

SPRAOI PARENTS HANDBOOK

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Mission Statement

Spraoi Childcare Centre is committed to providing a warm stimulating, creative, fun and safe environment to meet the social, emotional, cognitive and physical developmental needs of your child.

We offer our facilities to all parents/guardians or interested parties with children, inclusive of special needs, cultural, financial or religious backgrounds.

Our Aims

To provide a safe environment in which children are encouraged to play and share new experiences.

To provide a homely atmosphere at our childcare centre.

To highlight the importance of play in children's development.

To promote pre-school development of children in accordance with the Childcare.

Regulations and parents wishes Síolta and Aistear.

For the entire community to participate in and avail of this childcare service.

History of Spraoi

Spraoi started as a prefab for 1 playgroup behind the Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal in 1989. In February 2008 the building you attend now was completed costing 1.2 million a capital grant from Pobal.

Internal Structure of Spraoi Management

Spraoi is a non profit charity and community run enterprise employing 11 staff, 2 Fas employees, and 1 Tus employee, 1 SNA from the HSE, 6 volunteers, and Spraoi trains childcare students through work experience in childcare.

There is a board of directors who oversee the running of Spraoi. They are all volunteers. The board meets once a month approximately 10 times in a year.

Community minded people are always needed to oversee this enterprise. You would gain valuable experience and help your community manage one of the

largest service employment enterprises in the area. Please consider joining for a year while your child attends.

This Parents Handbook has been adopted
by the Board of Directors of 'Spraoi'.
Ballymote Community Childcare Co. Ltd
and updated Feb. 2012

I have received the Parents' Handbook
of Spraoi Ballymote Community Childcare Co. Ltd
and agree to comply with their policies.

Signed by Parent or Guardian:

Child's Name:

Date:

ALLERGIES:

We would also appreciate if parents would not send nuts or use nut spreads as some of our children may have a nut allergy. As this can be a potentially life threatening condition we would therefore appreciate your co-operation

Parental Contact Availability

When your child or children attend Spraoi it is required that you are available for contact and that if Spraoi requires contact you or a designated person is available to take our phone call preferable a parent.

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Finally, we would like to acknowledge that you as parents / guardians know your child best and are their first educators. We will always welcome suggestions and ideas from you and please do not hesitate to contact any member of the Spraoi team if you have any concerns regarding your child

Baby & Toddler Rooms & All Day Care:

Our Baby Room:

Our baby room can facilitate up to 10 children between the ages of 12 months and two and a half years. The HSE ratio is 1 staff member to 5 children. Our baby room has a room leader and an assistant.

Our Toddler Room:

Children from the age of two to four years are cared for in our toddler room where we can accommodate up to 10 children. The HSE ratio is 1 to 8 toddlers half day and 1 to 6 full day.

List of needs for your child while in Toddler or Wobbler Rooms in Spraoi

- Nappy bag containing enough nappies, baby wipes, cream for your child's daily needs should be sent to the facility with your child each day.
- While we do provide protective aprons, please send your child to school in comfortable appropriate clothing so they will not be anxious about keeping clean. Please ensure your child always has a change of clothing.
- Please clearly label all of your child's belongings, coats bags etc.
- During the summer months, please provide your child with high factor sun cream and sun hat.
- Breakfast, dinner and snacks are provided in the children's dining room for those in full and part-time day care. The menu for the week is posted in the downstairs hall way. This provides you with an opportunity to let us know of any dislikes or allergies your child might have. Please state clearly on the enrolment form if your child has any allergies.
- Spraoi will provide treats for birthdays all the children receive the same treats

Our outdoor area and has a safe and fun fenced off area for small children. All toddlers have access to sand & water play, painting, music and art & crafts. These activities encourage the child's imaginative play while at the same time developing their fine and gross motor skills. Insure your child has appropriate, comfortable and weather appropriate clothing to be able to fully participate in our activities indoor and out.

Play Group:

Our playgroups can facilitate 20 children a session and the children are between the ages of two years six months and five years on a sessional basis. The HSE ratio is 1 staff to 11 children. There is a room leader and an assistant in the room.

Full and half day care is also offered along with the sessional playgroup.

