities of others in the centre.
- Pay and leave arrangements.
- Identifying each individual's strengths and needs e.g. training or ability to shadow an existing staff member, in order to help them fulfil their role in the centre.
- Contracts and policy agreements.

The induction process will continue when work commences, depending on the role of the new staff member, this is usually carried out by the Room Leader of the room to which they are assigned. The manager will also be available for any questions, difficulties and support. The Room Leader will support and observe the new staff member in working with the children and their parents, working alongside existing staff and becoming part of the team. Existing staff members will be clear about their roles with regard to the new employee and have clear expectations. The manager will meet with the new employee on a regular and agreed basis to discuss their progress on settling into the centre.

Each induction process will be tailored to the needs of each individual and is based on their levels of experience and their role within the centre. The length of each induction will vary so that each individual is a confident and competent member of the team.

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Reviewed 15/03/18.

Code of Conduct Policy

Policy Statement

St. Sheelans Crèche endeavours to provide high quality childcare services and we employ high quality staff so that our staff can provide good role models and can incorporate all codes of best practice and good behaviour practices to ensure a safe, caring and nurturing environment for all children to develop holistically. This is achievable by following these simple practices:

- All staff must respect and value one another, the children, parents/ Carers and all other agencies involved with the crèche provision, without any discrimination or bias.
- All staff must conduct themselves as noted in their contracts and staff handbook

Guiding principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All staff are responsible to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. This responsibility extends to a duty of care for those adults employed, commissioned or contracted to work with children and young people.
- Staff who work with children are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Staff should work and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.
- The same professional standards should always be applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.
- Staff should continually monitor and review their practice and ensure they follow the guidance contained in this document.

Code of conduct examples

- All staff must recognise and respect the value and intrinsic worth of each child and family, regardless of economic or social background.
- All children and families deserve respect and understanding.
- Early years practitioners are responsible for nurturing and educating young children as well as providing information and support to parents.

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- Early years practitioners should seek to improve their understanding of the development of young children through ongoing education and collaboration with colleagues.
- Early years workers have a responsibility to understand and adhere to current legislation and guidance that supports their role.
- All staff have a responsibility to contribute to the settings responsibility to protect children and encourage a 'safer working culture'.
- Staff will be expected to follow agreed procedures, without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the Manager any deficiency in the standards.
- If staff have concerns regarding the Manager or other senior staff members the board of management can be informed.
- When information is necessarily confidential it should only be made available on a "need to know" basis.
- Staff should dress appropriately for their job and give a positive image.
- **No jewellery except watches, important rings and studded earrings. No nail polish, no high heels, neat and tidy hair, minimal makeup, Staff have a duty to ensure they are presented well to work daily, clean clothes, showering and use of antiperspirant are essential when working in enclosed spaces with staff and other children.**
- Except for medical reasons, employees must not take any substances that might affect their work.
- No staff should consume or be under the influence of drink/drugs during their hours of work.
- No smoking is permitted on the premises. Best practice guidelines in relation to use of mobile phones and digital equipment
- Staff mobile phones should not be carried on the person within the rooms they should be stored in staff lockers.
- The nursery telephone number should be used as the main point of contact for staff in an emergency.
- The use of mobile phones being carried on a person or used in the crèche rooms will result in a disciplinary procedure.
- It is the responsibility of the Manager/Senior staff to approve photographs for use on displays and for marketing purposes.
- All staff must adhere to rules, regulations, policies and procedures as directed by the Board, that is:

Time keeping

Confidentiality

Positive attitude and behaviour

Reliability

Behaviour and interaction with children

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Absence from work
Flexibility
Personal Grooming

Each staff member must abide by company policy in their contracts in the first instance and thereafter the staff hand book. The following are outlines of conduct

➤ **Time Keeping**

All staff must be present at their work stations when their shift commences. All staff must strictly adhere to the time allotted for tea and lunch breaks, therefore returning to their work station promptly when their break is over.

➤ **Confidentially**

All staff must implement a confidential attitude to their role within the Crèche, therefore NO information, given or received within the work environment, may be discussed or disclosed outside of the Crèche provision. Staff must bear in mind that confidentially must be implemented within the work environment.

➤ **Positive Attitudes and Behaviour**

All staff must attend the workplace with positive attitudes and behaviour befitting their environment. We must provide good role models for the children, bearing in mind that children may pick up on negative attitudes.

➤ **Reliability**

All staff must prove to be reliable, therefore must not be absent without relevant reason and notification to the Crèche Manager and must strictly adhere to the time keeping regulations.

➤ **Behavioural and Interaction with the Children**

All staff must behave and interact professionally and appropriately with the children, taking into consideration what their individual role within the crèche.

➤ **Absence from Work**

All staff must inform the Crèche Manager of an absence from work due to sickness or other relevant reasons, at the opening time of the Crèche and to follow the Staff Sickness Leave Policy.

➤ **Flexibility**

It would be expected, valuable and greatly appreciated if all staff would prove to be flexible around their hours of work e.g.
 If a shift needs to be changed due to staffing levels
 Staff meetings etc.

- We recognise the importance of a Code of Behaviour between staff and children as recommended in *Our Duty to Care*. Our Code of Behaviour is kept under regular review.
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review. The Code of Behaviour supports all staff and volunteers to have a clear understanding of what is acceptable with respect to their behaviour with children.

- We recognise that children have an equal right to our service provision in line with the *Equal Status Acts* and the *National Disability Strategy*.
- We are committed to -
 - Valuing and respecting all children as individuals
 - Listening to children
 - Involving children in decision making as appropriate
 - Encouraging children to express themselves
 - Working in partnership with parents
 - Promoting positive behaviour
 - Valuing difference
 - Implementing and adhering to all relevant policies to keep children safe,
 - **Adult to child Ratio's**
 - 0-1year- 1:3**
 - 1-2 years- 1:5**
 - 2-3 years- 1:6**
 - 3-5 years -1:8 outside the ECCE session**
 - 3-5 years 1:11 inside the ECCE Session**
- The Code of Behaviour is given to all staff and volunteers at induction and it is expected that all staff and volunteers are familiar with the code and that they will raise any questions arising with their line manager.

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- All employees have a duty to adhere to the Code of the Behaviour and to bring breaches of the code to the attention of their line manager. Breaches of the Code of Behaviour are dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.
- Information on the service policy for managing behaviour could be included here or cross referenced with this section of the policy.

Educators working with their own children/close relative

Statement:

St Sheelan's is committed to providing a flexible work environment for its educators. In light of this, Educators are permitted to bring their children to the creche and will receive a 25% discount. However, this arrangement is subject to continuous reviews by the Board of Management of St Sheelans.

The review will consist of:

- ✚ How individual educators work with their children
- ✚ All Policies of St Sheelans are adhered to.
- ✚ The feelings of other educators and parents
- ✚ The feelings and needs of the Educators child
- ✚ Educators' children should receive the same creche experience as any other children attending the setting.
- ✚ Educators should give feedback to their child's key worker at the beginning of the day and no further discussion should take place until the end of the day (unless an emergency situation develops)
- ✚ Key workers will complete observations, scrap books, tablet entries for an Educators child. Educators will not be a key worker for their own child.
- ✚ If an Educators child becomes unwell in the service, the educator must be conscious of the staffing ratios and seek permission to leave. They may need to possibly wait until appropriate cover can be found (except in an emergency situation) alternatively they may need to use the second emergency contact for help. Educators will be able to administer medication to their own child whilst on shift all paperwork needs to be filled in appropriately.

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- ✚ Educators must still be flexible with their working shift as per their contracts as long as appropriate notice is given.
- ✚ Educators must at all times fulfil the needs of the children registered in their room. There will be times that educators will need to work directly with their own children but should be vigilant that the needs of the other children need to be met just the same. This will be reviewed regularly at board level and will be subject to change, if found to be not working in anyway educators will be assigned to another room (not their children) to keep in line with ages and stages of development.
- ✚ Educators must not make comments about the quality of care their child is receiving in the room, if they have any concerns the appropriate policy (complaints) should be followed, or the incident should be reported to the manager in confidence.
- ✚ Educators should not spend time pointing out their child to other parents or discussing or sharing photos/ videos unnecessarily.
- ✚ Educators who are friends with parents in creche should not pass information about their child or other educators' children to parents whom they are friends with.

The Agreement is based on the following principles:

- ✚ Where Educators work in the same room as their child or close relation, the set of guidelines between St Sheelan's Childcare and the member of staff should be adhered to. Also, there is a clear statement from St Sheelan's that during their time at creche the child is in the care of St Sheelan's, and it is St Sheelan's that retains the responsibility for the child and their care.
- ✚ Where the agreement is not working or is impacting on the care of the child or other children in the room, The creche Manager will reassess the situation in consultation with the Board of Management and the educator to resolve the situation.
- ✚ Educators caring for another Educators child will treat them as they would any other parent/child. No special treatment will be offered to any child or parent who has connections with St Sheelan's Childcare Centre. Where the creche Manager assesses that the agreement is not working and/or there is an impact on the care of the children in the room because of the staff members relationship with their child or close relation the nursery manager will consider moving the staff member and not the child. This will enable the child to be in the appropriate age/stage group and to continue to forge consistent relationships with other children in this group.
- ✚ Where the educator is in another room, there will be an agreement between the educator and room leader about contact with the child during creche hours. We do

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not want to restrict parents seeing children, but we must consider room routine and the visit may cause upset to the child when the parent has to leave.

- ✚ Where an educator's baby requires breast feeding this will be accommodated to suit both the mother and baby's need. Cover will be provided during this time.
- ✚ Where a manager/ deputy manager who has ultimate responsibility needs to leave the creche, this should be advised to the Manager or Director. In extreme circumstances, it may be considered that there will be no alternative but for the manager or deputy manager to stay to manage the creche, if it puts the creche in an out of ratio or vulnerable status. In this case the emergency contacts for the child should be contacted so that the child can be collected.

Policy adopted: 26/04/2023

Implemented: 27/04/23

Reviewed as needed.

St. Sheelans Crèche Child Safety Policy

St. Sheelans crèche is diligent in its provision of a safety and secure environment for all children under its care, nevertheless, in order to obtain a high level the following is a list of codes that must be adhered to by all:

- All Behaviour and Interaction with Children is in professional caring manner.
- All staff must behave and interact professionally and appropriately with the children, taking into consideration that their individual role is within the Creche.
- Staff must never engage in rough physical play with children.
- Staff must never engage in sexually provocative games or in any inappropriate contact with the children.
- Staff must never let allegations made by a child go unrecorded and must be reported to the Creche Manager.

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- All staff must encourage children to do what they can for themselves, especially of a personal nature e.g. toileting.
- No staff member must take a child from the Creche premises without the Parent/Carer(s) consent.
- Use of corporal punishment of any kind towards a child e.g. slapping, is strictly prohibited.
- The use strong language is prohibited.
- Staff must never shout at children.
- All staff should respect the children, the Parent /Carer(s) and their colleagues at all times.
- All children will be encouraged to express their own feelings in an acceptable manner and to develop their own independence and sense of autonomy. This may be achieved through adult interaction, communication and support. This will enable all children to build up their self confidence and vocabulary, hopefully leading to the child being able to resist inappropriate approaches.
- All parents and guardians are to respect all children and staff within the facility and are encouraged to take part in activities with their children.
- While here at St. Sheelans Childcare Centre we fully understand the importance of a proper balance being found between protecting the child and respecting the rights and needs of their Parent/Carer (s) and families, but all carers should be aware that this facility operates under the children first guidelines .

ANTI BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

St. Sheelans crèche try to provide a safe and enjoyable work environment and as such do not tolerate any form of Bullying or harassment to ether the staff or the clients, either from other staff members of other clients while on the premises. St. Sheelans crèche are obliged under the Employment Equality Act 1998 and the

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Health, Safety and Welfare at work Act 1989 it states that “**bullying and harassment in the work place is unlawful. According to section 32 of the Employment Equality Act 1998, grounds under which claims of harassment can be taken are sex, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, race and membership of the traveler community**”, to protect all employees from any form of bullying or harassment once identified.

Bullying and harassment can be defined as repeated inappropriate behaviour, whether it is direct or indirect, verbal, physical, psychological or otherwise.

