



# Sesame Early Years Specialist Day Service

## Parent/Guardian Handbook

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# WELCOME TO SESAME

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Management and staff we would like to extend a warm welcome to you and especially to your child. We hope that your child will be happy and have an enriching experience at Sesame.

We respect that you, as Parents or Guardians know your child best. You know their strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes and can anticipate their needs. Our relationship with you is as important as our relationship with your child. In getting to know your child, we rely on open communication with parents in all aspects of care and education for the benefit of your child.

A spirit of inclusion and equality is created through positive experiences, opportunities and activities where all children are valued as individuals. We embrace diversity. We believe that each child is a unique and an unrepeatable miracle.

At Sesame we are committed to providing a service of the highest standard. We are notified to and inspected by Tusla -The Child and Family Agency. Sesame provides high quality early intervention and care for the children who attend our service and aims to provide an environment where children can develop and reach their full potential.

Above all, the children's welfare and happiness is most important to us. We provide a warm, loving, home-from-home environment, where each child is treated with respect and will develop and learn as individuals while feeling safe and secure.

Sesame is committed to equal opportunity in employment. Trained, motivated and friendly staff are the cornerstone of our service. We encourage a strong teamwork approach to help build and support our shared objectives. Each member of the Sesame team is qualified and holds a minimum of QQI Level V qualification. Our team is therefore professionally trained. Matters regarding your child's care can be discussed with your child's keyworker.

However, if you have any sensitive worries or concerns the Co-Ordinator will give you time to discuss them. If you wish, you can speak to the General Manager about any matter relating to your child's care. Please do not hesitate to make any enquiry, if it is not covered in this handbook during the course of your child's stay at Sesame.

*Eleanor McGrath*

**General Manager**

*Julie Mulcahy*

**Co Ordinator**

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## **Our Mission Statement**

The main function of Sesame is to provide an early year's specialised day service for children with additional needs in conjunction with families. Sesame is committed to providing excellent standards of care for the holistic development of each child. Through providing a warm, friendly, safe and caring environment we aspire to challenge and stimulate children to develop to their full potential through play, implementing their individual therapies, interactions and experiences that are age and stage appropriate. We recognize each child's individuality in the context of their place in Sesame, at home and in the wider community.

## **Our Ethos**

- At Sesame we endeavour to provide a safe, caring and happy environment for children.
- We recognise the importance of creating a space where our children are comfortable and our parents are confident of the quality of care.
- We build relationships with families and work effectively with them by being responsive to their changing needs.
- We support families to create a firm foundation for their child's future.

## **Aims and Objectives**

- The safety, health and well-being of children in our care are of paramount importance.
- To provide a safe & secure environment allowing children the freedom to explore.
- To meet each child's individual needs.
- To provide a wide variety of experiences that will stimulate the holistic development of each child.
- To create an atmosphere where children feel at ease and look forward to coming to Sesame.
- To communicate openly with parents /guardians, children and other staff members to show transparency in all areas of the service.
- To encourage children to make choices and engage in activities that will promote independence.
- To provide encouragement, promote enthusiasm and independence and allow children to express themselves and become active learners.
- To carry out observations on all children.
- To implement the children's individual programmes and specific early intervention tailored to each child, focusing on their strengths.

- To work in consultation with the therapists and other professionals for the benefit of the children.
- To have fully qualified staff with training constantly being updated and accessed to maintain high standards and keep abreast of changing regulations/ requirements and best practices.
- To ensure that each child is happy and has fun.
- Through comprehensive policies we are committed to delivering quality care.
- To implement the Siolta Framework- Síolta is designed to define, assess and support the improvement of quality across all areas of practice.
- Sesame supports the Principles of Aistear, the National Curriculum Framework from birth to six years.
- To keep up to date with Legislation, National Standard and Policies, and make changes as and when necessary.
- To comply with and work according to Child Care Act 1991 and Early Years Services Regulations 2016.

## **Function of the Service**

### **Principles**

We are an Early Years' Service for children with additional needs funded by the HSE Disability Service. Children between the age of 2 and 5 may attend Sesame. Children are referred to our service by the Children's Disability Network Team. We are managed by a voluntary management committee. We are a limited company and have charitable status.

### **Opening Hours:**

Morning Session 9.00am – 12.00pm

Afternoon Session 1.00pm – 3.45pm

We are open in line with the National School calendar.