1. Included in the playgroup fee, we provide a mid-morning snack for your child.
2. We provide fruit / homemade scones or some other healthy option along with a drink of milk or water; please keep us informed if your child has allergies.
3. All children attending our playgroup must be toilet trained.
4. Please have your child appropriately dressed example: coat and hat when cold and sun hat when sunny. All children have access to sand & water play, painting, music and art & crafts. These activities encourage the child's imaginative play while at the same time developing their fine and gross motor skills.
5. While we do provide protective aprons, please send your child to school in comfortable appropriate clothing so they will not be anxious about keeping clean. Please ensure your child always has a change of clothing.
6. During the summer months, please provide your child with high factor sun cream and sun hat.
7. Please clearly label all of your child's belongings, coats bags etc.
8. The curriculum in our playgroup is structured. We have trained childcare workers who with the guidelines of Síolta and Aistear develop long, medium and short term plans and implement these with the children. Included in the plans are story time, jigsaws, creative and imaginative play and physical education and the transition to school work book. The children's art is then displayed in the rooms and in the hall area. We always welcome parental opinion and input.

Admissions Policy

Our service operates on a first come, first served basis. When all available places are taken up, a waiting list is established.

All children are welcome regardless of ethnicity, culture, race, religion, gender or ability.

For insurance purposes all children using the Spraoi facilities must be properly and **fully** registered.

On admission parents must inform Spraoi Community Childcare Centre of any special requirements of the child and must clearly state this on the enrolment form and keep Spraoi updated if changing phone number or address.

Inappropriate Language/Behaviour policy:

Children model their language and behaviour on that of the adults in their environment. Spraoi strives to provide a setting where confidence, self esteem, and independence are nurtured. Therefore the management will not accept any disrespectful words or actions towards the children, parents, or staff of Spraoi.

By praising children and affirming their positive actions and attitudes we hope to promote this positive self-image and sense of self.

Inappropriate behaviour whether by physically abusing another child or adult, e.g. kicking, biting, or by verbal bullying, will not be tolerated.

Parents will be informed if their child persistently misbehaves or if their child has been upset. In all cases inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with in Spraoi at the time.

Parents may be asked to meet with staff to discuss their child's behaviour, so that if there are any difficulties we can work together to ensure consistency between home and Spraoi.

Children must be encouraged to recognise that bullying, fighting, hurting, and racist comments are not acceptable behaviour. We want children to learn that certain actions are right and others are wrong.

Children with Special Needs Policy

This service is committed to the integration of children with special needs. We believe that the development of young children with disabilities or special needs is more likely to be enhanced through attending services for all children. We will endeavor to ensure that where possible:

Children are given opportunities and supported to participate in activities on an equitable basis.

2. The physical environment is appropriate (e.g. wheelchair access)

3. The staff will receive training where necessary

4. A relevant Care Plan will be drawn up on each individual case between the board of management, parents, and professional services as required.

5. By maintaining good communication between parents and staff, Spraoi will endeavor to ensure the child will receive extra care and support in a safe environment thus allowing the child to integrate, socialise, and develop to his/her maximum potential.

6. Every case will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Spiritual, Cultural, Social, and Moral Values Policy

Growth in spiritual, social, moral, and cultural values is encouraged in our setting by:

1. Providing an environment where the children feel safe and secure.
2. Constantly implementing Spraoi rules.
3. Learning to share and respect the property of others.
4. The celebration of festivals from a variety of cultures.
5. A respect and knowledge of other cultures.
6. Promoting grace and courtesy. These are ongoing lessons where the children learn to treat each individual with respect and kindness.

Nutrition Policy

Food is an important aspect in children's care and development.

It is our policy to provide children with healthy food, snacks & drinks.

Spraoi will provide cake and treats for birthdays. Please do not bring any special foods on such occasions. Financial donations are welcome but not compulsory.

Complaints/Compliments Policy

Spraoi has an open door policy and is available to discuss your complaint / compliments with you. The first step in the procedure is to bring a complaint to the attention of the room leader of your child or manager or supervisor on the day that will undertake to record the nature of the complaint and will try to deal with it appropriately.

If the manager and staff are unable to find a solution, the complaint should be put in writing and will be sent to the Board of Management who will act within two weeks of receipt of the complaint.

A register of complaints/compliments will be maintained and will be available for inspection upon request. There is also a suggestion/complaints box in the foyer if you wish to remain anonymous.

Before-School/ After-School Club/ No School/ Camps:

Our service includes dropping children to school after the morning club and picking them up from school when it is finished and daycare on school holidays. We also provide day care on school half days and when school is not in session.

1. We accommodate both the children who finish school at 2pm and those who do not finish until 3pm. The children are picked up at the school and accompanied to the facility.
2. Please clearly label all of your child's belongings, coats bags etc.
3. The children in our after school club receive ample opportunity for creative play and have access to outside play.
4. Please clearly label all of your child's belongings, coats bags etc.
5. The curriculum in our playgroup is structured. We have trained childcare workers who with the guidelines of Síolta and Aistear develop long, medium and short term plans and implement these with the children. Included in the plans are story time, jigsaws, creative and imaginative play and physical education and **The Transition to School Workbook**. The children's art is then displayed in the rooms and in the hall area. We always welcome parental opinion and input.

