



# *Inagh Ark Childcare Centre*

## **Parents Hand Book**



September 2014

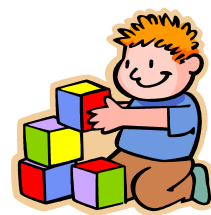
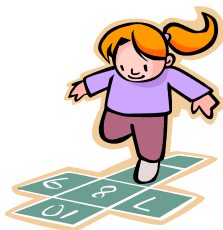
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*Part of Inagh Development Limited  
Working for the local community*



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### **Introduction**

Welcome to Inagh Ark Childcare Centre, where children's well being and potential for learning is of primary importance. Our aim is to enable children to be confident and competent learners throughout their time with us and to be keen and eager to learn more when they move on to school.

We believe that parents are the first educators of their children and we wish to work with parents as partners to support the continued active learning of the children attending Inagh Ark.

The staff team at Inagh Ark are committed to providing a warm and caring atmosphere whilst maintaining a professional approach to their work with the children.

At Inagh Ark Childcare we provide inclusive childcare. We welcome Children of all abilities and work with parents and the Clare Early Intervention Unit to provide appropriate care for children with special needs. We recognise the rights of the child outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1998.

Inagh Ark Childcare is a Community Childcare Provider and is part of Inagh Development Limited and there is a sub-committee who govern the day to day running of the centre.

We are inspected on an annual basis by the Preschool Inspection Team. The reports of the inspections are available for you to view in the office, at any time, as well as now being available online.

In the following pages I have outlined some areas of particular interest to parents. If you wish to know more or have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me on 065 6836439.

Pat Kiernan



### **Our curriculum— Play based within Aistear framework**

Aistear is the national curriculum framework and was developed by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment in Ireland.

The Aistear framework uses four broad themes, these are:

- ◇ Well-being
- ◇ Identity and belonging
- ◇ Communicating
- ◇ Thinking and Exploring

Aistear is designed to compliment all methods of early childcare and education.

‘Children love to play and play often mirrors what is important in their lives’

Aistear also recommends the use of the ‘key’ worker system, which is recognised as good practice in childcare in many parts of the world.

The Key worker is a member of the childcare team who has a particular responsibility for one group of children. The key worker gives feedback to parents and communicates all issues concerning your child. Your child will be allocated a key worker who will respond to your child’s needs in consultation with you.

The Key worker will be documenting your child’s learning and sharing the documentation with you on a regular basis. A portfolio will be gathered for the time your child is with us to give to you, this can then be shared with the school your child will attend.

Our aim is to help children to become active learners, be self-assured and for them to be confident and competent learners.





## **Policies and Procedures**

Inagh Ark

has developed a set of policies and procedures to help staff carry out their duties effectively and to safe-guard the children in our care.

The following are policies and procedures of particular importance to parents, the full document is available in the centre, please ask to read it:

- **Admissions policy:** covers the way in which children are admitted to the childcare centre, this policy ensures that all children have equal access to our childcare services
- **Child Protection policy:** has been drawn up with the guidance of the HSE and in line with the 'Children First' document. This policy covers issues of child welfare and abuse. The policy details signs of abuse, how any concerns will be reported to the HSE and how all parties behave/react.
- **Behaviour Management:** this policy is to enable staff to manage behaviour that can be disruptive. The aim of the Behaviour Management policy is to provide an environment whereby each child is respected, feels valued and develops a positive self-image. We aim to enable each child to develop an accepted code of behaviour where they learn that others as well as themselves have needs and rights. Corporal punishment is never allowed. The rules are clearly set out in the policy in order to maintain a happy and safe environment.
- **Complaints Policy:** is in place to ensure that parents/carers who are unhappy about any aspect of the care their child/ren receive have a way to address the issues. All complaints will be dealt with in a sensitive, respectful and confidential manner. The policy also covers the children's right to make a complaint
- **Sleep Policy:** this is in place to safe guard children who require a nap whilst in the service.
- **Preventing the spread of Infection Policy:** is in place to ensure a healthy environment for all the children in the Childcare Centre
- **Nappy changing:** to ensure that the very young children are well cared for at all times.
- **Fees policy:** our fees are set each year and have to be approved by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.
- **Risk Assessment Policy:** to manage risk within the setting and safe guard the children whilst offering measured risk to enhance their play experience.