Our service is supported by the HSE multi-disciplinary team made up of the following;

Psychologists

Physiotherapists

Speech and Language Therapists

Occupational Therapists

Clinical Nurse Specialist

Social Worker

**Our Facilities include:**

- Classrooms
- Outdoor play area
- Playroom
- Indoor swing room
- Speech and Language room
- A Floor Time room
- Meetings rooms
- Multi-Sensory Room
- Body Awareness room
- Nurses Office
- Sensory garden

The rooms are designed in such a way as to meet the developing needs of each individual child. The children are guided through a range of educational and play activities at their own pace. The children's key workers implement their specific therapies and individual programmes. Our team creates a positive and secure environment where children feel confident in exploring their surroundings.

## **Our Staff Team**

While your child is attending Sesame, we understand that you, as parents and guardians need to be reassured that all your child's needs are being met and that they are being cared for.

In line with our Equality & Diversity policy, we do not discriminate. We include both female and male staff. Our robust recruitment policy is designed so that we select the people who we believe are the best people for the job.

Apart from ensuring that each person has the right attributes to work with children with additional needs, they are fully trained in the relevant field i.e., Nursing, Social Care and Early Years Care and Education. We actively encourage and support staff to further their profession through training.

## **Board Of Directors**

A voluntary Board of Directors is in place and is committed to the delivery of a quality service that meets the holistic needs of every child in a caring and supportive learning environment. Sesame is funded by the HSE.

## **Students on Work Experience**

We positively encourage third level students to undertake work experience placements at Sesame. Students are also garda vetted. Students are supervised by staff and are not counted as part of the required ratio of adults to children. They are required to adhere to Sesame policies and procedures.

## Our Staff

Eleanor McGrath  
General Manager

Julie Mulcahy  
Coordinator

Karina Coward  
Classroom  
Nurse

Pamela  
Morrissey  
Early Years  
Practitioner

Katherine  
O'Brien  
Early Years  
Practitioner

Noreen  
Nugent  
Early Years  
Practitioner

Sandra  
Power  
Early Years  
Practitioner

Kelly O'Donnell  
Early Years  
Practitioner

Lorraine  
O'Rourke  
Early Years  
Practitioner

Kirsty Arrigan  
Early Years  
Practitioner

Dearbhla Flynn  
Early Years  
Practitioner

Rose Daly  
Administration



## **Partnership with Parents and Guardians**

It is the policy of Sesame that staff and parents/guardians work together to achieve the best possible early years experiences for all the children attending the service. We have an open door policy therefore, please feel free to ask questions, make suggestions or voice concerns. Parents and Guardians are encouraged to inform the service if a child will be absent, of any sickness, medications, inoculations that the child has had or any changes in their routine as these may affect the child's temperament and the staff's interactions with the child. Regular exchanges of information with parents/guardians and staff will enable a two-way process which benefits the children.

In line with our Partnership with Parents and Guardians policy:

- We encourage a community atmosphere within the service and welcome any ideas and suggestions you may have.
- We operate an "open door" policy to any parent/guardian whose child uses our service. This facility is also extended to you at any time should you wish to telephone or meet the coordinator or nurse regarding an issue or concern about your child. Please feel free to make an appointment to do so.
- We would welcome that parents/guardian's advise staff of any significant happenings at home that we should know of e.g., child had a poor night's sleep, as he/she may be tired.
- We give feedback on each child and their day through the log book. This is a great method of two-way communication and we ask all parents/guardians to read and use the log book.
- All parents/guardians can speak to the general manager or coordinator to arrange an individual meeting to discuss any questions or concerns they may have.
- Opportunities for parents/guardian's involvement with the service include attending meetings, information events, fundraising and family fun days.
- Sesame will hold contact information for you and your spouse/partner or nominated person on the contact form. Contact with any nominated person will only be used in an emergency situation if we cannot contact you directly. It is important that we have all up to date telephone numbers for yourselves and others listed and we must be notified of any changes to telephone numbers/mobiles etc. so that we can keep our records updated.
- We ask that children are collected on time; children can become distressed and worried if they are collected late continuously.
- Sesame accepts no responsibility for staff babysitting or childminding children that attend the service.

## **Health and safety**

We will take all responsible steps to ensure the health and safety of each individual in the service. To achieve this, we have established safe working practice amongst staff and children, and ensure everyone is aware of these procedures. We have a health and safety statement available on request.

