

5. SETTLING- IN

Due to Covid 19 settling in guidelines have changed in line with public health guidelines.

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Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 (Síolta Standard 9: Health and Welfare, Síolta Standard 13: Transitions) (National Standard 1: Information, National Standard 3: Working in Partnership with Parents/guardians or Guardians, National Standard 6: Evaluation, National Standard 8: Care, Play and Learning, National Standard 9: Nurture and Well-Being)

Statement of Intent:

We aim to ensure children feel safe and secure in the absence of their parents/guardians. Due care and attention will be paid to a child's need for time to settle into our setting.

Policy and Procedure:

The service will therefore endeavour to make the settling-in process a positive experience for children and will work closely in partnership with parents/guardians to ensure this is achieved.

We recognise that in some cases there may be particular difficulties experienced by children, parents/guardians, and staff during the settling-in period and we are prepared to explore and consider various ways of settling children into the service.

All children are individuals and we plan to meet their individual needs and resolve any difficulties quickly and smoothly. In order to accomplish this, we will ensure that:

Pre- Admission:

- The service invites the child and parents/guardians to visit at an agreed time.
- We offer phased/staggered settling-in.
- Prior to enrolment exchange of information will take place between parents/guardians and staff. In order to meet the needs of each child parents/guardians will be asked to fill out the "All About Me" form. Parents/guardians are encouraged to provide us with information on their child's likes/dislikes, interests, achievements etc.

First Day

- We will greet the child and parent together.
- Each child will be appointed a key worker.
- The parent/guardian will be assured of the value of their presence to the child in this process.
- Parents/guardians are welcome to stay for the child's first session. Some children may not be ready for a full session and the person in charge will advise the parents/guardians on this matter.
- Parents/guardians will be made aware of the necessity of interacting with their child and the other people in the service in order to reassure the child of the safety of the new surroundings.
- Children must be collected on time and promptly from their session at the agreed time.

Ongoing Matters:

- Parents/guardians must never leave their child without saying goodbye.
- Our staff will provide support and encouragement to parents/guardians during the settling-in period should the transition be difficult. Staff will phone parents/guardians to reassure them, if necessary.
- We may need to assist parents/guardians through this separation process as an extended goodbye can be distressful for children.

- The 'settling in' process has no time limits and may need to be repeated if a child becomes unsettled.
- When children are beginning to settle without their parents/guardians, they should be supported in observing, experimenting and discovering for themselves without any attempt to make them participate in activities.
- Opportunities will be made available for parents/guardians to exchange information on the child's progress at this stage.
- Parents/guardians and their children are encouraged to get to know the key people involved in their child's life.
- Children who are still clearly distressed having followed the above procedure may need to have their attendance deferred for a trial period.

Transition to Primary School:

- Being open to liaising with the local primary schools.
- Building a programme regarding "Starting Big School" into our curriculum.
- Focusing on practical "independence" skills.
- Liaising with parents/guardians so that teachers and parents/guardians have a consistent approach regarding preparation for school.
- Having a progress meeting with parents/guardians to discuss school readiness.