About our services:

Opening Hours

The opening hours are 8am to 6pm Monday to Thursday, and 8am to **5pm on Fridays**.

PROGRAMME

Before School

Playgroup

Half Day Care (4½ hours)

Full Day Care

TIME

8am-9.15am

9.15am-12.15pm

up to 1.30 and from and After School 2.05pm-6pm

8am-6pm

Ages

At Spraoi, We can cater for children between the ages of 12 months and 12 years. We offer full and part time day care for your child. In addition to this we have a longstanding playgroup and both before and after school service

Fees Policy:

All fees are to be paid weekly in advance, no exceptions please.

Payment is required for any session missed-whether due to illness, holidays or any other reason for failure to attend

Parents requiring extra sessions can book these at short notice subject to availability.

No charges will be made for Bank Holidays or weeks closed.

Parents will not be charged for the settling in period.

There is a late fee applicable for all children who are not picked up at the arranged time. (€5.00 per 15 minutes or part thereof)

Child protection Policy

Management, staff and volunteers/students [as appropriate] in this organisation recognize that the welfare of children is paramount and our service will endeavor to safeguard the children by:-

1. Having a reporting procedure to respond to concerns around children's' welfare and safety
2. Having a confidentiality statement
3. Having a code of behavior for staff and volunteers/students
4. Having a safe recruitment procedure
5. Having a procedure to respond to accidents
6. Having a procedure to respond to complaints
7. Developing a Staff allegations procedure and disciplinary procedure

Record Keeping Policy:

Records as required by the Child Care (Pre-school services) (No 2) Regulations 2006 and Child care (pre- school services ((No 2) (Amendment) Regulations 2006 will be maintained and available.

Confidential records will be kept in a locked storage facility. Access to these records will be limited to the appropriate group leader, management, and parents regarding their own children, in line with our Confidentiality Policy.

Confidentiality Policy:

Spraoui has a confidentiality policy that all staff and Board members must undertake to comply with at all times.

All information pertaining to the children attending Spraoi will be maintained in the strictest confidence.

Dropping off Policy

Parents are requested to respect the following:

1. Start times of each programme are as on page three.
2. Leave the child in the care of a staff member when dropping them off.
3. Parents are requested to advise staff of any important information regarding their child / children on a daily basis.
4. After the initial settling in period, parents are asked not to stay once they have dropped off their child.
5. Dropping off a child late may cause unnecessary disruption for all children and staff with respect to morning curriculum and daily plans.
6. If possible notify the centre if a child will be absent. This information will be recorded in child's records.

Health & Safety & Fire

Spraoui Community Childcare Centre takes all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of each individual in the service. To achieve this we have established and maintain safe working procedures with the staff and children, and ensure that everyone is aware of these procedures. We ensure all articles and substances are handled, stored and transported safely. We will ensure that all staff will have training in first aid. We comply with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989 and 2005.

Spraoui's Health and Safety Policy complies with the Pre-school services regulations 1996 and as such are inspected by pre-school officers annually.

Health and Safety Policies and Procedures cover staff members, employers, service users and visitors to Spraoui and any other person who is affected by the work on our premises. These policies and procedures place a duty of care on all of the above people.

Spraoui when required, retain the services of a doctor to advise them on all related matters of health and safety.

All staff members are required to report any accidents, incidents or potential hazards in the Accident/Incident book. Staff members are required to complete the necessary forms, have them signed by a parent or guardian and file them.

Safety & Security

We would appreciate if staff, parents, and visitors to Spraoui would ensure that they close the front door after themselves.

To ensure the security and safety of all those attending Spraoui, the directors have installed:

Smoke alarms

Emergency exit

Fire doors from all rooms where children eat and play

Thermostatically controlled water in children's toilets

Electrical socket covers

Fire Safety equipment

First Aid Kit

24 hour CCTV

The following policies and procedures are in place to ensure the safety and security of all those who attend/visit Spraoui and will be displayed throughout the premises:

Health, Hygiene, & Safety Policy

Fire Drill Procedures

Health & Safety Statement

Collection Policy

1. Only the designated people named on the enrolment form may collect a child from Spraoi. Staff must be informed in advance if a person other than the named person will be collecting the child. This information will be recorded.
2. Parents of after-school children who go home on the bus must sign a consent form to say who will collect the child from Spraoi. This also applies to staff accompanying children to the bus. These forms must be returned to Spraoi along with enrolment and other associated forms.
3. Only people over the age of 16 may collect a child except in the case of siblings or others collecting for the bus run home, whose parents have signed permission slips (on last page).
4. Children must be collected on time. Late collection causes unnecessary emotional upset to a child and imposes problems on the staff ratios. A late fee will also apply for the same.
5. If a child becomes ill at Spraoi, his / her parent(s) will be contacted and must come and collect the child within one hour of the phone-call.
6. In the case of one parent families clear instructions must be given to the centre and entered on relevant form i.e. the named person with days/dates of pick up and drop off.