Examples of bullying and harassment are as follows:

Verbal:

- Verbal abuse, insults and name calling
- Aggressive behaviour and the use of raised / loud voices when addressing an individual
- Constantly centering one individual as the source of fun making and jokes
- Offensive nicknames
- Humiliation in public
- Using gossip, rumour or ridicule to slander an individual’s reputation
- Constant criticism

Non-Verbal:

- Exclusion, isolation and non co-operation in the work place
- Hostility and unfriendly contact
- Unjust and unfair delegation of duties
- Taking credit for another person’s work
- Through the use of offensive gestures directed towards a colleague or their work
- Aggressive facial expressions and staring

Physical

- Horse Play
- Unwanted physical contact
- Assault

The above examples are not exhaustive. Bullying and harassment can also take place in very mild forms; however a build up of this behaviour over a period of time will lead to the same outcomes as apparent bullying and harassment.

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In St. Sheelan's Childcare Center any form of workplace bullying and harassment will not be tolerated as we believe that every employee has the right to work in an environment free from any form of bullying or harassment. This behaviour is both unwanted and unwelcome and is a direct attempt to undermine the employee's sense of value and well being both in their workplace. Under our policy an isolated incident of the above behaviour, while unpleasant and often unnecessary, is not considered to be bullying or harassment, however repeated incidents are and will be dealt with in the first instance by the Crèche Management then by the Board of Directors, except in cases where the manager is directly involved, in which case the matter will be dealt with by the board directly, however in the case such as constructive criticism by the Crèche Management of an employees conduct or work performance should not be construed as either bullying or harassment unless conduct inappropriately. Such issues will be dealt with in a fair and professional manner and according to the Crèche's staff handbook.

The Management and staff of the Crèche understand that bullying in the workplace will result in low staff morale, increased absenteeism and a reduction in the quality of service on offer. More importantly it will have a destructive effect on the loving, caring, safe environment which is so very important to the holistic development of the children attending the Crèche. Bullying and harassment leads to the loss of confidence and dignity of the individual affected by it.

The Crèche Management will respond in a caring and supportive manner to any complaints of bullying and harassment within the Crèche staff team. Complaints can be made by following the Crèche's Complaints / Compliments' Procedure. Again the Crèche Management will follow the procedures as set out in the Crèche Staff handbook. The Crèche staff also has the responsibility to make themselves familiar with this policy and more importantly to treat their colleagues with dignity and respect.

Breach of this policy on bullying and harassment can be grounds for disciplinary action and could lead to dismissal for serious offences of intimidation, bullying and harassment.

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Equal Opportunities Policy

St Sheelans Childcare Centre strive to promote equal opportunities for all those involved within the facility, this includes children, Parents/ Carers, staff and all other agencies in contact with the Crèche. By providing a high quality childcare service to all in the community by having policies in place to support and promote an equality and anti-bias approach. With which aspire that all children, Parents / Carers and staff will be treated ‘without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child’s or his or her parents or legal guardians race, colour, sex, Language, religion, political or other opinion, nationality, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.’

(UN Convention, Article 2.1)

The following support our approach:

- The Crèche will not tolerate opinions voiced in a negative way against a person’s religion, beliefs, colour, culture and language.
- The Crèche will not tolerate any actions that make a person feel isolated or rejected.
- The Crèche will not tolerate any actions that is physical or verbal harassment to another person within the facility.
- The Crèche will not tolerate any actions that deface or damage the Crèche’s or a person’s belongings or property while in the facility.
- The Crèche will not tolerate any actions that promote the imposition of a person’s views on others relating to negative racist attitudes.

Children

- The Crèche will ensure that all children will equally be given the opportunities to learn and develop at their own individual pace.
- Each child’s age and stage of development, gender, cultural and religious background, language and disabilities will be taken into account and given full consideration.
- The children will be encouraged to understand and acknowledge their own feelings and the feelings of those around them.

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Staff Responsibilities

- All staff will ensure that respect is shown to all, and that the above article is implemented fully and whole heartily.
- Staff will promote practices that will develop positive to differences of race, culture, language, gender and disabilities.
- Staff must acknowledge and take into account the feelings of the children, Parents / Carers and fellow members and must respect all.
- The Crèche management must ensure that all staff are provided with opportunities allowing them to develop to their best potential.

Staff Rights

- Each and every Crèche staff member have the right to be treated with the utmost respect and equality regardless their position, race, gender, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, nationality, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
- Each and every Crèche member has the right to be given the opportunity to develop to their full potential.
- Adequate opportunities for training will be provided to all Crèche staff members.

Parents / Carers

- The Crèche Team will ensure that all Parents / Carers will be treated with dignity and respect at all times and that the opinions and values of all Parents / Carers will be respected and given due consideration.
- The Crèche management in conjunction with the Crèche staff team will ensure that all Parents / Carers are duly informed of any relevant information with regard to the service and to the care given to their child.

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INCLUSION ANTI BIAS POLICY**ST SHEELAN'S CHILDCARE CENTRE**

Mission statement of St. Sheelans Community Childcare Centre. We are a non-profit organization aiming to provide affordable, accessible, high quality and safe childcare for the immediate and surrounding areas of Templemore. We endeavor to support children to see equality and diversity as a natural part of our setting and world. We aim to value the ability, individuality and cultural background of all children by providing each child with the opportunities they need to reach their full potential as active learners within an inclusive ethos/culture.

Policy statement

This policy represents the agreed principles and commitments for inclusion, in line with Early Childhood Care and Education National Inclusion Charter.

At St Sheelans, we achieve care and inclusion in education by continually reviewing an anti-bias approach that is implemented by the early childhood service, and by working in partnership with families, children and the early childhood team, both individually

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through reflective practice, and in consultation with children and their families, so as to ensure that the education and care provided is fully inclusive of all children, families and agencies that attend and use our service.

Our Ethos

St Sheelans will ensure an inclusive culture, recognizing that every child is an individual and has their own learning style.

We believe all children are unique, but share many similarities, thus promoting equality and diversity throughout our service.

St sheelans will promote and nurture the identity of each child attending our service and ensure their physical and emotional well-being is of paramount importance at all times.

Inclusion refers to:

A process involving a programme, curriculum or education environment where each child is welcomed and included on equal terms, can feel they belong, can progress to his/her full potential in all areas of development (National Childcare Strategy 2006-2010)

Core Principles

St Sheelans actively seeks support learning and participation that does not hinder or exclude individual children or groups of children. This means that equality of opportunity must be reality for all children attending the service. This is achieved by using a child centred equality and diversity approach to create an inclusive learning environment.

Core principals of this strategy are:

- To work in partnership with parents
- Support children's ability, Identity, cultural background and sense of belonging.
- Support children to become respectful of difference.
- Foster each child's critical thinking in order to confront bias and discrimination
- Implement a curriculum that meets the individual needs and emerging interests of the child under *Siolta: The National Quality Framework (2006)* and *Aistear: The National Curriculum Framework(2009)*.
- Respond to childrens diverse and individual learning needs and styles through an emerging curriculum.
- Support continual development for all early childhood practitioners, so as to ensure that they are trained in an equality and diversity approach to providing care and education to all.

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Early childhood practitioners work to ensure the following:

- Children feel secure and know that their contributions are valued.
- Children know they belong and are valued as unique individuals.
- All children's cultural backgrounds are respected and valued.
- Children feel strong and confident about their identity.
- Children are taught in groupings that allow them all to experience success
- Children use materials that reflect a range of social and cultural backgrounds
- Children have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles
- Children are encouraged to participate fully, having particular regard for being cognisant of children with a variety of disabilities.
- If a child uses an aid or assistive technology to communicate, that the device is used solely for this purpose.

Responsibilities of management and early childhood practitioners

- All families and children are encouraged to participate, accessing learning experiences through the curriculum on offer.
- At St Sheelans service, we promote childrens individual learning according to their stage of development in line with the Child Care Act, 1991; Child Care(Pre-School services) (No.2) Regulations 2016; Disability act 2005; Equal Status Acts 2000-2012; the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, with particular attention to Articles 29 and 30; and Children First: National Guidance for the protection and Welfare of Children 2011.

Registration policy

Please see the centres registration policy, included in your handbook for parents which contains all policies and procedures for your registration in the service.

Dealing with discriminatory incidents

- The first step in handling incidents involving discrimination is to recognize and acknowledge what is happening
- All children need to know that name-calling or physically hurting someone is unacceptable.
- Discuss with the children in a democratic and sensitive manner that name-calling or physically hurting someone is unacceptable
- When an incident occurs, both childreb learn from the incident. Refer to behavior management policy of the centre.

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- Always determine the real reason for incidents involving exclusion or conflict. It may not be a discriminatory incident, so be careful not to make assumptions.
- Some incidents may be brought into the early childhood service by the child, arising from comments made by adults outside the setting. Recognise when it is an adult issue, and identify appropriate actions for addressing the issue with the child's parents/ guardians
- An incident should be considered from the perspective of all individuals involved as well as those who witnessed it. Appropriate actions need to be taken, at circle time or in group discussion, in order to address incidents witnessed by children who were not involved, that does not mean singling out children in a group.
- By showing empathy and expressing our feelings, we help children to express their feelings,
- It is important to be aware of how our own attitudes can shape how we respond to a given situation. Be mindful that early childhood practitioners are role models for the children and the early childhood service, Children will do as we do (see eist manual-Murray and O'Doherty (2010).

Actions to be followed if the policy is not implemented

If you as a staff member or a parent, feel that this policy is not been implemented, you can follow the centres Complaints Policy and Procedure to make a complaint.

The above policy will be re-evaluated at regular intervals throughout the year. We at St Sheelans value your input.

*If you have any queries please contact the inclusion coordinator
Simone Simmons
Management: St Sheelans Childcare Centre*

Child Safe Guarding Statement

St. Sheelan's Community Childcare Centre Ltd, is a non-profit organization aiming to provide affordable, accessible, high quality and safe childcare for the immediate
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and surrounding areas of Templemore. We endeavor to support children to see equality and diversity as a natural part of our setting and world.

We Endeavour to value the ability, individuality and cultural background of all children by providing each child with the opportunities they need to reach their full potential as active learners within an inclusive ethos/culture. St Sheelan's provides activities centred on physical, intellectual, social, emotional, spiritual and holistic development, all through a play based emerging curriculum under *Siolta: The National Quality Framework (2006) and Aistear: The National Curriculum Framework(2009)*. Some of the activities provided are sensory, music and movement, mark making, imaginary play, role play, manipulative play, construction activities, small world activities, baking, nature walks and Community walks. At present we provide services for working families and low income families through DCYA childcare funding programmes e.g. CCS TEC ,CETS, CEC, and CCSP. We also provide ECCE for children from 3 years to 5 years.

St Sheelan's Community Childcare Centre ltd, is a registered Pre-school providing the following full day, part time, and sessional services in our centre, for children aged 4 months to 5 years.

The Management structure is:

- Board of Management
- Manager
- Deputy Manager
- Staff
- Community Employment staff
- Volunteers

Commitment to safeguard children from harm:

- St Sheelan's Childcare Centre is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children in our care by providing a safe environment in which they can play, learn and develop, while respecting the rights of staff and volunteers and all adults with a responsibility for children. The protection of children is paramount and takes precedence over all other concerns.
- We are committed to upholding the rights of every child and young person who attends our service, including the rights to be kept safe and protected from harm, listened to, and heard.
- Our policy and procedures to safeguard children and young people reflect national policy legislation and are underpinned by *Children first: National Guidance for the protection and welfare of children, DCYA,2017, Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Practise and Procedure, Tusla, 2018, and the Children First Act 2015.*

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- Our policy declaration applies to all paid staff, volunteers, board members and students on work placement within our organisation. All board members, staff, volunteers must sign up to and abide by the policies, procedures and guidance encompassed by this policy declaration and our child safeguarding policy and accompanying procedures.
- We will review our child safeguarding statement and accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures every 2 years or sooner if necessary, due to service issues or changes in legislation or national policy.

Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for Child protection

DLP Simone Simmons, 050456600.	Deputy Liaison Person Maria Campbell, 050456600.
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RISK ASSESSMENT:

In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, The Board of Management/Service Provider has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the service or participating in service activities. A written assessment setting out areas of risk identified and the service procedures for managing those risks is summarised below:

Risk identified	Who is responsible	What is currently in place to manage the risk	What future actions are needed
Staff	Manager DLP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection policy. • Code of conduct policy. • Garda vetting. • Recruitment. • Induction. • Child safety policy • Anti-bias inclusion policy 	Review of procedures regularly. Updates on new information /relevant information. Relevant training. Continuous professional development.
Parents	Manager DLP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection policy • Signing in and out book • Crèche security policy • Electronic screening • Partnership with parents. • Anti-bias inclusion policy 	Review of procedures and parent hand book. Information/ relevant updates information,
Visitors	Manager DLP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signing in and out book • Crèche security policy • Supervised (monitored while on the premises) • Electronic screening 	Review of procedures regularly. Informing staff through meetings. Informing visitors on arrival to the centre.