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- **Code of Good Practice**: this policy sets out the standards of behaviour and expectations of the Board, the Staff and parents in order to maintain a happy and safe environment where children thrive and their rights are respected.
- **Recruitment and retention of staff**:- We are committed to fair, equal and transparent recruitment and on going staff training that ensures a good quality service. Our staff are our biggest asset and as such need to be supported.
- **Record Keeping**:- We are required to keep records on file i.e. registration forms. There may be, from time to time, other important/sensitive information that is necessary for us keep with (your knowledge) and all information is kept confidential.
- **Confidentiality Policy**: all staff and committee members are asked to sign a confidentiality form to ensure that all information that may become known to the organisation remains confidential. Breaches of Confidentiality are taken very seriously. The only time it is permissible for staff to take information outside of the organisation is in cases where they may have child protection concerns and this would only be sharing information with child protection agencies.
- **Safe Management of Activities**: This policy is in place in order that the children are able to play and learn in a safe environment. It gives staff clear guidelines to follow and parents peace of mind.
- **Procedure for Outings**: Is in place to make outings safe and enjoyable for everyone and gives simple safety steps to follow.
- **Health and Safety**: Under legislation there are certain standards that employers are obliged to put in place, in order to safe guard employees. We are also responsible for the safe running of the childcare facility. All staff have undergone 'Manual Handling' and 'First Aid' training with the centre having at least one member of staff with full 'Occupational' first aid.
- **Risk Assessment Policy**: to manage risk within the setting and safe guard the children whilst offering measured risk to enhance their play experience.
- **Anti-Bullying**: is in place to ensure that children are not subjected to behaviour that is threatening, intimidating or harmful to their well being, be it; physically, emotionally, verbally, sexually, racially. Bullying is unacceptable.
- **Policy Updates** These policies will be updated from time to time in line with best practice and new policies will be added as the need arises

**Ratios**

The childcare regulations states that the staff child ratios for pre-school children are as follows:

<b>For sessional care</b>	0-1 year	1:3
	1:2.5 years	1:6
	3-6 years	1:10/1:11
<b>Full Day care:</b>	0-1 year	1:3
	1-2 years	1:5
	2-3 years	1:6
	3-6 years	1:8

For school age children there are no regulations, but we adhere to pre-school regulations, where appropriate.

**Space requirements:**

For sessional care	2.00	sq. metres per child
Full day care	0-1 year	3.70 sq. Metres per child
	1-2 years	2.80 sq. metres per child
	2-6 years	2.32 sq. Metres per child

Inagh Ark can accommodate 22 preschool children in both the Montessori and preschool plus full day care children in the building at any one time.

**Training/Qualifications**

The majority of our staff have Level 5, others have level 6 and level 8, but all staff have some childcare training. Staff also undergo first aid training, which is updated every two years, they also take part in 'Children First' child protection training with the HSE. We have regular in-service training to update skills as well as encouraging staff to take relevant outside training opportunities.

**Insurance**

We are comprehensively insured with BHP, our insurance certificate is on display in the lobby.