Any change of the arrangements must be clearly instructed to the centre in advance. This information will be recorded.

Parental Involvement Policy

Parental involvement is an integral part of the services that we provide. This policy is based on an understanding of the importance of the partnership between the parents and staff in the best interest of the child.

Parents will be encouraged to spend time with their child while the child settles in and adjusts to their new environment. However, after the initial settling in period, parents are not encouraged to remain with their children.

Staff can accommodate parents who wish to check on their children. If a parent would like to check on their child's progress an appointment can be made to speak with group leaders.

As a community project we encourage parents to get involved with the many activities of Spraoi. Our monthly newsletter is designed to inform parents of activities, events, and other news such as fundraising which we would appreciate help in implementing.

Head Lice Policy

For communicable disease prevention, children with lice or nits may be sent home and may only return to Spraoi following treatment and when they are lice free. Spraoi will endeavor to follow the best practice guidelines as set out below:

Regular checking for head lice is the only effective method for ensuring the prevention of a head lice outbreak at Spraoi. For example, all children should be checked for lice by their parents on a regular weekly basis.

If a child comes to Spraoi with lice or nits in their hair, the parent(s) or one of the persons on the registration form will be called to come and take the child home as soon as possible to prevent the spread of head lice to others.

Staff will inform other parents, in writing, in the event of an outbreak of head lice. Confidentiality shall be maintained.

Notification of Child's Illness to Parents

Please do not bring a sick child into the childcare centre. If your child is unwell or displays any of the following symptoms: rash, Diarrhea, vomiting or fever they are best cared for at home.

Parents will be alerted as soon as possible if their child is ill or if any other illness has occurred within the premises. If a child becomes ill while attending Spraoi, staff members are required to contact parents or emergency contacts and inform them of the situation. This will result in the parents arranging for the child to be collected from Spraoi as soon as possible, or within one hour, whichever is first.

HSE regulations require us to notify parents when their child is sick with a temperature. Staff are obliged to contact parents and ask you to collect your child from Spraoi because of illness. **The decision to make the phone call to collect your child is not taken lightly, so we wish to inform parents that you MUST collect your child within one hour of the phone call.** If it is not possible, then it is your responsibility to arrange for someone else to take your child home. If this is the case we would ask you to call Spraoi and inform the staff as to who will collect your child.

If this policy is not followed by all parents, then we are:

- Violating HSE Regulations and
- Your actions are putting other children who use Spraoi at risk.

In cases of a serious medical emergency, arrangements must be made within ten minutes. If the parent/carer cannot be contacted, emergency services will be called for medical assistance.

Exclusions due to illness:

Exclusion policies are enforced to protect other children at Spraoi from picking up infection. We do understand that these guidelines will cause some inconvenience to parents, however we hope that you understand that they are in the best interest of all children using the facility. Children who are on antibiotics due to illness are not allowed to attend Spraoi until they have been on the antibiotics for at least 48 hours and must have responded adequately to the antibiotic to enable him/her to participate in the daily activities at Spraoi. This is at the discretion of the programme leader. It is not our policy to administer medication.

A child will not be permitted to attend the service for at least 48 hours if they have the following symptoms or illness:

Diarrhoea

Cold and Flu

Sore Throat

Conjunctivitis (eye infection)

Vomiting

Temperature

Croup

The following illness and infections result in a week or more of exclusion:

Conjunctivitis until all clear

Scabies- 1 week after treatment

Impetigo - 1 week

Thrush - 1 week

Measles- 1 week after the appearance of the rash

Chicken Pox - 1 week and/or when all the spots are crusted over

German measles - 2 weeks after the onset of symptoms

This list is not exhaustive.

Positive Behaviour Management Policy:

The methods used at this childcare facility will only be those which promote the development of self-discipline and will be developmentally appropriate.

Spraoi believes in promoting positive behaviour. We aim to encourage self-discipline and consideration for each other, our surroundings and property.

The behavioural rules within each programme (Playgroup, Before & After School, Day Care, etc) are concerned with safety, care, and respect for each other.

The parents may be asked to meet with staff (or vice-versa) to discuss their child's behaviour, so that if there are any difficulties we can work together to ensure consistency between home and Spraoi.

By positively promoting good behaviour valuing co-operation and a caring attitude, we hope to ensure that children will develop as responsible members of society.