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Other Children	Manager DLP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accident incident policy • Behaviour management • Managing challenging behaviour • Biting policy • Anti-bias inclusion policy 	<p>Review of procedures regularly. Staff CPD to manage behaviour affectively.</p>
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CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

As required by the Children First Act 2015 and Children First National Guidance for protection and Welfare of children, 2017 the following safeguarding policies/procedures/ measures are in place.

- Procedure to maintain a list of Mandated persons under the Children First Act, 2015- *available in our child protection policy*
- A relevant person has been appointed: this is the Manager of the centre who is also the DLP.- *available in our child protection policy*
- A Designated Liaison person and Deputy have been appointed- *available in our child protection policy*
- Child protection and welfare reporting procedures in place- *available in our child protection policy*
- Confidentiality policy- *available in our child protection policy*
- Policy for dealing with Allegations of Abuse or Neglect Against Employees- *available in our child protection policy*
- Procedure for managing Child protection records- *available in our child protection policy*
- Recruitment policies- *available in our child protection policy*
- Garda vetting policy- *available in our child protection policy*
- Code of Behaviour for working with Children- *available in our child protection policy*
- Induction policy- *available in our child protection policy*
- Crèche security policy- *available in our child protection policy*
- Behaviour management policy- *available in our child protection policy*
- Managing challenging behaviour policy- *available in our child protection policy*
- Confidentiality policy- *available in our child protection policy*
- Child safety- *available in our child protection policy*
- Tusla e-learning programme completed by all staff.
- Relevant staff has attended Always Children First Child Protection Training.
- Staff have access to regular Supervision and support in line with the service policy.
- Complaints Policy- *available as a separate document*
- Outings policy- *available as a separate document*
- Policy for managing Accidents and incidents- *available as a separate document*
- Social Media Management Policy- *available as a separate document*

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- Sign in and out procedure- *available as a separate document*
- Drop off and collection policy- *available as a separate document*
- Anti-bias inclusion policy- *available as a separate document*

Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service. This Child Safety statement will be reviewed every 2 years or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

This statement will be on display in our service, it has been provided to all staff, volunteers and any other persons involved with the service. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this statement will be available to Tusla when requested.

Signed; _____ Chairperson Board of Management

Religion Policy

St Sheelan's Childcare Center promotes a non-denominational practice, fostering and accepting equally all cultures.

As part of our anti-bias approach we endeavor to respect each individual, the following points support the policy:

- By providing an environment where each individual child feels safe, secure and able to express themselves freely.
- Promoting a respect and knowledge within each child of various differing cultures and religions.
- Celebrating various festivals from many cultures and religions from around the world.
- Encouraging each child to experience such celebrations through the mediums of art & craft activities, story-telling, music & movement, baking and through play.

St Sheelan's Childcare Center fully understand and supports the wishes of Parents / Carers from all cultures and religious communities if they wish to keep their child out of the Crèche in order to celebrate religious events they may do so, however this will not change the payment arrangement nor the holiday breaks taken by the crèche.

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Student and Volunteer Policy

St Sheelan's will not be taking students in for the duration of Covid-19.

St Sheelans Childcare Centre will gladly offer placements to students and to volunteer workers, who have been Garda Vetted It is the responsibility of the Crèche to provide a positive and rich learning environment for all students and volunteer workers and to give such people the opportunities needed in order for them to complete relevant courses and work experience. However the following protocols are to ensure that **'good practice'** and a **safe nurturing environment** is maintained for the children and staff at **all** times.

- Students and volunteers will not be counted as part of the adult: child ratios.
- The Crèche Manager will have overall responsibility for any students and volunteer workers.
- The room leader will supervise any students and volunteer workers at all times.

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- All students and volunteer will fully understand their role and responsibilities within the Crèche.
- The Crèche requests that any college wishing to send a student on work placement should firstly make telephone contact with the Crèche Manager and secondly introduce the student in writing. Additional needs of the individual student and course content should be included.
- Photos and videos are restricted for course work only and can be viewed by staff prior to being given to tutor.
- The Crèche requests that confirmation of student insurance should be submitted to the Crèche Manager to ensure that the student is insured by the college while on placement.
- Volunteer workers should submit a letter of application to the Crèche Manager, requesting that they be considered for voluntary work.
- An interview / initial meeting will be conducted and Garda clearance will be sought for any volunteer workers.

Policy for Compliments and Complaints for Parents/ Guardians

St Sheelan's Childcare Centre Board of Directors, Crèche Management and staff team are fully dedicated in providing a service which meets the highest of standards and quality in the childcare field. However we fully appreciate that there will be occasions when Parents / Carers wish to report infringement or indeed compliment the staff team on the service provided. We work in partnership with parents by seeking their views and encouraging parents to participate in any decision making in

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relation to the service. We welcome comments/suggestions on the delivery of the service.

In the case of a Parent / Carer wishing to voice a “Complaint” or a ‘Compliment’ in relation to the service being offered to them by St Sheelan’s Childcare Centre, the following procedures are in place to ensure that your voice is heard:

Procedures for Responding to a Complaint

- We undertake to ensure all complaints are taken seriously and dealt with fairly, impartially and confidentially.
- We will endeavour to quickly and informally resolve complaints through discussion with parents and members of staff as appropriate
- Parents will be made aware that there is a complaints procedure in operation as part of enrolment/intake.
- If we find that we have made a mistake or that something could have been done better we will change the way we do things to avoid making the same mistake in future.
- Complaints can be made by parents, guardians and other advocates on behalf of children.
- If a parent is not satisfied with any aspect of the service they are requested to resolve the issue informally through discussion with the room leader /owner /manager.
- If the problem persists, re-occurs or the parent is not satisfied with the response, the complaint should be put in writing to the manager/chairperson of the Board of Management. (Contact details could be inserted including email address).
- Confidentially will be observed at all times.

All complaints will be treated seriously and with respect.

Community Services/Services with a Board of Management

- The Board of Management may then nominate a committee member to meet with the parents and the room leader/manager (as appropriate) to try and resolve the issue.

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- Most complaints are resolved at this stage. However if there are other or more serious issues arising from the complaint or it cannot be resolved then both sides may agree the need for a third party to mediate in relation to the complaint.
- Written records of discussion and agreements made will be kept of this meeting and copies made available to parents, room leader, or other involved staff (as appropriate).
- All complaints will be dealt within in a timely manner.

Other services

- If the issue still remains unresolved the owner/manager will ask the parents to put their complaint in writing to them, a further meeting may take place and agreements reached will be written up and copies forwarded to parents and other relevant personnel (as appropriate).
- Most complaints are resolved at this stage. However if there are other or more serious issues arising from the complaint then both sides may agree the need for a third party to mediate in relation to the complaint.
- Depending on the nature of the complaint the Disciplinary procedures may also be followed.

If a complaint is made to the Early Years/Pre-school Inspectorate about any aspect of this service we will co-operate fully with the Inspectorate to resolve the issue

In the event of a Parent / Carer wishing to make a compliment in regards to the Crèche provision or the care of their child, the following procedure should be followed:

Compliments:

- All personnel should acknowledge all compliments and will forward any compliments to the Crèche Manager.
- The Crèche Manager will ensure that all compliments will be passed on to those people to whom they are made and indeed will make the board aware of them.

All compliments will be treated sincerely and with gratitude.

Date Reviewed 15/03/2018

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Recruitment Policy

Statement

The Management of St Sheelan’s Childcare Centre is committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all employees will be fair, open and transparent and will comply with all relevant legislation. Personal information received is dealt with in the strictest confidence. Inclusion forms an important aspect of the recruitment of staff within the service. Applicants will not be excluded from being considered for a position based specifically on their need, background, culture, religion, gender or economic circumstances. (as pertaining to the Equality Act 2004). Positions will be offered based on competency, qualification and enthusiasm for the position.

Recruitment Procedures

Job Description

Once a vacancy occurs a detailed job description is prepared before each post is advertised and is available to all applicants. The job description includes:

- Job title
- Location of the position
- Who the employee will report to
- Overall purpose of the job
- Key area of work
- Details of specific duties and responsibilities
- Hours of work

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Person Specification

The person specification includes

- knowledge
- skills
- qualifications,
- experience
- other attributes required to carry out the job satisfactorily.

Advertising

All posts are publicly advertised in local newspapers, job markets and websites and clearly state that St Sheelans Childcare Centre is an equal opportunities employer. All advertisements include the following:

- Name and role of the organisation
- Job title
- Brief description of the job
- Location of position
- Qualifications and experience which are essential and which are desirable
- Whether the position is full time or part time, temporary or permanent
- How to apply • How to get further information
- Closing date and time for application
- Logos if appropriate, e. g. NDP, NCIP, pobal, etc.

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The Application

All applicants are sent the job description and person specification, together with the application form (if an application form is being used rather than CVs). All applicants are required to complete a Garda Vetting Request form. Completed application forms will be dated on receipt. To ensure confidentiality, only those nominated to undertake the selection will see the completed application forms.

Shortlisting

A short listing/interview panel (selection panel) with a minimum of three people is set up to review all applications. The short listing panel and the interview panel will consist of the same people as far as possible and have gender balance

- The selection panel agrees the selection criteria from the information supplied in the advertisement and the job description and before any applications are examined
- Assessment of applications is based only on information provided by the applicant
- All applicants who meet the selection criteria are invited to attend for interview
- A letter of regret is sent to all applicants who do not meet the selection criteria
- A complete report of the short listing process is prepared by the selection panel.

Selection Process

- The position is offered to the candidate with the highest mark on the score sheet, after references have been checked
- A reference is always sought from the current or most recent employer. Both referees are contacted verbally by telephone and this is followed up with a written reference.

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- The person who comes second on the score sheet is held in reserve provided she/he meets the criteria
- The successful candidate is officially notified in writing having first been contacted by telephone
- Letters of regret are sent to all unsuccessful candidates once the post has been accepted and within one week of the interviews being held.

Induction

An induction period is provided for all new employees. Employees are provided with

- Information on the role of the service/facility
- Information on the roles of other employees
- Terms and conditions of employment
- Details of salary
- Staff handbook
- Employees are obliged to familiarise themselves with the Policies and Procedures of the service and to sign up to codes of behaviour policies

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Garda Vetting Policy

St Sheelan's Childcare Centre is a member of the Early Childhood Ireland Garda Vetting Consortium through which we can avail of Garda vetting. The Early Childhood Ireland Garda Vetting Consortium acts as our Authorised Signatory.

Garda Vetting is a procedure through which An Garda Síochána is asked, with a person's permission, to disclose any information held on Garda file.

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Within current disclosure policy, details of all convictions and/or prosecutions, successful or not, pending or completed, in the State or elsewhere as the case may be are disclosed to the authorised liaison person (The Manager) in the registered organisation.

It is best practice that Garda vetting be conducted in respect of all personnel working in a fulltime, part-time or voluntary or student placement capacity in a position in the Organisation, through which they have unsupervised access to children and/or vulnerable adults.

All staff/volunteers will be re-vetted after a period of 3 years, St Sheelan's Childcare centre may also carry out random re-vetting of staff/volunteers at times that it deems appropriate.

Nominated Garda Vetting Contact Person The Nominated Garda Vetting Contact Person in St Sheelan's, is the Manager of the centre. The Nominated Garda Vetting Contact Person is registered with Early Childhood Ireland Garda Vetting Consortium. It is their role to manage all Garda vetting applications submitted by St Sheelan's Childcare Centre.

Garda Vetting Procedure The Nominated Contact Person will distribute Garda vetting forms to applicants to be completed for E-vetting. Once completed the forms will be checked for completeness by the Nominated Contact Person. In the event of an incomplete form, the form will be returned to the applicant to complete. The forms are then sent to the Authorised Signatory in Early Childhood Ireland for processing.

Once vetted, the Garda Vetting approvals along with any disclosures are returned to St Sheelan's via email, to be printed and kept on the individuals file.

