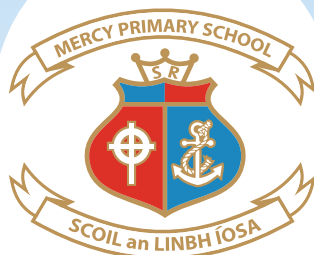




**SALiChildcare**  
Grow Each Day in A Fun Filled Way



# PARENT'S HANDBOOK



# Welcome!

## **Dear Parents,**

On behalf of all staff here at SALI Childcare Service Ltd., I extend a warm welcome to you and your child. It is our aim that your child will be extremely happy in our service. We work to ensure your child reaches his or her full potential in a pleasant and stimulating learning environment. There is a strong sense of community and a high level of co-operation between staff, children, parents and visitors.

We have a dedicated team of highly qualified professionals and you can be assured of our full co-operation and commitment at all times.

Should you have any queries or concerns at any time please feel free to come and talk to us.

**Sinéad Chapman**  
Childcare Manager

# Our Team

Here at SALL Childcare Service our highly qualified and talented educators are committed to providing the best care and education for your child.

Every member of staff has been selected for their experience, qualifications and dedication to making a positive difference to your child's life. We look for individuals who have excellent communication skills so they can build trusting and open relationships with both children and parents.

Our staff culture is one of fun, teamwork and dedication to the high standards that parents expect.

Our staff are fully qualified in all aspects of children's care in line with the latest methodology and accreditation. Our service eagerly keeps abreast with the latest industry standards and trends, making us one of the leaders in our field.

More detailed information about our team is displayed in the service.



# Mission Statement

Our childcare service is a place where children are encouraged to grow and develop in a supportive, positive and enjoyable atmosphere.

We provide a home away from home in which both staff and parents work together to fulfil each and every child's developmental potential, as well as holistic needs, in a safe and comforting environment.

## **SALI Childcare Service provides the following services:**

Sessional Pre-School	09.30 - 12.30
Part Time Pre-School	08.45 - 13.25
Full Day Care	08.00 - 18.00
Breakfast Club	08.00 - 08.45
Happy Hour	13.30 - 14.45
After-School	13.30 / 14.30 - 18.00

Under the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016, SALI Childcare is registered as an early years care and education and afterschool service. We cater for children from 2 years and 6 months to 12 years of age. We can cater for up to 57 preschool children and 60 afterschool children. We operate under the following adult to child ratios:

## **Full & Part-Time Services    Sessional Services**

### *Adult to child ratios*

Part/Full Time	Adult	Child
2-3 years	1	6
3-6 years	1	8

Sessional	Adult	Child
2½ – 6 years	1	11

# About Us

SALI Childcare Service Ltd. is an exceptional and affordable pre and after-school service located in the grounds of Mercy Primary School, St. Francis Street, Galway. SALI Childcare Service is registered with Tusla (Child and Family Agency). To date we have received fully compliant inspection reports.

# Opening Hours

We understand that parents are busy and have commitments for work, education and training therefore we open from 8.00 am until 6.00 pm.

We offer activity camps when local schools close for holidays, for example, during Summer, Easter, Halloween and other Mid-terms.

# Facilities

SALI Childcare has full use of the Mercy Primary School which boasts exceptional facilities such as:

- Three large, bright, spacious and fully equipped (including a SMART Interactive White Board) pre-school and after-school rooms.
- A safety surface outdoor area with a large slide and seesaws.
- Large hall with fully stocked P.E. equipment room.
- A fully stocked library.
- A state of the art kitchen for preparation of healthy and nutritious snacks and hot meals.

# Schemes Offered

We operate under the ECCE scheme (free pre-school for eligible children), the CCS (Community Childcare Subvention) scheme, which offers subsidised childcare for parents in receipt of state benefits and the TEC Schemes. We also provide the Affordable Childcare Scheme.