## Manager

Pat Kiernan	NNEB	30 yrs. Experience
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**Childcare staff**

## Preschool

* Bernie Foudy (deputy)	Level 5	22 yrs. experience
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* Michelle Wynne	Level 5	10 yrs. experience
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## Montessori

* Nicole White	Level 6	13 yrs. experience
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* Roísín Johnston	Level 8	7 yrs. experience
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* *Breda Cullinan	Level 5	9 yrs. experience
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\* Currently on extended Maternity Leave

## Waddlers

* Edel Fitzgerald	Level 5	4 yrs. Experience
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## Toddlers

* Tracey Cummins	Level 5 in Sp/needs	3 yrs. Experience
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* Caroline Flannery	Level 8	3 yrs. experience
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## Babies

* Lynda Toomey	Level 5	8 yrs. experience
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* Lisa Healy	Level 5	3 yrs. Experience
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## After schools

* Claire Lynch	Level 6	2 yrs. experience
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## Kitchen

* Mary Maloney	Food Hygiene	6 mths experience
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## Bus driver

* Joe Callinan	D licence holder	3 yrs experience
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**Current relief staff:**

◇ Sharon Burke	incomplete level 5	6 mths experience
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◇ Denise Hinchy	Level 5	2 yrs experience
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◇ Tara Varden	Level 6	1 yrs experience
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**Garda Vetting:**

It is a mandatory requirement that all staff working in a childcare setting are vetted.



**What you need to provide**

Apart from the food that has been requested we would ask you to provide the following:

For Preschool and Montessori children

- \* Slippers/indoor shoes

For all children:

- \* Weather appropriate clothing for outdoor play—sunhats, light jacket/jumper for the summer months. Hats, gloves, coat for the winter.
- \* Change of clothes in case of accidents.
- \* Any medication/inhalers must be clearly labelled with full instructions re. dosage, times to be administered and other relevant information, plus a consent form must be completed.

Baby room

- \* Sufficient formula milk for the time your baby is with us.
- \* Sufficient food for the time your baby is here.
- \* Nappies, wipes any creams or lotions etc.
- \* Teething gel, ie. Baby Bonjela.
- \* Soother, comfort toy.
- \* Change of clothes (vests, socks and 1 set of clothes).

Waddler/Toddler room

- \* Nappies/pull ups, wipes, creams etc.
- \* Soother, comfort toy for sleep time.



### **Settling-in**

Settling-in time is very important for children's confidence and feeling of security. Therefore we ask that parents allow time for the settling in period, how long settling-in takes depends on many factors including age, understanding, whether your children has experienced group care in the past and your child's personality.

You will be asked to stay with your child, introduce him/her to the staff who will be caring for them. Following this you will be asked to leave your child for short periods of time. The staff in the room will guide you and inform you as to how your child is settling.

### **Preventing the spread of infection**

- \* children who have more than one bout of diarrhoea/vomiting must stay out until they have been clear of all symptoms for **48 hours**.
- \* If your child is on antibiotics please allow **48 hours** before they return [medicines can be administered from then on, with consent]
- \* Please notify the staff if your child has any childhood illness such as chickenpox/measles, we can then notify other families, please ensure it is safe for your child to return.
- \* If your child has a high temperature please do not bring them to the childcare service.
- \* If your child develops a high temperature during the day Calpol or equivalent can be administered [if a consent form has been signed].
- \* If, however, the temperature does not reduce within 30 minutes you will be contacted and asked to collect your child as soon as possible as a high temperature can be very serious for children.

### **Hot food**

We would ask for your help in relation to compliance with HSE regulations concerning food:

- \* Food bought in for reheating needs to be sufficiently cooled to go into the fridge or if frozen defrosted enough to finish defrosting in the fridge by lunch time
- \* We ask that you place your child's snack in a labelled Ziploc type plastic bag as all

At Inagh Ark we provide the following services:

- ⇒ Babies—from 4 months
- ⇒ Waddlers — from approximately 15 months
- ⇒ Toddlers—from approximately 2 years old
- ⇒ Preschool—from approximately 3 years old

**Inagh Ark Childcare Centre**

**Inagh**

**Co Clare**

Inagh Ark is funded by the Irish Government through the National Childcare Implementation Programme. We have also received funding through Equal Opportunities in Childcare Programme funded through E.U structural funds and the Irish Government through the National Development Programme.

These funds are administered and monitored by Pobal and the Depart-



European Union  
Structural Funds



Transforming Ireland