Disputes Where an applicant disputes the accuracy of any detail contained in their Garda vetting disclosure, the following procedure should be followed:

- The vetting Subject should outline in writing to the nominated Contact Person the exact basis on their dispute.
- The Nominated Contact Person should submit this along with the original application form to the Authorised Signatory; In any case where there has been an error in completing the original application form, the Vetting subject should

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complete a new form and both the new and original forms should be submitted to the Authorised Signatory.

- The Authorised Signatory will submit the Vetting Subject's report along with the original application form to the GCVU for further checks;
- If following further checks, the Vetting Subject still disputes the accuracy of any detail contained in their disclosure, arrangements will be made for further enquiries to be conducted as appropriate.

The Board Of Management will assess the suitability of applicants for positions within the Organisation regarding any Garda vetting disclosures that may be received in respect of them.

The details of the disclosure will be verified with the vetting subject, who may be requested to provide further details relating to the incident(s) pertaining. If further information is required the Nominated Garda Vetting Contact Person will request same from the Authorised Signatory who will make enquiries with the Garda Central Vetting Unit. The Vetting Subject will be informed.

Data Protection Confidentiality is paramount. Any personal information relating to an applicant will be treated with the utmost care. Applicants will be treated with dignity and respect at all times. The Organisation is committed to protect the rights and privacy of individuals and is in compliance with the Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003. „The Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003 (the “Data Protection Acts”) lay down strict rules about the way in which personal data is collected, accessed, used and disclosed. The Data Protection Acts permit individuals to access their personal data on request, and gives individuals the right to have their personal data amended if found to be incorrect.” Any data received from the Garda Central Vetting Unit via the Early Childhood Ireland/ Garda Vetting Consortium, in respect of any individual is for the sole use of the Organisation. All data disclosed will be managed and protected within the statutory provision of the Data Protection Act and any other legislation that may be enacted in respect of Data Protection.

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Social Media Policy

Policy Statement

At St Sheelan's Childcare Centre, we respect the privacy of children and their families, staff and volunteers. All information relating to children and their families, staff and volunteers will be treated in a strictly confidential manner.

Information

A social media site e.g. Facebook, is used for sharing information relating to our childcare service. This will include photographs, childcare related news posts, child activity updates e.g. sample plans and sample learning stories pictures of children with permission from parents, fundraising and local childcare initiatives. The social media site will be used as an extension of the early childhood services form of communication and will not be used for personal communication for staff, committee or parents. A strict yearly review process will take place

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before the start of each pre-school year to remove all out of date images, involving children who have not attended the early childhood service for 1 year

Administration:

- The social media site is set up with a 2 administrators to approve and monitor activity on the social media site. This will be the centre Manager and a member of the board of management.
- All posts are verified in advance of being placed on the social media site by parents.
- All inappropriate posts are removed from the social media site and the user will be reported and blocked from the site.

Communication:

- The service does not use the social media site as a replacement of already established communication methods with parents.
- The social media site is a tool used for updates and sharing relevant information with parents.
- The social media site is an extension of the early childhood services form of communication; it is not used for personal communication for staff, committee or parents.

Images, videos/media packages:

- Images of individual or groups of children are not uploaded to the site without prior permission from parents this will be attached to the child registration record upon enrolment.
- Images will be taken on the service camera/ mobile phone.
- All images or videos will only be kept on the site for a maximum of 2 years; a review will be completed each year to remove old images or videos past the expiry date.
- St Sheelan's will never post an image of a child with identifying information
- **We ask parents not to share images of other people's children on their own facebook page.**
- We will ensure children are appropriately dressed before posting any image

Date Adopted: 15/03/2018

Review: yearly

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Child Protection and Welfare Policy Statement

Policy Statement:

St Sheelan's Childcare centre is committed to safeguarding the children in our care and to providing a safe environment in which they can play, learn and develop. We are committed to child centred practise in all our work with children and full compliance with *Children First* and *Our Duty to Care*. We recognise the right of children to be protected from harm, treated with respect, listened to and have their views taken into consideration in matters that affect them.

Managers, staff,volunteers and students in this service recognise that the welfare of children is paramount and our service will endeavour to safeguard children by:

- Having procedures to recognise, respond to and report concerns about children's protection and welfare.
- Having a confidentiality policy
- Having a code of behaviour for all management ,employees, students and volunteers.
- Having a safe recruitment procedure
- Having procedures for managing/supervising employees, students and volunteers
- Having a procedure to respond to accidents and incidents

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- Having a procedure to respond to complaints
- Having a procedure to respond to allegations of abuse and neglect against staff members.

As part of this policy this service will:-

- Appoint both a Designated Liaison Person for dealing with child protection concerns and a Deputy Liaison Person.
- Provide induction training on the child protection and welfare policy to all staff, volunteers students and members of the board of management.
- Ensure staff attend child protection training as appropriate.
- Provide supervision and support for staff and volunteers in contact with children.
- Share information about Child Protection and Welfare Policy with families and children.
- This policy will be shared on enrolment with our service.
- Work and cooperate with the relevant statutory agencies as required.
- This policy will be reviewed each time an incident is reported or every 2 years if that is sooner this review will be carried out by the manager of the centre and signed by a member of the board of management.

Overall Responsibility of all Employees, Board Members, Volunteers and Students

Although the Designated Liaison Person has a lead on issues relating to the protection and welfare of children, it is the responsibility of all service personnel to ensure the safety, protection and well-being of children in the care of the service. All staff, management, board members, relief staff and volunteers are required to read, understand and sign off on the Child Protection and welfare Policy. It is expected that if staff, board members or volunteers have any questions about the policy or its implementation they speak with the Designated Liaison Person.

We will ensure that all personnel:

- Are Aware of their responsibilities and their obligations under *Children First*.
- Are aware of their responsibilities for reporting concerns and/or incidents regarding the safety well-being of Children to the Designated Liaison Person.
- Attend child protection training as appropriate

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The policy is applicable at all times when children are in the care of the service, including on day trips and outings

The Policy Must be observed by:-

- Staff
- Special Needs Assistants
- Board Of Management
- Volunteers
- Students on Placement
- Visitors to the service.

Definition of a child: for the purpose of this policy a 'child' means anyone who is under 18 years of age.

Role of the Designated Liaison Person

Children First requires that every organisation providing services to children appoint a Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for reporting neglect or abuse. The DLP is responsible for dealing with child protection and welfare concerns in accordance with ***Children First*** and ***Our Duty to care***.

The Deputy DLP will be appointed by the board of management /manager to undertake the below duties when the DLP is on Leave or is unavailable for a long period of time.

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Designated Liaison Person	Deputy Designated Liaison Person
Name: Simone Simmons Position: Manager Contact Details: 0504 56600	Name: Maria Campbell Position: Deputy Manager Contact Details: 0504 56600

The Role of the DLP is to:

- Provide information and advice on child protection and welfare concerns and issues to the staff of the service.
- Be Accessible to all staff
- Ensure that they are knowledgeable about child protection and welfare and that they undertake any training considered necessary to keep updated on new developments.
- Ensure that the Child Protection and Welfare policies and procedures of the service are followed.
- Be responsible for reporting concerns About the protection and welfare of children to TUSLA- Child & Family agency or to An Garda Siochana

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- Ensure the appropriate information is included in the report to the Child and Family Agency and that the reported is submitted in writing (under confidential cover) using the standard report form.
- Liase with the Child and Family Agency, An Garda Síochána and other agencies as appropriate
- Keep relevant people within the organisation informed of relevant issues, whilst maintaining confidentiality.
- Ensure that an individual case recorded is maintained of the action taken by the service, the liaison with other agencies and the outcome.
- Advise the organisation of child protection training needs
- Maintain a central log or record of all child protection and welfare concerns in the service.

Mandated people in our service

St Sheelan's Childcare Centre is required under The Children First act 2015, to maintain a list of mandated persons in our service these people are as follows.

Title	Name	Position
Designated Liaison Person	Simone Simmons	Centre Manager

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Deputy Liaison Person	Maria Campbell	Centre Deputy Manager
Mandated Persons	Linda Nesbitt	Chairperson Board Of Management
Mandated Person	Lee-Anne Noonan	Early years Pre-school Leader
Mandated Person	Joan O' Loughlin	Early Years Wobbler Leader
Mandated Person	Amy Maher	Early Years Baby Room Leader
Mandated Person	Carmel Greed	Early Years practitioner
Mandated Person	Olivia Ryan	Early Years practitioner
Mandated Person	Elaine Quinn	Early Years practitioner
Mandated Person	Nicola Delaney	Early Years practitioner
Mandated Person	Anne-Marie Dunne	Early Years practitioner
Mandated Person	Amy Tuson	Early Years practitioner
Mandated Person	Megan Monahan	Early Years practitioner
Mandated Person	Mary-Rose Kennedy	Early Years practitioner

Recognizing, Responding and Reporting Concerns about a Child's Welfare or Possible Abuse

Recognising Concerns

- Staff and/or volunteers may at times be concerned about the general welfare and development of children they work with and they can discuss any concerns with their manager and/or Designated Liaison Person at any time.

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- All staff and volunteers should be familiar with the definitions of abuse as outlined in *Children First* (see Appendix (ii)) and the signs and symptoms of abuse (see Appendix (iii)).

In accordance with *Children First*:

- Everyone must be alert to the possibility that children with whom they are in contact may be suffering from abuse or neglect.
- The Children and Family Agency should always be informed when a person has reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, is being or is at risk of being abused or neglected. Child protection concerns should be supported by evidence that indicates the possibility of abuse or neglect.
- A concern about a potential risk to children posed by a specific person, even if the children are unidentifiable, should also be communicated to the Child and Family Agency.
- The guiding principles in regard to reporting child abuse or neglect may be summarised as follows:
 - (i) *the safety and well-being of the child must take priority*
 - (ii) *reports should be made without delay to the Child and Family Agency.*
- Any reasonable concern or suspicion of abuse or neglect must elicit a response. Ignoring the signals or failing to intervene may result in ongoing or further harm to the child.
- Section 176 of the Criminal Justice Act 2006 introduced the criminal charge of reckless endangerment of children. It states:

‘A person, having authority or control over a child or abuser, who intentionally or recklessly endangers a child by – (a) causing or permitting any child to be placed or left in a situation which creates a substantial risk to the child of being a victim of serious harm or sexual abuse, or (b)

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failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child from such a risk while knowing that the child is in such a situation, is guilty of an offence.'

The penalty for a person found guilty of this offence is a fine (no upper limit) and/or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years.

A concern could come to your attention in a number of ways:

- A child tells you or indicates that she/he is being abused. This is called a disclosure (see Appendix (iv)) for guidance on responding to a disclosure from a child)
- An admission or indication from the alleged abuser
- A concern about a potential risk to children posed by a specific person, even if the children are unidentifiable
- Information from someone who saw the child being abused
- Evidence of an injury or behaviour that is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused in any other way
- Consistent indication over a period of time that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect
- An injury or behaviour which is consistent with abuse, but an innocent explanation is given
- Concern about the behaviour or practice of a colleague.

All Personnel are expected to consult *Children First* and the *Child Protection & Welfare Practice Handbook* for detailed information on the signs and symptoms of abuse.

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Procedures for Responding to a Child Protection or Welfare Concern

- Under no circumstances should a child be left in a situation that exposes him or her to harm or risk pending Child & Family Agency intervention. In the event of an emergency and unavailability of a Duty Social Worker, the DLP will contact An Garda Síochána
- If the child has made a disclosure, a written record will be made. If there are other grounds for concern that the child has been abused or neglected, a written record will be made
- If there are reasonable grounds for concern (see Appendix (V)) the DLP will complete the Standard Report Form without delay and send it to the Duty Social Work Team in the Child and Family Agency (See below for contact details).

Duty Social Work Team, Tusla – Child & Family Agency	An Garda Síochána
Name: Sarah O’ Rourke Position: Duty Social Worker contact: 067 46600 (Nenagh) : Child and Family Agency , Unit 3, St. Camillus Hospital, Shelbourne Road, Limerick 061 588688	Name: Templemore Garda Station Contact: 0504 32630 Address: Main St, Kiltillane, Templemore, Co. Tipperary
Name: Lisa Mc Geeney Position: Tusla Officer Address: Nenagh Co. Tipperary Contact: 067 38316	

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- If the concern is urgent and the child is in immediate danger, the report to the Child & Family Agency will be made by telephone and followed up with the completed Standard Report Form.
- In the event of an emergency and the unavailability of a Duty Social Worker the DLP will contact An Garda Síochána
- The DLP may use the process of informal consultation with the Duty Social worker to discuss the response to a child protection & welfare concern and whether or not it warrants reasonable grounds for concern. Informal consultation is carried out without providing the name of the family or the child. If advised to do so, a formal report will be made.
- The DLP will record information about the concern, informal consultation (if carried out) and details regarding if and when the parents were informed.