## Frameworks

At SALI Childcare we follow both the Aistear and Siolta frameworks. Aistear is the national curriculum framework for children from birth to six years. It describes the types of learning that are important for children in their early years. Aistear works as a guide in planning practical learning programmes for children in early years settings. Siolta is the national quality framework for Early Years settings. Siolta provides a guide in order to define, assess and support the improvement of quality across all aspects of our practice.

## After-School

Children from 4 to 12 years are collected from local schools by our team and provided with a hot meal and afternoon activity programme in an environment suitable to their needs, suitably equipped with a diverse range of activities.

Children have time to relax and unwind after their day at school. Staff supervise homework and provide them with a range of activities, games, cookery, arts and crafts, music, dance, ICT as well as the opportunity to mix with friends.

# Enrolment Policy

SALI Childcare Service Enrolment Policy prioritises the following:

- Children who will attend the Mercy Primary School the year after the ECCE scheme (pre-school) or are currently attending the Mercy Primary School (after-school).
- Brothers or sisters of children currently attending or past attendees of SALI Childcare.
- Children availing of the ECCE/CCS/TEC Schemes (5 days).
- Children of current SALI/Mercy Primary school staff.
- Children that live within the parish.
- In order of receipt date of application form.

The same will apply if there is a waiting list. No child will be placed on the waiting list unless an enrolment form is completed. We enrol on a first come, first served basis in order of receipt of application form.





# Policy on Withdrawing a Child from SALI Childcare Service

- SALI Childcare requires one month's written notice of the date your child will cease attending. One month's fees must be paid in lieu of notice. Where applicable the deposit paid on registration will be used against final payment.
- It is important to note that upon registration that all children are expected to attend until the end of the school year. Parents who withdraw their children earlier than this will not be entitled to a childcare place the following September.





# SALI Childcare Service Fee Policy

- Fees are set at the beginning of each year at a rate that takes into account affordability for parents and the sustainability of the service.
- Weekly fees are on display on the parent's notice board and are discussed with parents when they register their child with SALI Childcare Service. Fee are dependent on eligibility for schemes.
- Fees must be paid weekly/monthly in advance.
- Due to the government schemes in operation we are unable to offer a family discount.
- Fees must be paid even when the child is absent due to illness, except in special circumstances and with the agreement of the Board of SALI Childcare/Manager.
- Fee paying arrangements for holidays, bank holidays etc. will be agreed with parents at the time of enrolment.
- Parents will sign a contract agreeing the terms of the fee payment policy.
- Under no circumstances will amendments be made to this policy. Please remember that staff need to be paid out of the service's fees so please pay on time.

# Curriculum

The service implements a play based curriculum. This is based on the theory that play is the most natural and effective learning mechanism of the child. Children want to play and they use play as both a means for figuring out how the world works and how to be effective and masterful within it.

The play based curriculum is structured so that children have time, space and support to play. It involves a combination of free play, and activities, both adult and child led, that are based on the emerging interests of the children.

The play based curriculum, as outlined by Aistear, identifies four themes that permeate early childhood care and education.

- Well Being: this theme is about children being confident, happy and healthy.
- Identity and Belonging: this theme is about children developing a positive sense of who they are and feeling that they are valued and respected as part of a family and community.
- Communicating: this theme is about children sharing their experiences, thoughts, ideas, and feelings with others with growing confidence and competence in a variety of ways and for a variety of purposes.
- Exploring and Thinking: this theme is about children making sense of the things, places, and people in their world by interacting with others, playing, observing, investigating, questioning, and forming, testing and refining ideas.

# Equal Opportunities

At SALI Childcare Service, we are committed to providing equal opportunities for all by providing an environment that respects everyone individually, regardless of gender, race, culture, religious, special or additional needs.

We provide children with resources that encourage them to learn about different values, cultural diversity and physical disabilities. Activities and experiences will reflect a wide range of lifestyles, cultures and beliefs.

## Observations and Assessment

We use observations and assessment throughout the pre-school in which we gather information to assist ongoing assessments of our children:

- By providing a wide range of activities and experiences through the pre-school.
- By direct observation and evaluations.
- Information from outside agencies or other settings when applicable.
- Parental involvement.
- Examples of children's work.
- Photographs.
- Assessment records.