## **Safety Procedures**

- ◆ Staff ensures that every child's safety is of paramount importance.
- ◆ Children are supervised by adults at all times.
- ◆ We adhere to strict collection procedures
- ◆ All toys, materials are age appropriate and used with supervision
- ◆ Parents/Guardians should ensure that unsuitable objects such as lollipops, popcorn, nuts or polystyrene are not available to the children in the service.
- ◆ TUSLA guidelines of ratio re qualified adults to children are strictly adhered to.
- ◆ The outdoor sand pit contains washed sand and is covered when not in use.
- ◆ A Child Protection Policy is in place and training has been provided to staff
- ◆ The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) in relation to Child Protection is the General Manager, Eleanor McGrath. The Co-Ordinator and Deputy DLP is Julie Mulcahy.
- ◆ Fire Drills are carried out regularly
- ◆ The electric sockets are protected by the appropriate covers.
- ◆ Window Blind cords are secured and out of reach by children.
- ◆ Our comprehensive policies and procedures are committed to ensuring the safety and welfare of your child.

## **Security**

- ◆ The service is a secure area which can only be accessed by authorised personnel.
- ◆ CCTV is in operation at all exits/entrances with a strict protocol in place.
- ◆ Parents are asked not to hold doors open for other persons as they may not be authorised to enter the building.
- ◆ Security Door must remain closed at all times.
- ◆ All children are signed in by their keyworker on arrival and signed out when leaving.
- ◆ All staff sign in and out when entering and leaving the building.
- ◆ All visitors sign in and out in a visitor's book at reception.
- ◆ Non staff & authorised personnel also sign in on entry and out when leaving.
- ◆ Access to Sesame by unauthorised persons is strictly prohibited

## **Arrivals Policy**

### **Principle**

Sesame is committed to ensuring the safety and care of the children upon arriving and leaving the service. We ask all parents/guardians and staff to follow the collections and arrivals policy and procedure.

### **Attendance**

It is essential to the efficient running of the service that parents/guardians inform the Co-Ordinator or any other member of Sesame staff if your child is unable to attend the service. A follow up phone call is required to inform the service when the child will be returning. If you are aware in advance the child will be absent for appointments etc. please let a member of staff know. A register of the times and days that children attend is kept.

### **Arrivals**

- On arrival to the service, your child's keyworker or another staff member (if keyworker is unavailable) will meet you outside the building.
- Your child will then be brought in to the building by the designated staff member.
- Your child will be registered on arrival by using the sign in book.
- The keyworker will support the child to remove coats and to find their coat peg.
- All external doors are securely closed for the safety of all the children.

## **Collection Policy**

The Collection Policy of Service is as follows:

- Parents/guardians must collect their child by the agreed collection time. Parents/guardians will be asked to give the names of at least two other people who are authorised to collect their child. If the parent/guardian is late arriving to collect the child the coordinator will endeavor to contact the parent. In the event of being unable to contact the parent the coordinator will contact the other named persons to collect the child.
- Children will not be released into the care of a person under the age of 18 years or to a person who appears to be incapable of caring for the child. Should this situation arise, the staff will contact an authorised collector. If no one is available to collect the child then the staff should contact the Tusla social work child protection team.
- At Sesame we ask that parents/guardians do not collect their child from the service while under the influence of alcohol. This can lead to embarrassment and worry within the team. If parents/guardians feel that this situation may arise they should arrange for an authorised collector to collect their child.
- Children should be collected only by the adult/s named on the collection authorisation form. Should the person responsible be unable to collect the child, we ask the parents/guardians to phone in advance to inform the Coordinator of same and identify who will be collecting their child. The parent and guardian will then update the collection authorisation form to include the new authorised person.
- If the collector is unknown to the staff, I.D. may be required to confirm their identity.
- Please ensure that you park safely and do not cause an obstruction, even for a very short time. At Sesame we have a reverse car parking policy.
- In the event of a parent/guardian collecting another fellow child, a prior arrangement must be made and staff informed in writing in advance.
- In order to comply with childcare legislation which determines the staff/ child ratios and in the best interest of the children (children can become distressed when no-one comes for them when all other children have been collected) it is important that children are collected on time from the service.
- All staff must remain on the premises until all children are collected.

## **Late Collection of Children**

We understand that sometimes a parent/guardian is unavoidably delayed when coming to collect their child. We will ensure that the child receives a high standard of care in order to cause as little distress as possible. Parents/guardians in this situation must contact the coordinator to say that they will be late. Children are only released from Sesame to individuals named and with written consent from the parents/ Guardians.

The staff will try to contact parents / guardians if they are late collecting their child and have not contacted the service. If all attempts to contact parents/guardians and authorised persons to collect the child are unsuccessful and the child is still here after 30 minutes the staff will contact the Gardaí.