Community Services/Services with a Voluntary Management Committee: Where there is a voluntary management committee in place, the chairperson is informed each time a referral or report is made under the Child Protection and Welfare Policy. In accordance with the confidentiality policy no identifying information is included when informing the chairperson.

Other Services: If the owner is not the DLP they are informed when a referral or a report is made under the Child Protection and Welfare Policy.

Duty Social Work

A list of all the duty social work teams can be accessed here:

<http://www.tusla.ie/services/child-protection-welfare/contact-a-social-worker>

Procedure when a referral is not made to the Child & Family Agency

- Not all concerns will meet the reasonable grounds for concern. In this case, the concern and any informal consultation will be documented and kept confidentially and securely.
- The DLP will inform the member of staff, volunteer or student who raised the concern that it is not being referred in writing, indicating the reasons. The DLP will advise the individual that they may make a report themselves or contact the Duty Social Work Team

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and that the provision of the *Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998* will apply¹.

Informing Parents about Child Protection and Welfare Concerns

- Good communication with parents is very important in ensuring best outcomes for children and any concerns about the health and well-being of a child will always be discussed with parents from the outset.
- **When a child protection concern is being reported to the Child & Family Agency, good practice indicates that parents should be informed about the report unless doing so may put the child at further risk.** The DLP may seek advice from the Child and Family Agency Social Work Department in relation to this.

Disclosure by an Adult of abuse as a child

- In relation to retrospective disclosures, it is imperative that all child protection concerns are examined and addressed.
- An increasing number of adults are disclosing abuse that took place during their childhood. If a staff member becomes aware of a retrospective concern they should follow the reporting procedure and speak with the DLP. If any risk is deemed to exist to a child who may be in contact with an alleged abuser, the service should report the concern to the Children and Family Agency without delay.
- Information about relevant support services may be provided to the adult if appropriate.

4. Confidentiality Statement

- The effective protection of a child often depends on the willingness of the staff in statutory and voluntary organisations involved with children to share and exchange relevant

¹ The Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998 provides protection from civil liability and penalisation by an employer where reports are made to designated officers in the HSE or to An Garda Síochána reasonably and in good faith.

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information. It is therefore critical that there is a clear understanding of professional and legal responsibilities with regard to confidentiality and the exchange of information.

- All information regarding concern or assessment of child abuse or neglect should be shared on 'a need to know' basis in the interests of the child with the relevant statutory authorities.
- No undertakings regarding secrecy can be given. Those working with a child and family should make this clear to all parties involved, although they can be assured that all information will be handled taking full account of legal requirements.
- Ethical and statutory codes concerned with confidentiality and data protection provide general guidance. They are not intended to limit or prevent the exchange of information between different professional staff with a responsibility for ensuring the protection and welfare of children. The provision of information to the statutory agencies for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection.
- It must be clearly understood that information gathered for one purpose must not be used for another without consulting the person who provided that information.

Responding to a Retrospective Disclosure by an Adult of abuse as a child

- In relation to retrospective disclosures, it is imperative that all child protection concerns are examined and addressed.
- An increasing number of adults are disclosing abuse that took place during their childhood. If a staff member becomes aware of a retrospective concern they should follow the reporting procedure and speak with the DLP. If any risk is deemed to exist to a child who may be in contact with an alleged abuser, the service should report the concern to the Children and Family agency without delay.
- Information about relevant support services may be provided to the adult if appropriate.

Allegations of Abuse or Neglect against Employees, Students or Volunteers:

- The protection and welfare of the children in the service are paramount and their safety and well-being is the priority. However, the service also has a duty and responsibility, as an

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employer, in respect of its employees. It is important to note that there are two procedures to be followed when an allegation of abuse or neglect is made against an employee:

1. Reporting procedure in respect of any child protection and welfare concern
2. The procedure in respect to the allegation against the employee

It is recommended that two different people are nominated to manage each procedure. In small staff teams it may be necessary to call on external people who are independent to the parties.

- In general, it is the Designated Liaison Person who is responsible for reporting the matter to the Child & Family Agency (as per the reporting procedure) while the Board Of Management is responsible for addressing the employment issues.
- If the concern meets the reasonable grounds for reporting then it should be referred without delay to the Child & Family Agency.
- To be reported to the Child and Family Agency the allegation must meet the reasonable grounds for reporting of a concern, informal consultation with the Child & Family Agency may be used to determine if reasonable grounds are present.
- Where there is a Board of Management, they are the employer; otherwise the owner of the service is the employer.
- All staff and volunteers in the service should be aware of who to contact should they become aware of an allegation of abuse or neglect against any employee in the service.
 - Written records are very important: If a disclosure is made by a child, a written record of the disclosure should be made as soon as possible by the person receiving it. Where an allegation of abuse or neglect is made by an adult, a written record of the allegation should be made and a written statement should be sought from this person.
 - Where an employer becomes aware of an allegation of abuse by an employee while executing their duties, an employer should privately inform the employee of the following:
 - (i) The fact that an allegation has been made against him/her
 - (ii) The nature of the allegation.

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The employee should be afforded the opportunity to respond; the response should be noted and passed onto the Child & Family Agency with the formal report.

- All stages of the process should be recorded.
- An investigation may be required and the policy should note who will carry this out, the time involved and any appeal process. In small staff teams, independent, external parties may be called upon.
- Whether or not the matter is being reported to the Child & Family Agency, the employer is always informed of an allegation of abuse or neglect against an employee.
- Confidentiality: It is essential that at all times the matter is treated in the strictest confidence and that the identity of the employee is not disclosed, other than as required under the procedures within the policy.
 - Protective measures may be required while the allegation is being investigated. The principles of natural justice, the presumption of innocence and fair procedures should be adhered to. It is very important to note protective measures are intended to be precautionary and not disciplinary.
 - The employer should maintain regular and close liaison with the Child & Family Agency and or An Garda Síochána and ensure that no action by the service frustrates or undermines any investigation.
 - Further action will be guided by employment legislation, the contract of employment, the other policies and procedures of the service (including the disciplinary policy) and the advice of the investigating agencies.
 - *It is recommended that services always seek legal advice when dealing with allegations of abuse or neglect against an employee.*

Parents and allegation of abuse or neglect against employees

- Parents have the right to contact the Child & Family Agency to report an allegation of abuse or neglect about the employee or service.

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- Parents of children who are named in an allegation of abuse or neglect will be kept informed of actions planned and taken, having regard to the rights of others concerned.
- If there is any concern that a child may have been harmed their parents will be informed immediately.

Record Keeping

Record Keeping Policy

Policy Statement

At St Sheelan's we endeavour to maintain all records according to the Child Care(Pre-school services) Regulations 2006 to ensure the health and safety of staff and children, and to promote the learning development of all children who attend our service.

- All records will be factual and written impartially.
- Under *the freedom of information act 1997*, parents will have access to all records pertaining to their child alone.
- Staff members will only have access to records of children in their care and will be used to inform staff on how best to meet the needs of each child and plan for further learning.
- The Early Years(Preschool) inspectorate will have access to files for inspection purposes.
- The service will only share information with other professionals or agencies, with consent from parents or without their consent in terms of legal responsibility in relation to child protection and welfare of the child.
- Staff follow *Aistear and Siolta the national quality guidelines and framework for early childhood education* in relation to various aspects of record keeping within the service

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- Where there is child protection or welfare concerns, observations /records will be kept on an ongoing basis and information shared with the Child and Family Agency as appropriate. These records will be stored and locked into a filing cabinet in the Managers office.
- **Health and Safety**
- Records will be maintained in relation to medical administration and accident report forms which will be co signed by parents / guardians and staff.
- Written parental consent is obtained to allow the service to seek medical assistance for a child in case of an emergency.
- Information on children’s allergies will be displayed in their play area and in the kitchen so that all staff are aware of allergies.
- The daily arrival and departure time of each child is recorded in the “sign in book” which is situated at the worktop in each room.

Records relating to children

Register of Pre-School Children

- *A register of every child attending the service is maintained*
- *The information on the register will be updated accordingly.*

Observation, Assessment and Programme Planning

- Staff use regular observation and assessment as a means of supporting and planning for children’s learning and development. Observations and assessments are recorded in the form of written observations and discussion, photos and the use of children’s work in individual scrap books for each child. These will in turn be shared regularly with staff and parents to ensure a cohesive approach to ensuring the needs of each child are met.
- A record of the planned programme / activities is clearly documented through short, medium and long term plans. Observations and assessment records are used to inform the plans and ensure that activities are suitable for the age, stage and interests of children in the service.
- Daily information will be recorded and shared with parents / guardians in the baby and wobbler rooms outlining settling in periods, food and drink, nappy changes, sleep etc. Staff Records

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- A recruitment policy and procedure is in place.
- Records outlining the name, position, qualification and experience of each staff member, volunteer and student are maintained.
- Records are kept in relation to all documents and records relating to Garda vetting and references from previous employers for all staff members.
- Written records are kept relating to staff appraisals and supervision.
- The daily arrival, departure and meal break times of each staff member is recorded
- All staff records are strictly confidential (see confidentiality policy).

Records Related to the Running of the Service Include:

- Details of the maximum number of children catered for at any one time.
- Details of the type of service and age range of children using the service
- Staff/Child ratio's within the service..
- An outline of the type of programme under which the service operates
- Opening hours and fees.
- Policies and procedures currently in place. • Daily attendance register of all children present in the centre.
- Staff roster.
- Details of any accident, injury or incident involving any of the children attending the service.

Fire Safety:

- A written record will be kept of (a) All fire drills which take place on the premises (b) The number, type and maintenance record of fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.. Hygiene: • A cleaning programme and schedule for furniture, work and play equipment is in place. (See Appendices 2 and 3).

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- Food hygiene practices are guided and recorded under the principles of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) and the Food Hygiene Regulations 1950 – 89 and the European Communities (Hygiene of Foodstuffs) Regulations 2000.
 - Each child has their own linen for use during sleep / rest periods. In cases where cots or mattresses are shared, linen is changed each time it is used. All linen changes are documented
- For retention of records in our service please see hard copy of Policies in Managers office

Code of Behaviour

Code of Conduct Policy

Policy Statement

St. Sheelans Crèche endeavours to provide high quality childcare services and we employ high quality staff so that our staff can provide good role models and can incorporate all codes of best practice and good behaviour practices to ensure a safe, caring and nurturing environment for all children to develop holistically. This is achievable by following these simple practices:

- All staff must respect and value one another, the children, parents/ Carers and all other agencies involved with the crèche provision, without any discrimination or bias.
- All staff must conduct themselves as noted in their contracts and staff handbook

Guiding principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All staff are responsible to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. This responsibility extends to a duty of care for those adults employed, commissioned or contracted to work with children and young people.

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- Staff who work with children are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Staff should work and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.
- The same professional standards should always be applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.
- Staff should continually monitor and review their practice and ensure they follow the guidance contained in this document.

Code of conduct examples

- All staff must recognise and respect the value and intrinsic worth of each child and family, regardless of economic or social background.
- All children and families deserve respect and understanding.
- Early years practitioners are responsible for nurturing and educating young children as well as providing information and support to parents.
- Early years practitioners should seek to improve their understanding of the development of young children through ongoing education and collaboration with colleagues.
- Early years workers have a responsibility to understand and adhere to current legislation and guidance that supports their role.
- All staff have a responsibility to contribute to the settings responsibility to protect children and encourage a ‘safer working culture’.
- Staff will be expected to follow agreed procedures, without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the Manager any deficiency in the standards.
- If staff have concerns regarding the Manager or other senior staff members the board of management can be informed.
- When information is necessarily confidential it should only be made available on a “need to know” basis.

