

# Parent Statement for Partner Services

## 1. Welcome to our Partner Service

Little Star Preschool, Tullow Church Hall Brighton Road Foxrock, Dublin 18 Foxrock D18X0E8, is a Partner Service, working together with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, and parents/guardians to deliver high quality, affordable, inclusive Early Learning and Care (ELC) and/or School Age Childcare (SAC) services for children under Together for Better.

Together for Better is the funding model for early learning and childcare that brings together four major programmes, the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme - including the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM), the National Childcare Scheme (NCS), Core Funding, and the Equal Start.

As a Partner Service, we offer subsidy schemes to parents/guardians and receive Core Funding. Core Funding, which began in September 2022, is the new supply side funding stream to start the partnership for the public good between the State and providers. Its primary purpose is to improve pay and conditions in the sector as a whole and improve affordability for parents as well as ensuring a stable income to providers.

This Parent Statement outlines some of the important things you can expect from us, as a Partner Service. This Parent Statement is provided as a condition of the Core Funding Partner Service Funding Agreement, the NCS, ECCE and CCSP Saver Funding agreements and informs the agreement in place between us Little Star Preschool and the parents/guardians that use our service. The Minister of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth is not a party to this agreement which is solely between the service and parent/guardian.

### 1.1 About Us

Here are some of the basic things to know about us:

A typical week for us is 09:00 to 12:30 Monday to Friday for 38 weeks per year.

At Little Star Preschool we offer the following services to children and their families:

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Sessional Care for Early Learning & Care (ELC) excluding ECCE provision |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Sessional pre-school under ECCE (Free Pre-school)                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Full day care/part time care for Early Learning & Care (ELC)            |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Term time School Age Childcare  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Out of term School Age Childcare  |

## 2. Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE), Access and Inclusion Model (AIM), National Childcare Scheme (NCS) and Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCSP) Saver Programme.

This Childcare Service is in contract to deliver the:

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | National Childcare Scheme (NCS)                            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Community Childcare Subvention Plus (CCSP) Saver Programme |

### Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (ECCE)

ECCE provides for 15 hours per week of preschool provision over 38 weeks per year before children start primary school at no charge to parents. A child is eligible to start ECCE in the September term once they have turned 2 years and 8 months of age on or prior to 31 August that year.

If you are availing of additional childcare, the balance of the childcare fees that you have to pay are the child's fees minus the 15 hours of ECCE per week your child is eligible for. The 15 hours you are awarded is paid by the Department to Little Star Preschool for your child. Any additional childcare hours you are using outside of ECCE are eligible for an NCS subsidy (see details below).

Little Star Preschool must provide you with written details of how the balance of your childcare fees are calculated (that is, the fee we charge less your free 15 hours per week of preschool provision).

Lynda Priestley Owner / Manager will support you in registering your child for the ECCE programme in our service if your child meets the eligibility criteria. Further information about ECCE is available here - <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/2459ee-early-childhood-care-and-education-programme-ecce/>

**Please note:** In the ECCE Programme you are not required or obliged to select or pay a deposit for any optional extras.

If you do avail of any optional extra, should you, at any time, wish to withdraw from any of the optional extras selected, you must provide Little Star Preschool with 20 working days' notice.

### **Access and Inclusion Model (AIM)**

The goal of AIM is to create a more inclusive environment in pre-schools, so all children, regardless of ability, can benefit from quality early learning and care. The model achieves this by providing universal supports to pre-school settings, and targeted supports, which focus on the needs of the individual child, without requiring a diagnosis of disability.

Further information about AIM is available here - <https://aim.gov.ie/>

#### Optional:

This service also has an Inclusion Coordinator, Julie Davis who has a special qualification focused on supporting the inclusion of all children in the service.

### **Calendars**

Little Star Preschool will provide you with a separate letter indicating the days our service is closed over the programme year. We will provide you with a minimum of 20 working days written notice period of our intention to change this.

## **3. Fees Policies**

As a Partner Service, we operate a Fees Policy that is transparent and understandable to our parents/guardians and is compliant with the requirements under the Core Funding Partner Service Funding Agreement. Please do not hesitate to contact Lynda Priestley Owner / Manager who will provide additional clarification as required.

**3.1 Fee Management – As a Partner Service**, we operate our Fees Policy in accordance with the Core Funding Partner Service Funding Agreement, which in programme year 2024/2025 involves no increases of fees on those charged to parents/guardians on 30 of September 2021, called an effective 'fee freeze'. There may be some exceptions to this rule, which can be found in <https://earlyyearshive.ncs.gov.ie/downloads/download-corefunding/>. In order that you can understand what this fee freeze means for you, we have outlined our fees and associated fees policy below.