## **Early Collection of Children**

We ask that parents let us know if you will be picking up their child early so that we can have the child ready for you and to minimise disrupting the rest of the group.

## **Late Drop Off**

We ask parents to drop children off at the correct time to avoid disrupting the group once they have started and so that your child benefits from our full daily program.

## **Attempted collection by a parent who has been denied access in a court order**

A parent who has been denied access to a child through a court order will not be permitted on to the premises. If the parent who has been denied access becomes threatening or violent and insists on removing the child from the service this will be viewed as trespassing. The service will in this event contact the Local Gardaí.

## **Pre-Admission**

A welcome pack for parents/guardians is available once your child has been referred to Sesame. A guided tour is facilitated by management. Parents are welcome to drop in with their child to familiarise themselves with the routine, setting and staff and to ask any questions they may have.

## **Settling In Policy**

The service is committed to the smooth transition of your child into the setting. Settling in should be a positive experience and will lay the foundation for future learning.

### **Statement of Intent**

For many children and their families attending Sesame is the first time they have been separated for any length of time. Sesame is committed to the smooth transition of the children into our service. It is our policy to advise parents/guardians to introduce their child to us before they start in the service in accordance with our Admission Policy.

### **Policy and Procedure**

- We recognise that some children find the transition from home difficult. Therefore, during the settling-in period 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.
- Sesame operates an open-door policy especially during the settling in period. The child may stay for a shorter day until the Coordinator and Parents/Guardians agree the child has settled in.
- The length of time it takes for children to settle varies greatly for each child. Children will be accommodated in any way possible to ensure their comfort during this time.
- Parents/Guardians are provided with an information pack about the service before the child starts at the service.
- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to visit the service with their child before the child starts at the service, so that the child can become familiar with the other children, staff and the day to day running of the service. This will enable the child to explore the environment and provides families with the opportunity to talk to staff about their child's needs and to develop trust in the staff.

- To help the children with the transition from home parents/guardians are asked to provide some information such as; the child`s like and dislikes, activities they enjoy, key words, signs or visuals the child uses at home.
- No child will be pressured into taking part in any activity.
- Each parent/guardian will be kept informed of the child`s progress during the settling in period.
- Children may need time to adjust to the new environment and routines. Staff will be on hand to support families and assist them with techniques such as regulation, using visuals aids and objects of reference.
- Our service has an electronic buzzer system in place at the front door.
- Parents/Guardians should be made aware of the importance on interacting with their child and other people in the setting in a positive manner, in order to reassure the children of the safety of the different surroundings.
- If needed we give the parent/guardian a photo of Sesame to prepare children before they attend each day.

## **Keyworker System**

Sesame staff work with the children on a one-to-one basis. We have a keyworker system in place, we will inform when the keyworkers change. The keyworker will carry out all relevant therapies given to them by the Children's Disability Network Team. These therapies are also carried out at home by the Parent/Guardian.

The key worker has many responsibilities. Their role involves developing a relationship with the child and their family. Each individual child will have different needs; therefore, the key worker must be adaptable and attentive to the child. This will help ensure the child's needs are met.

### **The role of a key worker includes:**

- Meet and greet the child and their family upon arrival.
- Familiarise yourself with the child's care plan, folders and files to have as much information as possible about the child to be able to meet their needs.
- Be aware of the child's day to day needs, read log books and get a verbal report of how the child is on arrival.
- Document all information and observations about the child in their task records and key worker notes.
- Monitor and record progress and be able to feedback information to therapists, classroom nurse/Coordinator etc.
- Follow the child's lead.
- Encourage open communication.
- Watch and observe the child.
- Become familiar with the child and begin to identify the child's interests and strengths.
- Engage with the parents and guardians to build positive relationships and to exchange information about the child.
- To provide parents with opportunities to contribute and share their knowledge and insights.
- Pass on information to parents/guardians when they are collecting their children.
- Fill out log books every day.
- Be aware of parents/guardian's sensitivity around their child attending an early year's specialist service, what this means, supporting them, providing resources and being a listening ear.
- Liaise with the HSE Children's Disability Network Team re individual programmes. Seek advice from same.
- Provide a handover to the new keyworker when they are assigned.



## **AISTEAR**

### **THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK FOR CHILDREN FROM BIRTH TO 6 YEARS**

Our curriculum follows the principles of the National Curriculum Framework for children from birth to six years, with planned activities to stimulate the child's development; we provide opportunities for children to develop physically, emotionally, intellectually and socially.