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- Staff should dress appropriately for their job and give a positive image.
- **No jewellery except watches, important rings and studded earrings. No nail polish, no high heels, neat and tidy hair, minimal makeup.**
- Except for medical reasons, employees must not take any substances that might affect their work.
- No staff should consume or be under the influence of drink/drugs during their hours of work.
- No smoking is permitted on the premises. Best practice guidelines in relation to use of mobile phones and digital equipment
- Staff mobile phones should not be carried on the person within the rooms they should be stored in staff lockers.
- The nursery telephone number should be used as the main point of contact for staff in an emergency.
- The use of mobile phones being carried on a person or used in the crèche rooms will result in a disciplinary procedure.
- It is the responsibility of the Manager/Senior staff to approve photographs for use on displays and for marketing purposes.
- All staff must adhere to rules, regulations, policies and procedures as directed by the Board, that is:

Time keeping

Confidentiality

Positive attitude and behaviour

Reliability

Behaviour and interaction with children

Absence from work

Flexibility

Personal Grooming

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Each staff member must abide by company policy in their contracts in the first instance and thereafter the staff hand book. The following are outlines of conduct

➤ **Time Keeping**

All staff must be present at their work stations when their shift commences. All staff must strictly adhere to the time allotted for tea and lunch breaks, therefore returning to their work station promptly when their break is over.

➤ **Confidentially**

All staff must implement a confidential attitude to their role within the Crèche, therefore NO information, given or received within the work environment, may be discussed or disclosed outside of the Crèche provision. Staff must bear in mind that confidentially must be implemented within the work environment.

➤ **Positive Attitudes and Behaviour**

All staff must attend the workplace with positive attitudes and behaviour befitting their environment. We must provide good role models for the children, bearing in mind that children may pick up on negative attitudes.

➤ **Reliability**

All staff must prove to be reliable, therefore must not be absent without relevant reason and notification to the Crèche Manager and must strictly adhere to the time keeping regulations.

➤ **Behavioural and Interaction with the Children**

All staff must behave and interact professionally and appropriately with the children, taking into consideration what their individual role within the crèche.

➤ **Absence from Work**

All staff must inform the Crèche Manager of an absence from work due to sickness or other relevant reasons, at the opening time of the Crèche and to follow the Staff Sickness Leave Policy.

➤ **Flexibility**

It would be expected, valuable and greatly appreciated if all staff would prove to be flexible around their hours of work e.g.

If a shift needs to be changed due to staffing levels

Staff meetings etc.

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- We recognise the importance of a Code of Behaviour between staff and children as recommended in *Our Duty to Care*. Our Code of Behaviour is kept under regular review. The Code of Behaviour supports all staff and volunteers to have a clear understanding of what is acceptable with respect to their behaviour with children.
- We recognise that children have an equal right to our service provision in line with the *Equal Status Acts* and the *National Disability Strategy*.
- We are committed to -
 - Valuing and respecting all children as individuals
 - Listening to children
 - Involving children in decision making as appropriate
 - Encouraging children to express themselves
 - Working in partnership with parents
 - Promoting positive behaviour
 - Valuing difference
 - Implementing and adhering to all relevant policies to keep children safe
 - **Adult to child Ratio's**

0-1year- 1:3

1-2 years- 1:5

2-3 years- 1:6

3-5 years -1:8 outside the ECCE session

3-5 years 1:11 inside the ECCE Session

- The Code of Behaviour is given to all staff and volunteers at induction and it is expected that all staff and volunteers are familiar with the code and that they will raise any questions arising with their line manager.

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- All employees have a duty to adhere to the Code of the Behaviour and to bring breaches of the code to the attention of their line manager. Breaches of the Code of Behaviour are dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.
- Information on the service policy for managing behaviour could be included here or cross referenced with this section of the policy.

Safe Recruitment

Recruitment Policy

Statement

The Management of St Sheelan's Childcare Centre is committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all employees will be fair, open and transparent and will comply with all relevant legislation. Personal information received is dealt with in the strictest confidence. Inclusion forms an important aspect of the recruitment of staff within the service. Applicants will not be excluded from being considered for a position based specifically on their need, background, culture, religion, gender or economic circumstances. (as pertaining to the Equality Act 2004). Positions will be offered based on competency, qualification and enthusiasm for the position.

Recruitment Procedures

- We will ensure that all staff and volunteers are carefully selected in line with the Service Recruitment Policy and the Child Care (Pre-school Services) Regulations 2006. The following will be undertaken:

Job Description

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Once a vacancy occurs a detailed job description is prepared before each post is advertised and is available to all applicants. The job description includes:

- Job title
- Location of the position
- Who the employee will report to
- Overall purpose of the job
- Key area of work
- Details of specific duties and responsibilities
- Hours of work

Person Specification

The person specification includes

- knowledge
- skills
- qualifications,
- experience
- other attributes required to carry out the job satisfactorily.

Advertising

All posts are publicly advertised in local newspapers, job markets and websites and clearly state that St Sheelans Childcare Centre is an equal opportunities employer. All advertisements include the following:

- Name and role of the organisation

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- Job title
- Brief description of the job
- Location of position
- Qualifications and experience which are essential and which are desirable
- Whether the position is full time or part time, temporary or permanent
- How to apply • How to get further information
- Closing date and time for application
- Logos if appropriate, e. g. NDP, NCIP, pobal, etc.

The Application

All applicants are sent the job description and person specification, together with the application form (if an application form is being used rather than CVs). All applicants are required to complete a Garda Vetting Request form. Completed application forms will be dated on receipt. To ensure confidentiality, only those nominated to undertake the selection will see the completed application forms.

Shortlisting

A short listing/interview panel (selection panel) with a minimum of three people is set up to review all applications. The short listing panel and the interview panel will consist of the same people as far as possible and have gender balance

- The selection panel agrees the selection criteria from the information supplied in the advertisement and the job description and before any applications are examined
- Assessment of applications is based only on information provided by the applicant
- All applicants who meet the selection criteria are invited to attend for interview
- A letter of regret is sent to all applicants who do not meet the selection criteria

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- A complete report of the short listing process is prepared by the selection panel.

Selection Process

- The position is offered to the candidate with the highest mark on the score sheet, after references have been checked
- A reference is always sought from the current or most recent employer. Both referees are contacted verbally by telephone and this is followed up with a written reference.
- The person who comes second on the score sheet is held in reserve provided she/he meets the criteria
- The successful candidate is officially notified in writing having first been contacted by telephone
- Letters of regret are sent to all unsuccessful candidates once the post has been accepted and within one week of the interviews being held.
- Any child protection and welfare concerns that arise through the recruitment process should be dealt with through the reporting procedures above.
- All new appointments should be subject to a probationary period for a 6 month period and a review meeting held before the post is confirmed.
- All employees will be provided with an employment contract within one month of employment

Personnel File

An up-to-date and accurate personnel file is kept for each member of staff that includes the following records:

- proof of identity and that the person is over 18 years of age
- proof of satisfactory Garda Vetting
- two validated references, including a reference from the most recent place of
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- employment
- verification of qualifications
- Investigation of any gaps in employment

Induction, Training and Supervision/Support

Induction Policy

At St. Sheelans Childcare Centre we feel that a good induction programme helps to ensure that the children have a confident and competent team of carers, working together in a consistent manner and in such a way that their health, safety, welfare, education and care needs are met.

Induction for new employees, students and volunteers:

- As part of the induction process, all new management, staff, volunteers and students will be briefed on all the elements of the Child Protection and Welfare Policy including the ethos of the service, child centred practice and the Code of Behaviour, within the first week of employment.
- All management, staff, volunteers and students will be required to commit to and abide by the Child Protection and Welfare Policy. They are required to confirm that they have read and understand the Child Protection and Welfare Policy with their signature.

Training on Child Protection:

- The DLP and deputy DLP will be released to attend *Always Children First* Training and/or other relevant training as identified and we will ensure that the DLP and Deputy DLP attend child protection training every 3 years.
- All management, staff and volunteers will be encouraged to attend child protection and other relevant training as identified.

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- Staff will be provided with information in relation to particular skills training to encourage professional development and best practice.

Staff Supervision and Support

- Regular supervision and support is available to staff and volunteers, through one to one meetings or group meetings.
- Staff will be supported while dealing with a child protection concern and outside support will be sought where necessary, the costs of this will be borne by the company.

The initial part of the induction process will be carried out by the manager, on the premises prior to commencing work, this part of the programme will include;

- Showing the new employee, student or volunteer where everything is and what happens in each area.
- Introductions to the children, colleagues and as much as possible, the families of the children attending.
- Information about the services policies practises, routines and quality standards through the Staff Handbook, Policies and Procedures of the centre, Child Protection and Welfare Policy and Health and Safety information.
- Explaining our curriculum and how play and learning experiences in the centre are planned, implemented and evaluated.
- Clarify their roles, what the job will involve and what is expected of them, also to clarify the roles and responsibilities of others in the centre.
- Pay and leave arrangements.
- Identifying each individual's strengths and needs e.g. training or ability to shadow an existing staff member, in order to help them fulfil their role in the centre.
- Contracts and policy agreements.

The induction process will continue when work commences, depending on the role of the new staff member, this is usually carried out by the Room Leader of the room to which

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they are assigned. The manager will also be available for any questions, difficulties and support. The Room Leader will support and observe the new staff member in working with the children and their parents, working alongside existing staff and becoming part of the team. Existing staff members will be clear about their roles with regard to the new employee and have clear expectations. The manager will meet with the new employee on a regular and agreed basis to discuss their progress on settling into the centre.

Each induction process will be tailored to the needs of each individual and is based on their levels of experience and their role within the centre. The length of each induction will vary so that each individual is a confident and competent member of the team.

Policy for Complaints, compliments

Policy for Compliments and Complaints for Parents/ Guardians

St Sheelan's Childcare Centre Board of Directors, Crèche Management and staff team are fully dedicated in providing a service which meets the highest of standards and quality in the childcare field. However we fully appreciate that there will be occasions when Parents / Carers wish to report infringement or indeed compliment the staff team on the service provided. We work in partnership with parents by seeking their views and encouraging parents to participate in any decision making in relation to the service. We welcome comments/suggestions on the delivery of the service.

In the case of a Parent / Carer wishing to voice a "Complaint" or a 'Compliment' in relation to the service being offered to them by St Sheelan's Childcare Centre, the following procedures are in place to ensure that your voice is heard:

Procedures for Responding to a Complaint

- We undertake to ensure all complaints are taken seriously and dealt with fairly, impartially and confidentially.
- We will endeavour to quickly and informally resolve complaints through discussion with parents and members of staff as appropriate

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- Parents will be made aware that there is a complaints procedure in operation as part of enrolment/intake.
- If we find that we have made a mistake or that something could have been done better we will change the way we do things to avoid making the same mistake in future.
- Complaints can be made by parents, guardians and other advocates on behalf of children.
- If a parent is not satisfied with any aspect of the service they are requested to resolve the issue informally through discussion with the room leader /owner /manager.
- If the problem persists, re-occurs or the parent is not satisfied with the response, the complaint should be put in writing to the manager/chairperson of the Board of Management. (Contact details could be inserted including email address).
- Confidentially will be observed at all times.

All complaints will be treated seriously and with respect.

Community Services/Services with a Board of Management

- The Board of Management may then nominate a committee member to meet with the parents and the room leader/manager (as appropriate) to try and resolve the issue.
- Most complaints are resolved at this stage. However if there are other or more serious issues arising from the complaint or it cannot be resolved then both sides may agree the need for a third party to mediate in relation to the complaint.
- Written records of discussion and agreements made will be kept of this meeting and copies made available to parents, room leader, or other involved staff (as appropriate).
- All complaints will be dealt within in a timely manner.

Other services

- If the issue still remains unresolved the owner/manager will ask the parents to put their complaint in writing to them, a further meeting may take place and agreements reached will be written up and copies forwarded to parents and other relevant personnel (as appropriate).

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- Most complaints are resolved at this stage. However if there are other or more serious issues arising from the complaint then both sides may agree the need for a third party to mediate in relation to the complaint.
- Depending on the nature of the complaint the Disciplinary procedures may also be followed.

If a complaint is made to the Early Years/Pre-school Inspectorate about any aspect of this service we will co-operate fully with the Inspectorate to resolve the issue

In the event of a Parent / Carer wishing to make a compliment in regards to the Crèche provision or the care of their child, the following procedure should be followed:

Compliments:

- All personnel should acknowledge all compliments and will forward any compliments to the Crèche Manager.
- The Crèche Manager will ensue that all compliments will be passed on to those people to whom they are made and indeed will make the board aware of them.