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <b>a) Our service was in existence on or before 30 September 2021</b> |
|-------------------------------------|---|

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
|                          | As a Partner Service, we are committed to operating the effective 'fee freeze' for Programme Year 2024/2025. This means that we will not charge our parents/guardians more for the same service than what we were charging in September 2021.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>b) Our service was established after 30 September 2021</b><br>As a Partner Service, we are committed to operating the effective 'fee freeze' for Programme Year 2024/2025. This means that we will not charge our parents/guardians more for the same service than what we were charging when we first became a Partner Service. |

**3.2 Donations** - We will not request or accept any donations, voluntary or otherwise from parents/guardians, in respect of the ELC/SAC services being provided.

**3.3 Deposits** - We will not charge any non-refundable deposits<sup>1</sup> to parents/guardians in the respect of their ELC/SAC service where the parent/guardian takes up the service for which the deposit was paid. Additionally, we will return all deposits which have been taken relating to the 2024/2025 programme year once your child's registration is approved on the Hive or within four weeks of the child taking up the place, whichever is sooner.

**3.4 Discounts** – We will keep all discounts that were available on 30 September 2021 in place, provided that they are available to all children in our service. Any discount relevant to you will be applied to your normal fee.

**3.5 Optional Extras** – The term 'Optional Extra' is only applicable to any extra services or activities we offer under the ECCE/CCSP Saver Programmes which are not funded by the Programmes but which are voluntary with optional charges to you. These optional extras are very limited in nature and there is a copy of the DCEDIY-approved optional extras list available in Appendix 1 of the [ECCE programme rules](#), which are also available on the Early Years Hive.

**3.6 Additional Service** - Is when something additional to a service type/fee option is offered to parents/guardians. Take up of the additional service must be entirely optional to parents/guardians. For example a service provider may offer school collection services in addition to their SAC Service Types, or a service providing ECCE only may offer 2 weeks of camp during Easter, these would be entirely optional to parents/guardians and charged for additionally.

**3.7 Fee Review Process** - As a Partner Service, we must uphold our contractual obligations regarding our fees charged to parents/guardians as laid out in the Core Funding Partner Service Funding Agreement.

Where a parent/guardian identifies a potential breach of Core Funding fee rules by a Partner Service, they may seek to have this examined and a conclusion reached through the [Core Funding Fee Review process](#).

A parent/guardian who has identified a change to a Partner Service's fee policy potentially breaching the Core Funding Partner Service Funding Agreement, may address the issue in the first instance by using the Partner Service's complaints policy. In certain cases, this step may allow for the quick resolution of the case between the Partner Service and the parent/guardian without engagement with the CCC. This pre-fee review stage is optional and where a parent/guardian does not wish to engage with the service with their concerns or questions around Fee Management, a parent/guardian can raise the case directly with the relevant CCC.

### 3.8 Fee Policy

A. The fee policy we are going to implement for year 2024/2025 is the same as the fee policy that we had in place on 30 September 2021.

<sup>1</sup> Non-refundable deposits include administration/registration fees or other such charges.

### 3.9 Fee Tables

#### 3.9.1 - Section A: Fee Tables

Programme Year: 2024/2025

| Fee Type Name                        | Session Type | Session Start Time | Session Finish Time | Hours per Day | Days per Week | Hours per Week | Fee     | Full Fee Non-ECCE Eligible Children | Effective From | Effective To |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------|-------------------------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Non-ECCE<br>9.00am - 12.30pm         | AM           | 09:00              | 12:30               | 3.5           | 5             | 17.5           | €110.25 | €110.25                             | 26/08/2024     | 29/06/2025   |
| Sessional - ECCE<br>9.00am - 12.00pm | AM           | 09:00              | 12:00               | 3             | 5             | 15             | €0      | €0                                  | 26/08/2024     | 29/06/2025   |
| Sessional - ECCE<br>9.00am - 12.30pm | AM           | 09:00              | 12:30               | 3.5           | 5             | 17.5           | €31.58  | €0                                  | 26/08/2024     | 29/06/2025   |

**3.9.2 - Section B: Fee Extras: Deposit / Discount / Optional Extras\* / Additional Services**

| Type           | Extras                | Amount | Description  | Additional Detail / Conditions                                       | Effective From | Effective To |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------|--|--|----------------|--------------|
| Deposit        |                       | €255   | Deposit of €255 required to secure a place.  | Deposit returned once the child is registered on the ECCE Programme. | 26/08/2024     | 29/06/2025   |
| Discount       |                       | €0     | We do not offer discounts.   |  | 26/08/2024     | 29/06/2025   |
| Optional Extra | 30 additional minutes | €120   | Additional 30 minutes per day x 5 days per week (12.00 - 12.30) €120 per calendar month. |  | 26/08/2024     | 29/06/2025   |