Aistear means “Journey”. We at Sesame are committed to supporting your child to become confident and independent, who learn to value and respect, to think and understand, and develop a strong sense of identity and belonging. We do this by providing “learning experiences” and by helping your child to learn for his/herself.

## **SIOLTA**

Siolta is the National Quality Framework for Early Education. It ensures that we deliver a curriculum through a range of principles and standards that staff must meet as Early Years Educators. Sesame is the first Early Years Specialist Day service for children with additional to have completed Siolta and be Siolta validated.

## **Early Childcare and Education**

Children need early learning experiences to foster their cognitive, social and emotional development and lay foundations for later success. Children learn how the world works by playing, exploring and problem solving.

We incorporate many different activities throughout the day. These vary from room to room and each area will have an appropriate plan. The staff plan a curriculum that will help to support your child's holistic development.

## **We Endeavor to Provide**

- ◆ Responsive and stimulating experiences
- ◆ Interesting environments and challenges
- ◆ Outdoor play
- ◆ Child led activities
- ◆ Imaginative play
- ◆ Music, movement and drama
- ◆ Creative time - we look at and discuss different topics and themes, highlight milestones such as birthdays and much more!
- ◆ Awareness of equality and diversity

We follow general routines whereby the children feel secure and have an appropriate balance of active and rest time. Children are all individuals and will develop differently; we will build on their strengths and provide support and encouragement when needed.

## **General Routine**

- ◆ Playroom Child-led activities.
- ◆ Morning greeting.
- ◆ Sensory room and body awareness.
- ◆ Groups, songs, nursery rhymes,
- ◆ Individual therapies, table top, sensory activities etc.
- ◆ Personal care
- ◆ Snacks are provided by parents/guardians
- ◆ Lámh DVD
- ◆ Home time

The children are taken outside frequently for play each day. Weather permitting.

At going home time, children are generally excited to see their parents or guardians and share their news, show their pictures and so forth. They may get anxious if left waiting for collection. Each child in Sesame has their own log book that is sent in and out to school each day. It is used for communication between keyworker and parents/guardians.

## **Illness/Exclusion/Vaccination/Medication**

### **Any form of medication must never be left in a child's bag, including inhalers**

Please notify the service when your child cannot attend at your earliest convenience. If your child is diagnosed with a notifiable illness such as chicken pox or a condition that is contagious the service must be informed so that other parents can be made aware. Please note that your child's identity will NOT be disclosed

### **DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO THE SERVICE IF HE/SHE IS UNWELL**

Your child will not be happy away from the home if he/she is unwell and may carry infection which may be passed to others

- ◆ When a child becomes ill while attending the childcare service, he/she will be isolated from the other children, and the parent will be notified to pick up the child within an hour. If the parent cannot be reached, we will contact the person indicated by you on your child's emergency care form.
- ◆ Please make sure all parent/guardian contact numbers for work, home and other emergency contact numbers are up to date.
- ◆ If you have given a mobile phone number and you cannot use it at work, please ensure that your workplace number is given so that it may be used in the event of an emergency

## **Exclusion**

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

- Acute symptoms of food poisoning/gastro-enteritis.
- A deep, hacking cough or Whooping cough
- Severe congestion
- Difficulty breathing or untreated wheezing
- An unexplained rash
- Lice or nits - until treated and clear - see Head Lice Policy and Procedure
- An infectious /contagious condition
- A child that complains of a stiff neck and headache with one or more of the above symptoms

## MINIMUM PERIODS OF EXCLUSION FROM THE SERVICE FOR ILLNESS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASE.

- **Antibiotics Prescribed:** At least 24 hours.
- **Conjunctivitis:** Until eyes are no longer weeping and clear or until they have been on antibiotics for 48 hours.
- **Croup:** Until the cough has subsided.
- **Diarrhoea:** 48 hours from last episode
- **Chickenpox:** 7 days from appearance of the rash, blisters are scabbed over.
- **COVID 19 (Confirmed case):** Follow HSE guidance on Isolation. Do not enter the service until isolation period as per HSE recommendations has ended.
- **COVID 19 (Close Contact):** Follow HSE guidance on testing, restricting of movement and isolation. Do not enter the service until restriction/isolation period as per HSE recommendations has ended.
- **COVID 19 (Awaiting test result/household member awaiting result):** Follow HSE guidance on testing, restricting of movement and isolation. Do not enter the service until all tests results have been received and the restriction period or isolation period as per HSE recommendations has ended.
- **Ear Infection:** 24 hrs after starting antibiotic
- **Gastroenteritis, Food poisoning, Salmonellas, Dysentery:** Until 48 hours after first formed stool.
- **Hand, Foot and Mouth:** Until child is well/seek Coordinator's advice.
- **Impetigo:** Until the skin is healed or 24 hours after starting antibiotic.
- **Infective hepatitis:** 7 days from onset of jaundice.
- **Infective Jaundice:** Until clinical recovery.
- **Influenza (flu):** 7 days from onset of symptoms.
- **Measles:** 4 days from appearance of the rash.
- **Meningococcal Infection:** Until recovered from illness, bacteriological exam clear.
- **Mumps:** Exclude child for 5 days after onset of symptoms.
- **Pediculosis(lice):** Until appropriate treatment has been given.