# Children with Additional Needs

Within our service we cater for children with additional needs, including children who may have physical disabilities, development delays, learning difficulties, special medical conditions or any special educational needs.

We aim to enable all the children to have equal access to the curriculum in an environment where every child is equally valued and respected.

Throughout the service we aim to have suitable facilities to provide for children with additional needs, therefore on this basis no child will be refused access to our service on the basis of any disability.

We provide access for parents, adults and visitors with a disability. We have wide doors, accessible toilets, access to an outdoor area and comply with all accessibility regulations.

The manager, staff, parents and special needs assistant will work in collaboration for the day-to-day coordination of provision for children with special needs. If the need arises, outside agencies will be called upon. Any special needs assistants will be supernumerary to ratios.

# Clothing

Children are allowed to wear their own clothes although it is preferable that these be loose and comfortable to allow for full movement of the limbs. Parents are requested not to dress their children in “good” or “expensive” clothes as the service cannot guarantee against spillages, paint etc.

Parents are also requested to provide a spare set of clothing for all children, ideally as outlined above this also includes underwear. These clothes must be clearly labeled with the child’s name and replaced if used. If clothes get lost or damaged within the service, the service will not take responsibility for them.

**\*Please label or mark your child’s name on all of their clothes, jackets, bags and uniform before they begin pre-school or after-school.**

# Healthy Lunches

We operate a Healthy Eating Policy in our childcare service. Crisps, sweets, chocolate spread, fizzy drinks, etc. are not allowed for school lunches. Please ensure that the outside of your child’s lunch box is clearly labeled or marked with their name and every child has their own water beaker. Milk or water are the only drinks acceptable for school lunches.

Within the service we provide hot, healthy and nutritious snacks to our part time children. If your child has special dietary needs or allergies it is imperative that you inform staff. Please see our noticeboard for a detailed menu including allergens. Due to allergies within the service we may request a nut and/or egg free classroom. Please ensure you follow these instructions for the health and safety of all children.

# Medication

It is the policy of the childcare service not to administer any medications to the children. The service will be happy to facilitate parents and guardians needing to give medication to their child. Children with a long term medical or life threatening condition will be accommodated in order that they may continue with their pre or after-school service. Parents and guardians must seek permission in writing from the manager before a member of staff may administer any medication or drugs to pupils.

# Illness and Accidents

Accidents occur despite supervision. Minor accidents are treated at school. In the event of a major accident or a child becoming ill, every effort will be made to contact the child's parents or the persons delegated to take responsibility for the child.

**This highlights the importance of keeping contact details updated. If your address or phone number changes please notify the service so we can amend our records.**

**The Board of SALI Childcare Service does not accept responsibility for any medical costs.**

# Absence and Sickness

It is the services policy that reasons for **all** absences must be explained to a staff member.

**Full fees must still be paid to the childcare service in the event of a child missing a day.**

If your child is sick, particularly with a contagious illness, for example; diarrhoea, vomiting, a fever of 101 degrees/38°C, communicable diseases: measles, mumps, meningitis, hepatitis, they **must not** be brought into the service. Head lice must be treated and head clear for at least 24 hours before re-admitting.

Only when your child is feeling well, accompanied with a doctor's cert indicating they are better, will they be admitted back into the service. Under no circumstances will the service put other children at risk by admitting sick children. As a parent you must make other arrangements. If your child is on antibiotics they **MUST** remain out from the service for at least 24 hours.

A sick child is not well enough to attend our service so please do not make them feel worse by sending them in.

## Parent - Staff Communications

Frequent communication is of vital importance in developing and nurturing cooperation between home and the childcare service. In our service, communication between parents and staff may take one of the following forms:

- Parents can request a meeting with a staff member or the service manager by making an appointment. It is necessary that the purpose of the visit be stated so that staff member may undertake whatever preparation is necessary with regard to information and records.



- Open door policy: we operate an open door policy to all parents.
- Newsletters are distributed regularly to the children. Please check your child's bag daily.
- Text-a-parent.
- An open day is held in June of each year with parents of new children.
- Events such as sports day, concerts and much more.
- The service website tells of our many activities and achievements.