**3.9.3 - Section C – Other Additional Information**

Fees must be pre-paid on a monthly basis. In the event that payments are late, parents/guardians will be given up to one month to make up the payment, unless suitable payment arrangements have been made and approved by the owner. Little Star reserves the right to apply an additional charge of up to 10% of the amount of the past-due fees. Deposits are non-refundable if a booking is cancelled. Fees are payable until the end of the preschool year (end June 2025), even if a child is absent for any reason or on holidays. Refunds of fees are only given in cases of extenuating circumstances (i.e. child becomes seriously ill and cannot attend preschool). Refund requests must be submitted in writing for consideration. If a child needs to be withdrawn from preschool, one month's notice is required. If one month's prior notice is not given one month's fees must be paid in lieu. Please ensure that your child is collected on time as children can become quite distressed if they are collected late. If your child is collected more than 5 mins late Little Star reserves the right to apply a half-hourly fee of €12.63.

\* These are entirely optional to parents

**3.10 The changes to our Fees Policy as applicable on September 30, 2021 (or when we first became a Partner Service, whichever is earlier), are as follows:**

**3.10 (a) The following new Service Types ARE available:**

| Fee Type Name | SAC/ ELC | Age Range | Min Age | Max Age | ECCE available for ECCE Eligible Children | Session Start time | Session finish time | Incorporated Services ? | Choose incorporated Service | Additional Information | No. hours per day | No days per week | No. hours per week | Fee (less ECCE 3 Free Hours (€)) | Full Fee |
|---------------|----------|-----------|---------|---------|---|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|----------|
|               |          |           |         |         |   |                    |                     |                         |                             |                        |                   |                  |                    | €                                | €        |

**3.10 (b) The following Service Types are NO LONGER available:**

| Fee Type Name | SAC/ ELC | Age Range | Min Age | Max Age | ECCE available for ECCE Eligible Children | Session Start time | Session finish time | Incorporated Services ? | Choose incorporated Service | Additional Information | No. hours per day | No days per week | No. hours per week | Fee (less ECCE 3 Free Hours (€)) | Full Fee |
|---------------|----------|-----------|---------|---------|---|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|----------|
|               |          |           |         |         |   |                    |                     |                         |                             |                        |                   |                  |                    | €                                | €        |

#### 4. Quality measures

As a Partner Service, we are committed to delivering quality for children and families. There are number of ways we can show this.

##### 4.1 Our staff have the following qualifications:

| Room/Session                | Qualification   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| ECCE Preschool Sessional AM | 1 x BA Hons QQI Level 8, 2 x QQI FETAC Level 6, 1 x QQI FETAC Level 5 |

##### 4.2

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <b>We are actively working to implement our Quality Action Plan and we will report on progress at the end of the year to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and our parents / guardians.</b> |
|-------------------------------------|---|

Little Star Preschool will display the end of year QAP report in an area accessible to parents/guardians as well as on any online platform maintained by the Little Star Preschool for the purpose of advertising its service or providing information to parents/guardians.

**Queries** -If you have any queries or wish to discuss any of the above, please contact **Lynda Priestley Owner / Manager**. Alternatively, you could address queries to your local **City/County Childcare Committee (CCC)**. A list of CCC contact details is available from [www.myccc.ie](http://www.myccc.ie)



Little Star Preschool will display this Parent Statement at all times in an area accessible to parents/guardians as well as on any online platform maintained by the Little Star Preschool for the purpose of advertising its service or providing information to parents/guardians. Little Star Preschool will print and co-sign a Parent Statement for each family. A copy signed by Little Star Preschool and the parent/guardian will be retained on file. Any changes to Fee Policies will require that an updated Parent Statement is displayed and Little Star Preschool will issue updated Parent Statements by email to our parents/guardians and retain proof of the associated email.

Include here a list of children enrolled at the service:

Use **BLOCK CAPITALS**:

| Child first name | Child family name |
|------------------|-------------------|
|                  |                   |
|                  |                   |
|                  |                   |
|                  |                   |

This Parent Statement, which is an agreement solely between the parent/guardian and the provider, sets out what is on offer at Little Star Preschool and the applicable fees. If these terms conflict with the terms of any other agreement between Little Star Preschool and the parents/guardians then this takes priority, however any parts of any existing agreement that do not conflict remain in force and are not affected by this Parent Statement.

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| Programme Year:                         | 2024/2025             |
| Signed on behalf of:                    | Little Star Preschool |
|   | 16DR0317              |
| Signed – Parent/Guardian:               |                       |
| Parent/Guardian name in BLOCK CAPITALS: |                       |
| Date:                                   |                       |