- **Pertussis (Whooping cough):** 5 days from the commencement of antibiotics
- **Poliomyelitis:** Until declared free from infection by GP
- **Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV):** Until symptoms are gone and temperature is under 38° Celsius.
- **Rubella (German measles):** 7 days from appearance of the rash
- **Scabies:** Not necessary once treatment has commenced
- **Scarlet fever:** 24 hours after commencing appropriate antibiotic treatment.
- **Streptococcal infection:** 24 hours from the start of treatment.  
**Recurrent Streptococcal infection:** If a child is being swabbed for suspected Strep A they cannot return to the service until the swab results confirm a positive or negative result. If a positive result, follow the above directions and seek guidance from the GP in relation to returning to the service.
- **Temperature:** Exclusion if 38 degrees or over
- **Thrush:** 24 hrs after starting antibiotic
- **Vomiting:** 48 hours from last episode of vomiting

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

If your child contracts any communicable disease, you must inform the service in the interests of Public Health.

**We will notify all parents of any notifications of a communicable disease**

## **Accident/Incident**

### **Policy and Procedure**

#### **Prevention**

- A Safety statement is prepared and reviewed on a regular basis. All new staff, students and Volunteers are made familiar with the Safety Statement.
- Children will be adequately supervised in accordance with the recommended child/adult ratios.
- Each room is designed for easy and unobtrusive supervision by the adults at all times.
- Our staff know which children are present at any one time.
- We ensure that no child can leave the premises undetected.
- The main door is locked with a door entry system.
- Only suitable and age-appropriate materials and equipment are available to children.
- Windows and doors have safety appropriate glass with restricted opening safety devices.
- All electrical sockets are fitted with safety covers.
- Furniture and equipment is arranged to minimize safety risks.
- Sun block protection will be used during hot weather; parents will be advised to provide sun cream and a hat that covers the head, neck and ears.

#### **In the event of an accident**

- The first aid boxes are always fully equipped, easily identifiable and the location is known to all staff.
- Medical supplies are checked regularly.
- A designated First Aider (certified) is on the premises at all times.
- Staff must wear protective clothing (disposable apron and gloves) to clean any bodily fluids or spillages.

- If a child is involved in an incident or accident, they will be taken into a quiet area, if possible.
- All accidents/incidents even minor ones, are recorded in an accident/incident record book. Minor accidents will be treated on site where possible and parents informed of the injury. Records are accessible to all relevant staff in case of an emergency.
- In the case of a serious accident, we have a local doctor on call, they will be called and the child's parents contacted immediately or we will call an ambulance.
- If the child has to go to the hospital a staff member will accompany the child, if the ambulance personnel permit. The child's record will be taken to the hospital.
- The staff member will not sign for any treatment to be carried out on the child in the hospital and will wait with the child until the parent/guardian or carer arrives.
- All serious accidents will be reported to the Insurance Company.
- Parents are responsible for all doctors or hospital fees where applicable.

## **Clothing**

Please send appropriate clothing i.e., raingear, sun gear, sun cream, hats etc., as weather dictates. We ask that these items be left at the service during term time. Dress children comfortably & appropriately for play. Please also send in a spare set of clothes and label all belongings.

Spare clothes to include:

- ◆ Top
- ◆ Vest
- ◆ Jumper
- ◆ Trousers
- ◆ Underwear
- ◆ Socks
- ◆ Shoes

## **Outdoor Play**

Outdoor play is so important for every child's development. It is a place where they can explore, use their imaginations, experiment, enhance their social skills and challenge their physical abilities. We treat the outdoor area the same as the indoors where their development and learning is supported by a wide range of activities. We will ensure that children are suitably protected if they engage in "messy play". We do not encourage parents to send their children in their "best" clothes. Please leave a pair of wellies at Sesame for your child's use.