## Compliant Procedure

Parents are asked to discuss their concerns with their designated staff member initially, by making an appointment and, if necessary to proceed further with the complaint, to make an appointment to speak with the Manager.

## Emergency Closing

Should an emergency closing be appropriate (e.g. in the event of no heat, snow etc.) the decision to close the service will be taken at the earliest possible time so as to maximise notice to parents and guardians.

**We ask that you ensure the school always has an up-to-date mobile phone number for you, so you can be informed immediately by the service through the text-a-parent service.**

# Behaviour Management

Within our service positive behaviour is always encouraged and promoted. It is essential that all staff, students or volunteer workers set a good example to all the children under their care. We use positive encouragement and re-enforcement to manage unacceptable behaviour.

## **If unacceptable behaviour is evident:**

- The adult in the room will get down to the child's level and ask them - in a calm and soothing voice - why they are behaving in the way they are. The adult will outline that what they are doing might hurt or cause upset to other children or the adult.
- Under no circumstances will children be shouted at. At all times the adult will stay calm and composed.
- If the negative behaviour continues the adult will take the child away from the activity or group they are in to allow the child to calm down and take a rest. Under no circumstances will the child be put in the "bold chair".
- Usually when the child is given a few minutes to take a rest and calm down, (under the adults supervision), they are calm enough to resume what they were doing.
- If the negative behaviour is continuous the parents will be brought in and a suitable plan of action will be agreed upon.
- All behaviour management policies are shared and discussed with parents so they can be implemented at home, thus ensuring continuity, which will overall improve behaviour.
- If a child's behaviour is continuously proven to be negative the adult may need to carry out an event sample observation to determine causes of the behaviour. This again will be discussed with the parents.

# After-School

Within the after-school programme we offer stimulating and relaxing activities including drama, sports, arts, music, ICT skills, baking, local excursions around the community and much more to all the children. There is a homework support facility available within the service. We realise that children have been working hard in school all day so we allow them their independence to choose what they would like to do. We also consult with the children on forthcoming activities and allow them to give their opinion on them.

We encourage all after-school children to bring a change of comfortable clothing to avoid their uniform becoming dirty during the week. Please ensure your child has a labelled sports bag to keep his or her clothing in. We encourage that parents ensure that their child's jacket and footwear are suitable for the weather conditions.

Our collection service, where applicable, will apply to normal school finishing times only. We regret we are unable to collect children from activities, which are scheduled outside of normal school hours.

We require a list of all half days and mid-term breaks for each school.

If parents or a relative are collecting the child from school instead of attending after-school care please ensure a staff member is informed by text or call.

All sessional after-school children are provided with a hot meal at a suitable time. The menu varies from day to day.

**It is important to note that your child will be registered for after-school care from September until the last week of June. All weeks (excluding mid-terms) must be paid for, regardless if your child attends or not.**

# Policies and Procedures

You will find a comprehensive list of policies and procedures on our parent's noticeboard outside Room 1. Please take the time to familiarise yourself with these. A copy of these policies and procedures can be emailed to all parents upon request.

Under Regulation 10 of the Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016, we have devised the following policies and procedures. We ask that all parents or guardians become familiar with these:

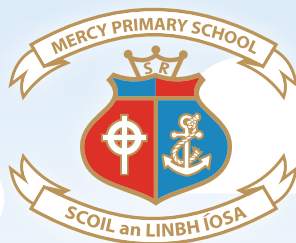
- Statement of Purpose and Function
- Complaints Policy
- Administration of Medication Policy
- Policy on Infection Control
- Managing Behaviour Policy
- Safe Sleep Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Outings Policy
- Policy on Accidents and Incidents
- Authorisation to Collect Children
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Policy on Outdoor Play
- Policy on Staff Absences
- Policy in use of Internet Photographic and Recording Devices
- Recruitment Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Settling in Policy
- Staff Training Policy
- Supervision Policy





# **SALiChildcare**

*Grow Each Day in A Fun Filled Way*



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