All compliments will be treated sincerely and with gratitude.

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Management of Day Trips/Outings from Service

Outings policy

St Sheelan's Childcare Centre aims to provide children with a varied and wide experience and from time to time the service may organize day trips and outings. It is our policy to ensure the safety and well-being of children during these activities through planning, risk assessment, management and supervision of the activity.

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Managing Routine Outings

St Sheelan's Service uses the facilities in park/playground/ library when weather permits. In managing and planning these activities we will:

- Inform parents at enrolment of the proposed activity, method of travel and supervision in place
- Seek written consent from the parents; children will not be able to participate in this activity unless this has been obtained
- Ensure an adequate number of personnel are present and that the children are supervised at all times
- Ensure that the person in charge will have access to a mobile phone in case of emergency
- A risk assessment of the venue/facility will be carried out and reviewed annually
- Ensure that adequate insurance is in place for the outing
- Ensure staff are familiar with emergency procedures
-

Managing and Planning Day Trips/Outings

This service aims to provide children with a varied and wide experience and from time to time the service will organize Day Trips. The following will be considered in planning these activities.

- All trips and outings will be planned in advance and a risk assessment will be carried out with regard to the following issues: safety in regard to method of transport, facilities, activities, accessibility for children with additional needs and emergencies.
- We will ensure that the method of transport complies with relevant safety requirements and insurance.
- We will ensure that adequate insurance is in place and that appropriate staff/child ratios are maintained in line with the pre-school regulations and the risk assessment.

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- An outline of the details of the trip and related activities will be supplied in writing to parents and written consent by a parent specifically for each trip will be obtained. Parents will be asked to provide information about any allergies that their child has.
- Where appropriate, parents may be invited to accompany their children on trips.
- If all staff are leaving the service, emergency contacts for all children will be brought on the trip.
- Children will be appropriately supervised at all times and the relevant adult/child ratios maintained.
- Safety Measures such as frequent head counts/roll calls at key stages, name tags, hats, armbands may be used as appropriate.
- Before leaving the outings book must be filled in stating;
 - Names of staff and children
 - Time they are going
 - Where they are going
 - Telephone numbers they can be contacted at.
- Staff must make sure that all the children have suitable clothing and allow for weather changes.
- A role call will be done;
 - On leaving the center
 - On arrival at the destination
 - On leaving the destination
 - On return to the center.

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Managing Emergencies and Critical Incidents

- A first aid box will be brought and a person with a First Aid certificate will be present
- The person in charge will have access to the service mobile phone in case of emergency
- The service does its up most to minimize risk and ensure the safety of all children at all times. However, it is important that staff are prepared for any emergencies that may arise and in this regard, a plan to deal with emergencies (such as critical incidents or an incident involving a missing child) will be developed for each outing. Staff will be reminded of any relevant policies and procedures prior to the day trip.

Dealing with Accidents or Incidents

ACCIDENT / INCIDENT POLICY

Policy Statement

At St Sheelan's Childcare Centre, It is our policy to promote the health, well-being and safety of all the children in our service through the implementation of robust policies and procedures and by developing and regularly reviewing accident prevention procedures and fire safety. Although we adhere to all safety precautions and guidelines, accidents may occur.

However, in the event of an accidents / incidents occurring relevant staff have been fully trained in PHECC First Aid Response, and we have a protocols in place to deal with these situations. In the event that an accident/incident occurring the following procedures are enacted:

Responding to an Accident or Incident

- First aid will be directly administered, from the smallest bump to more serious injuries, by a qualified First Aider. If there is a need for medical attention then the parents of a child will be contact and the same time as further medical attention, in the form of a doctor or ambulance.

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- We will ensure that all personnel are aware of emergency numbers and that they are prominently displayed.
 - We will ensure that all relevant personnel have up to date First Aid Training and that a complete First Aid Box is accessible.
 - The safety and welfare of the child is always the first consideration if a child is injured or an accident occurs.
- After an accident, as soon as practicable, the accident Report Form is completed and recorded in the accident book/log. The member (s) of staff who dealt with the situation will be required to complete the Accident / Incident Report Book.
- The Accident / Incident Report Book will require such information:
- the individual's name
 - home address
 - the date and time of the accident / incident
 - a description of the accident / incident
 - the location where the accident / incident occurred
 - a perceived cause of the accident / incident
 - what staff members and other adults were present
 - what immediate action was taken and by whom
 - what remedial action was taken
 - the name of the individual's Parent / Carer if applicable,
 - who informed the individual's Parent / Carer if applicable
- The staff member, manager and parents will be asked to sign the report.
- A copy of this report will be put in the individual's file e.g. if they are a member of staff or a child attending the Crèche.

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- The manager/owner/chairperson is informed of serious accidents or incidents.
- Parents are always informed of incidents or accidents involving their child and requested to sign the relevant form.
- A risk assessment will be carried out after each accident/ incident.
- The Manager will review the accident and incident reports annually.

Social Media Policy

Social Media Policy

Policy Statement

At St Sheelan's Childcare Centre, we respect the privacy of children and their families, staff and volunteers. All information relating to children and their families, staff and volunteers will be treated in a strictly confidential manner.

Information

A social media site e.g. Facebook, is used for sharing information relating to our childcare service. This will include photographs, childcare related news posts, child activity updates e.g. sample plans and sample learning stories pictures of children with permission from parents, fundraising and local childcare initiatives. The social media site will be used as an extension of the early childhood services form of communication and will not be used for personal communication for staff, committee or parents. A strict yearly review process will take place

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before the start of each pre-school year to remove all out of date images, involving children who have not attended the early childhood service for 1 year

Administration:

- The social media site is set up with a 2 administrators to approve and monitor activity on the social media site. This will be the centre Manager and a member of the board of management.
- All posts are verified in advance of being placed on the social media site by parents.
- All inappropriate posts are removed from the social media site and the user will be reported and blocked from the site.

Communication:

- The service does not use the social media site as a replacement of already established communication methods with parents.
- The social media site is a tool used for updates and sharing relevant information with parents.
- The social media site is an extension of the early childhood services form of communication; it is not used for personal communication for staff, committee or parents.

Images, videos/media packages:

- Images of individual or groups of children are not uploaded to the site without prior permission from parents this will be attached to the child registration record upon enrolment.
- Images will be taken on the service camera/ mobile phone.
- All images or videos will only be kept on the site for a maximum of 2 years; a review will be completed each year to remove old images or videos past the expiry date.
- St Sheelan's will never post an image of a child with identifying information
- **We ask parents not to share images of other people's children on their own facebook page.**
- We will ensure children are appropriately dressed before posting any image.
- **of Appendices**

There is some information which must be included in your **Child Protection and Welfare Policy** and it is recommended that this is not changed in anyway. The recommended Appendices are listed below:

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Additional appendices may be required and it can be a useful way of keeping all the forms related to the child protection and welfare policy together.

Appendix (i) Standard Report Form (see <http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/publications-and-forms>)

Appendix (ii) Definitions of Abuse from *Children First* (pp. 8-11)

Appendix (iii) Signs and Symptoms of Abuse from *Children First* (pp. 70-74)

Appendix (iv) Guidance on responding to a disclosure from the *Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook* (Chapter 2: 2.5. page 32-33)

Appendix (v) Reasonable Grounds for Reporting a Child Protection & Welfare concern from the *Child Protection and Welfare Practice Handbook* (Chapter 2: 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 page 30-31)

This document can be found in our policies and procedures document, it has been provided to all staff, volunteers and anyone else involved in our service. It is readily accessible to parents and guardians on request. A copy of this document will be readily available to Tusla on request

Signed: Noel Colleran _____ Chairperson Board Of Management

Date: _____

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Data Protection Policy and Procedures

St Sheelan's Childcare Centre

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INTRODUCTION

Why This Policy Exists

St Sheelan's Childcare Centre (hereafter referred to the "Service") needs to gather and use certain information about individuals.

These can include parents/guardians, children, clients, suppliers, business contacts, employees, and other people the organisation has a relationship with or may need to contact. This policy describes how this personal data must be collected, handled, and stored to meet the organisation's data protection standards — and to comply with the law.

The purpose of this document is to explain to staff and employees what can and cannot be done with this information and **forms an essential part of awareness training for all staff.**

This data protection policy ensures that the Service:

- Complies with data protection law and follow good practice,
- Protects the rights of staff, clients and partners,
- Is open about how it stores and processes individuals' data, and
- Protects itself from the risks of a data breach.

See also the policy on the use of the Internet and Photographic and Recording Devices in main policy document as required under the Child Care Act 1991 [Early Years Services] Regulations 2016.

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Safeguarding Against Data Protection and Security Risks

This policy helps to protect the Service from some very real data security risks, including:

- **Breaches of security and confidentiality.** For instance, information being given out inappropriately.
- **Reputational damage.** For instance, the Service could suffer if hackers successfully gained access to sensitive data.
- The risk of **large fines** or sanctions being imposed by the authorities.
- The **risks of being sued** for damages by individuals whose data has been mishandled.

DATA PROTECTION LAW AND CORE PRINCIPLES

The Laws

The Data Protection Acts of 1988 and 2003 (the "Data Protection Acts") and the 2016 General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR") describe how organisations including our Service must collect, handle, and store personal information.

These rules apply regardless of whether data is stored electronically, on paper, or on other materials.

To comply with the law, personal information must be collected and used fairly, stored safely, and not disclosed unlawfully.

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The Data Protection Acts and the GDPR are underpinned by eight important principles. These, and a description of how they are implemented within the Service, are described below.

The Principles - Management of Personal Data

All personal data collected and held by the Service must be managed strictly within the eight guiding principles as set out in the GDPR. **Personal Data must be:**

- **Processed Fairly and Lawfully**

At the time we collect information about individuals, they are made aware of the uses for that information. Where information is disclosed to third parties, this is also set out and explained. This information is set out in the Service's **Privacy Notices**.

- **Processed Only for Specific Lawful Purposes**

Personal information is only kept for clearly described and explicit purposes. The types of information retained and the specific purposes it is used for and details of any third-party disclosures are set out in the Service's **Register of Personal Data Records**.

- **Adequate, Relevant, and Not Excessive**

The Service collects sufficient information to provide an early childhood care and education service to children and their families. The data collected is set out in our Privacy Notices and Register of Personal Data Records.

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- **Kept Accurate and Up-to-Date**

The personal data that the service collects is checked for accuracy at the time of first collection, and the data subjects (e.g. parents, guardians, staff and others) are given the opportunity to update information freely whenever they are in contact with the service over the duration of the period that they attend (children, parents. Guardians) or work in the service (staff).

Personal information is retained for such time as required to provide the required services to staff and clients - or to comply with the relevant industry standards, legal requirements or guidelines. These are set out in detail in the Service's **Personal Data Register with the associated retention guidelines**. Once data has reached the retention threshold, it will be authorised for secure disposal and/or deletion.

- **Processed in Accordance with the Rights of Data Subjects**

Where staff or clients wish to exercise their subject rights in terms of Data Access, correction, or erasure this will be honoured as set out in the Service's **Subject Access Request handling procedure**.

- **Kept Secure and Protected in Appropriate Ways**

All personal information held within the Service is kept securely, and protected as described below under Information Security Guidelines, and set out in more detail in the Service's **Information Security Overview** document.

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- **Protected Against Transfer to Countries Without Adequate Safeguards**

No personal data is currently transferred outside the European Economic Area (EEA). If this ceases to be the case, appropriate measures will be taken to ensure the necessary safeguards are put in place and that the target country or territory can guarantee an adequate level of protection

Personal Data and Handling of Special Categories (Sensitive) Personal Data

Personal Data

Under GDPR, '**Personal Data**' means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person ('data subject').

In other words, any information that is clearly about a particular person. In certain circumstances, this could include anything from someone's name to their physical appearance.

The definition is wide ranging but typically within the child-care environment would include:

- Names of individuals
- Postal addresses
- Email addresses
- Telephone numbers
- Photographs
- PPSN numbers

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- Staff and Parent's Bank Account details

and any and all other information relating to individuals.

Special Categories of Personal Data

This is a particular set of sensitive data that can only be collected and used if specific conditions have been met and which must be treated with extra security.