## **Outings**

It is the policy of Sesame to ensure the safety and well-being of the children and adults involved in our service when planning and undertaking outings. The locations for the outings should be familiar to staff. Our day-to-day outings will only include, walks, trips to the park, playground or to town. In the event we are going somewhere different a risk assessment will be carried out and parents/guardians will be informed. Children will either walk, be pushed in buggies or travel on the Sesame bus when visiting these venues.

### **Policy and Procedure**

- A consent form must be given to and signed by a Parent / Guardian for trips or outings.
- A separate consent must be signed by a parents/guardian for outings on the bus.
- The Nurse will accompany the children on outings.
- Prior information about proposed outings is given to Parents/Guardians.



- Adult / child ratios required by the Early Year Services Regulations 2016 will be adhered to, but we aim to provide an even higher adult / child ratio where possible.
- The child's key worker must be responsible for the child they are assigned to.
- A safety briefing will be given to all adults involved in the outing so they are aware of where we are going, the plan of action and have all the necessary health and safety materials need during the outing.
- If children are to be in the care of other personnel / services during an outing, it is advised that the child protection policy of that service be discussed in advance of the outing.
- A mobile phone and all parents contact numbers is to be taken on excursions at all times. First aid kit and medication needed on the day will be taken also.
- Nurse and/or staff members trained in the administration of buccal midazolam or other emergency medications will bring same if children who may require it are on the outing.
- Staff must always ensure children are dressed appropriately for the weather.
- Children should wear high visibility vests during the outing.
- Staff members must be responsible for checking numbers of children, doing a head count and recording names of children, before leaving the premises, several times while out on the outing, before returning and on return to the service.

### **What is brought on Outings?**

- Buggies, even if children are walking. It is important to have at least one buggy in case a child gets tired.
- Contact numbers for each child's Parents/Guardians.
- Mobile phone - ensure it is charged properly and that there is plenty of credit in the phone.
- The child's drink - especially if it is a hot day. These should be chilled before leaving.
- Sun cream and sun hats or rainwear, depending on the weather.
- A watch with the correct time. Before leaving the staff should say what time they will be returning and if the time runs late, they should ring the Manager to inform them of this.

- The outings bag – containing spare set of clothes, PPE, tissues/wipes etc.
- A small travel first aid kit.
- Bring any medication which may be needed.

## **Transport on Outings**

In the event that transport is required for outings the following must apply:

- The private transport must be properly insured. A copy of the insurance policy should be requested and held on file.
- They must provide seat belts and if required booster seats for children.
- Information can be sought from the Road Safety Authority.

Written permission will be received by a parent/guardian first before any outings take place on private transport or the Sesame bus.

## **Managing medicines on trips and outings**

If children are going on outings, staff accompanying the children must include the nurse, or a member of staff has received training on medication administration who is fully informed about the child's needs and/or medication.

The required medication, a medication administration form, consent for medication administration, parent contact details and the procedure to be followed when administering medication must be brought on the outing.

- Medication for a child is taken in a sealed plastic bag clearly labelled with the child's name and the name of the medication. Inside the bag is a copy of the consent form, prescription, the parents/guardians' details, the administration technique and a medication administration form (long-term/short-term) to record when/if the medication was administered.
- On returning to the setting these are stored in the locked medicine cabinet.
- If a child on medication has to be taken to hospital, the child's medication is taken in a sealed plastic bag clearly labelled with the child's name and the name of the medication. Inside the bag is a copy of the consent form signed by the parent.

## **Healthy Eating Policy**

At Sesame we promote healthy nutritional choices for our children. We feel it is important at this young age to introduce and educate our children about good nutrition and the health benefits of eating well.

### **Policy and Procedures**

- We are committed to our children's safety and our children's safety is the primary food safety goal of our organisation.
- We will ensure our children's safety by the constant application of our safety standards and by ensuring all produce is prepared in a safe and hygienic environment complying with all relevant legislation.
- Mealtimes are relaxed and happy occasions where children are encouraged but never forced to eat any part of their lunch, nor is food withheld for any reason other than dietary limitations.
- We wish to encourage a healthy lifestyle with emphasis on the enjoyable and social aspects of eating together.
- Parents/guardians are asked to inform staff of any special dietary requirements. Every endeavour will be made to meet the needs of any special dietary requirement.
- Special therapeutic dietary needs are respected. Parents/guardians are requested to give Sesame Early Years Specialist Day Service staff a copy of the diet sheet provided by their dietician.
- Lunch time is used as an opportunity to encourage good social habits.
  - Good table manners will be encouraged
  - Children will also be engaged in conversation if they wish
  - Children that are slow eaters will be given time to eat and not rushed
- Parents will be advised on what their child eats each day.
- Children will be encouraged to sit down when eating and/or drinking.
- Mealtime should be engaged with in a positive way with the children. Staff must not use any negative association with food at any time with the children.
- Parents/guardians are asked to identify to staff any foods that they feel are inappropriate.

- The preparation of bottles and formulas are to be provided by the parent/guardian each day. Instructions for heating your child's bottles should be given to a member of staff. Milk/juice and food will always be placed in the refrigerator. All children's bottles/beakers etc. will be clearly labelled with their name.
- Sweets are not routinely offered, but may be for special occasions. Sesame will provide snacks and drinks to celebrate such occasions. Parents may send in birthday cakes however they should be bought at a shop, with the ingredients clearly stated. The cake should not contain nuts, as some children may be allergic to nuts.

### **Activities**

Healthy eating is promoted through an arrangement of activities for the children including play, stories, music, outings, cookery etc. The implementation of this Healthy Eating Policy will not only relate to the provision of healthy foods and drinks in the service, in order to promote the nutritional and general well-being of the children, but it will also address food related activities involving the children which should encourage and enable them to make healthy choices in the future.

### **Food Pyramid**

At Sesame we use the food pyramid as a fun and simple approach to healthy eating. The pyramid is divided into different sections or shelves, each representing a different food group. This food pyramid is displayed on the parents/guardians notice board and in the classrooms.

## **Toys/Personnel Belongings**

- ◆ If possible, we discourage children from bringing in their favourite toys, in case they get lost or damaged.
- ◆ Comforter toys, blankets and dummies may be necessary for some children; please label your child's property clearly.

## **Child Protection Policy**

Sesame has a TUSLA approved Child Protection Policy. This is available to parents on request. Sesame follows TUSLA "Children's first guidance". All Staff have received child protection training. We also have our Child Safeguarding Policy on display on the notice boards in our entrance hall.

Every member of staff has up to date Garda vetting.  
Before commencing work at Sesame, thorough reference checks are obtained.

## **Confidentiality**

- ◆ All information received relating to any child will be treated in a confidential manner where the safety and welfare of the child is not at risk.
- ◆ All records will be kept safe and secure.
- ◆ Parents have a right to privacy.
- ◆ Please inform us of any changes in details, phone numbers, emergency contact person etc., as soon as the changes occur.
- ◆ Staff have access to information in order to provide the correct care for your child. It is on a need-to-know basis.
- ◆ In the event of a child protection or child welfare concerns, staff will inform the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) or Deputy DLP. In the best interests of the child, Sesame is legally obliged to report concerns to the TUSLA Social Work Dept.
- ◆ Where possible we will attempt to advise the parent/guardians unless there is significant risk of harm.
- ◆ Parents/guardians must report any matter of concern within the service to the Manager.
- ◆ If there are Child Welfare or Child Protection concerns, Sesame is committed to work with the family for the benefit of the child in collaboration with TUSLA.

## **Training**

There will be some staff in-service training days throughout the year. Parents/Guardians will get adequate notice of same. This is to develop skills and maintain a high standard of quality and care.

## **Emergency Closure**

In the event that the service should need to close due to emergency or unforeseen circumstances we will endeavor to phone/email parents/guardians and will post a notice giving as much up to date information at the service.

## **Termination of Care**

Failure to comply with public health advice may result in the termination of your child's place in our service.

## **Conclusion**

We at Sesame will make every effort to ensure that your child has a positive and happy experience within our service. Please do not hesitate to share your views, concerns and positive comments with us as we are constantly striving to provide excellence in our care.

*Thank you.*

## ADMISSION AGREEMENT

Sesame does not discriminate against children or parents from admission regardless of race, colour, creed, sex, or religion.

Before a child is enrolled in the service the following must be received by staff:

*Completed application form	Yes/No
*Health history	Yes/No
*Details of any allergies	Yes/No
*Up-to-Date Immunisation Record	Yes/No
*Emergency Authorisation	Yes/No
*Parent Permission	Yes/No
*Parent Declaration Form	Yes/No

It is preferable that the child and parent(s) have a tour of the service and prior meeting with the Staff to answer any questions about the child's attendance.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian

Signed: *Eleanor McGrath* General Manager

Signed: *Julie Mulcahy* Sesame Co-Ordinator

Date: Sept 2023