The categories are:

- Racial or ethnic origin;
- Political opinions;
- Religious or philosophical beliefs;
- Trade union membership;
- Genetic data;
- Biometric data (where processed to uniquely identify someone);
- Data Concerning health; or
- Data concerning a natural person's sex life or sexual orientation.

Under GDPR, processing of these special categories of information is prohibited unless certain conditions have been met.

Within the Early Years environment this means that **you must obtain explicit consent from the data-subject** - i.e. the staff member, or parent/guardian(s) - in each case.

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You must take care to obtain this consent at the time an employee first joins the Service or when a parent/guardian or parents/guardians register their child using the appropriate application or registration forms.

The records of consent should be retained securely for the periods recommended in the **Data Retention Procedure [i.e as outlined in the Data Retention Form Appendix VIII]**

RESPONSIBILITIES AND COMPLIANCE

Policy Scope

Everyone who works for or with the Service has responsibility for ensuring data is collected, stored, and handled appropriately. Each person that handles personal data must ensure that it is handled and processed in line with this policy and data protection principles. Specific responsibilities are outlined in more detail below.

Management

Persons with responsibility for the implementation of the policy are as follows:

Manager/ Data Protection Officer: Simone Simmons

Data Controller: Simone Simmons

Child Protection Designated Liaison Person: Simone Simmons

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- Management will ensure that the basic principles of data protection are explained to staff and parents/guardians. This will be done during staff induction, staff meetings and if possible, through the Service's parent handbook/notice board.
- There are regular updates to data protection awareness, so that data protection is a “living” process aligned to the way the service conducts its business.
- The Data Controller will periodically check data held regarding accuracy and will complete regular security reviews.
- Non-compliance of the data protection and other policies of the Service may invoke the disciplinary policy and procedure.
- Confidential and personal information about the Service's children, parents or guardians, and staff will only be shared by Management, Data Controllers, and Designated Child Protection Liaison Persons in relation to child safety, in line with our Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Statement. Any breach of confidentiality by any member of staff will lead to disciplinary action.

The Data Controller (see designated person above)

To ensure the implementation of this policy, the Service has designated a Data Controller. All enquiries relating to the holding of personal data should be referred to the Data Controller in the first instance.

The Data Controller will:

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- Inform the person or persons involved a breach of confidentiality has occurred and their personal data may have been compromised. A record of this will be kept on the employee's file or child's file as relevant.
- Investigate where the breach of security has occurred and invoke the disciplinary policy if necessary.
- Check that additional measures are in place to ensure confidentiality.
- Review and update the Data Protection Policy if required.
- Check that any information kept is necessary for running the Service.
- Check to see if clerical and computer procedures are adequate to ensure accuracy.
- Reassure parents/guardians that the Data Protection Policy has been reviewed and additional measures to ensure security.
- Advise and inform employees of the need to ensure confidentiality through additional staff training and re-implementation of the Data Protection Policy.

Employees will be required to sign off to confirm they have read and understand the Data Protection Policy and Procedures.

Employees Responsibilities

As an employee, you are responsible for:

- Checking that any information that you provide in connection with your employment is accurate and up to date.

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- Notifying the Service of any changes to information you have provided, for example changes of address.
- Ensuring that you are familiar with and follow the Data Protection Policy.
- Ensuring that any personal data you hold, whether in electronic or paper format, is kept securely.
- Personal information relating to children or their families is not disclosed either verbally or in writing, accidentally or otherwise, to any unauthorised third party.

Sanctions and Disciplinary Action

Given the serious consequences that may arise, the Service may invoke the disciplinary policy and procedure in relation to employees. Sanctions include warnings up to and including dismissal for breaching the rules and guideline on data.

In the case of contractors or external service providers, serious breaches of the policies and procedures can and will be deemed grounds for termination of contractual agreements.

Any breach of the data protection policy, either deliberate or through negligence, may lead to disciplinary action being taken and could in some cases result in a criminal prosecution.

Compliance Monitoring and Review

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The Service will undertake regular reviews of the internal operation and changes in the legislation to ensure ongoing compliance with Data Protection Regulation. These will comprise of an annual review.

INFORMATION SECURITY - GENERAL GUIDELINES

Overview

- Access to the information should be restricted to authorised staff on a “need-to-know” basis and where data is needed to carry out their job descriptions.
- Data **should not be shared informally**. When access to confidential information is required, employees can request it from management (as outlined above in this policy).

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- The Service will provide training to all employees to help them understand their responsibilities when handling data.
- Employees should keep all data secure by taking sensible precautions and following the guidelines below.
- Strong **passwords must be used**, and they should never be shared.
- Personal data **should not be disclosed** to unauthorised people, either within the Service or externally.
- Data should be **regularly reviewed and updated** if it is found to be out of date. If no longer required, it should be deleted and disposed of.
- Employees **should request help** from their manager or the Data Controller if they are unsure about any aspect of data protection.

Data Storage

The security of personal information relating to children and families is a very important consideration under the Data Protection Acts. Appropriate security measures will be taken by the Service to protect unauthorised access to this data and to the data it is collecting and storing on behalf of the DCYA.

A minimum standard of security will include the following measures:

- Access to the information should be restricted to authorised staff on a “need-to-know” basis. Management will assign responsibilities regarding data at induction. Authorised staff are those identified by management and made known to such staff.

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- Manual files will be stored in a lockable filing cabinet located away from public areas.
- Computerised data will be held under password protected files with a limited number of authorised staff.
- Any information which needs to be disposed of will be done so carefully and thoroughly.
- The Service's premises at **Belleville Templemore Co.Tipperary** have the following security arrangements. **(All files containing information that falls under data protection legislation will be kept locked in cabinets in the Managers office. Any information kept on the crèche PC will be under the Managers administration name and locked with a password.)**

If you have any questions or concerns about where or how to store data, please refer to the manager or data controller as outlined above.

When data is **stored on paper**, it should be kept in a secure place where unauthorised people cannot see it. These guidelines also apply to data that is usually stored electronically but has been printed out for some reason:

- When not required, the paper or files should be kept **in a locked drawer or filing cabinet**.
- Employees should make sure paper and printouts are **not left where unauthorised people could see them** (for example, parents should not have access or see other parents' names/phone numbers).
- **Data should be shredded** and disposed of securely when no longer required.

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When data is **stored electronically**, it must be protected from unauthorised access, accidental deletion and malicious hacking attempts:

- Data should be **protected by strong passwords** that are changed regularly and never shared between employees.
- If data is **stored on removable media** (e.g. a CD or USB key device), these should be kept locked away (and ideally encrypted) when not being used.
- Data should be stored on **designated drives and servers** and should only be uploaded to **approved cloud computing services**.
- Servers containing personal data should be **sited in a secure location**.
- Data should be **backed up frequently**. All servers and computers containing data should be protected by an **approved security software and a firewall**.

Data Use

Personal data is at often at the greatest risk of loss, corruption, or theft when it is being used or accessed:

- When working with personal data, employees should ensure **the screens of their computers/tablets/apps are always locked** when left unattended.
- Personal data **should not be shared informally**.
- Personal data shared by email should be **downloaded, stored securely, and then deleted**.
- Data must be **encrypted before being transferred electronically**.

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- The manager can explain how to send data to authorised external contacts.
- Employees **should not save copies of personal data to their own computers**. Always access and update the central copy of any data.

Data Accuracy

The law requires the Service to take reasonable steps to ensure data is kept accurate and up-to-date.

The more important it is that the personal data is accurate, the greater the effort we will put into ensuring its accuracy. It is the responsibility of all employees who work with data to take all reasonable steps to ensure it is kept as accurate and up to date as possible.

- Data will be held in **as few places as necessary**. Staff should not create any unnecessary additional data sets.
- Staff should **take every opportunity to ensure data is updated** (for instance, by updating parent's contact information).
- The Service will make it **easy for data subjects to update the information** held about them, over the phone, or by email.
- Data should be **updated as and when inaccuracies are discovered**. For instance, if a member can no longer be reached on their stored telephone number, it should be removed from the database.

Data Disclosure to Third Parties

As the Data Controller, the Service is ultimately responsible for any personal data passed to third parties and care must always be given to procedures and security.

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The only data disclosed to third parties in the normal course of events is as described in the Service's Privacy Notices and Register of Personal Data Records.

In certain circumstances, the Data Protection Acts allow personal data to be disclosed to external agencies without the consent of the data subject. Any requests from external bodies and agencies not specifically provided for in legislation including An Garda Síochána, should be in writing.

Under these circumstances the Service will disclose requested data; however, the Data Controller must ensure the request is legitimate, seeking assistance from Management and from the Service's legal advisers where necessary.

Please note that information may need to be disclosed to authorised third parties. The Service will always check validity of any requests made.

The following list includes examples of such organisations but is not exhaustive:

- An Garda Síochána
- Early Years Inspection Team
- DES Inspection Team
- Pobal Compliance Officers
- DCYA and Childcare Committees
- Insurance Company

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- Health and Safety Authority
- Workplace Relations Commission
- Revenue Commissioners
- HR Advisors
- Other Professional Advisors

Please note that where information may need to be disclosed to authorised third parties, **it is essential to always check validity of any requests** made before release of the data.

Note: Data Collected Through Garda Vetting

The Service understands that sensitive information may be identified through Garda Vetting. In the event that an employee's Garda vetting raises concerns the information will be dealt with on a confidential basis. All information pertaining to such a situation must be stored in the same way as other data. The Service will not pass on a copy of an employee's Garda Vetting Form to any other party. The Service will hold original Garda Vetting forms.

We will also hold copies of police checks for staff who have lived in other countries (from age 18 years). The staff member holds the original and we hold a certified copy.

Data Erasure and Disposal

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When documentation or computer files containing personal data is no longer required, the information must be disposed of carefully to continue to ensure the confidentiality of the data.

For paper-based files and information no longer required, employees should safely dispose of documents or media in shredding receptacles (locked consoles and wheelie bins where there is no access to the documents once deposited). **The data will be shredded onsite - or alternatively a third party data destruction specialist and vetted staff will collect documents and media and shred on-site for the shortest chain of custody.**

In the case of personal information held electronically, temporary files containing personal information should be reviewed regularly and deleted when no longer required.

When personal data reaches the point where the retention period has expired, the information should also be securely deleted and removed.

In the event that IT equipment containing personal data is no longer required, all data stored on the devices must be removed prior to disposal **[and/or the equipment must be destroyed by a certified supplier who will provide a Certificate of Destruction to conform to the GDPR regulations.]**

DATA BREACHES

Definition: A data breach is an incident in which the Service's staff or client's **personal data or that of a child has been lost, accessed, and/or disclosed in an unauthorised fashion.**

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This would include, for instance, loss or theft of a laptop containing client or staff details, an email with personal information being sent to the wrong recipient, as well as more organised incidents of external hacking.

Your Responsibility and Immediate Action Required

All employees have a responsibility to take immediate action if there is a data breach.

- If an employee suspects at any time and for any reason that a breach may have occurred, then there is a **need to report it to the Manager/Data Controller as an urgent priority**
- Once notification of an actual or suspected breach has been received, the Manager/Data Controller will put the **Data Breach Procedure** into operation with immediate effect.

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DATA SUBJECT RIGHTS/SUBJECT ACCESS REQUEST HANDLING

Privacy Notices

The Service aims to ensure that individuals are aware that their data is being processed and that they understand:

- How the data is being used, and
- How to exercise their rights.

For parents of children this is set out in the Service's **Privacy Notice**, provided when they first apply to register their child with the Service.

For new staff members, this is set out as part of the contract and induction material supplied at time of recruitment.

Subject Access Requests

All individuals who are the subject of personal data held by the Service are entitled to:

- Ask **what information** the Service holds about them and why.
- Ask **how to gain access** to it.
- Be informed **how to keep it up to date**.
- Be informed how the Service is **meeting its data protection obligations**.

If a person the Service requesting this information, this is called a Subject Access Request.

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The handling of access requests is described in more detail in the **Subject Access Request ("SAR") Handling Procedure.**

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APPENDICES - RELATED DOCUMENTATION

Appendix I: Staff Confidentiality Agreement

Appendix II: Privacy Notice for Staff, Students, and Associates (e.g. Trainers)

Appendix III: Privacy Notice for Parents/Guardians

Appendix IV: Subject Access Request Handling Procedure

Appendix V: Data Breach Handling Procedure

Appendix VI: Website Privacy Notice

Appendix VII: Supplier Documents

Appendix VIII: Personal Data Register: Early Years Services

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