

# Little Deer's - Before/Afterschool service parents



## handbook

### Statement of Purpose and Function

The purpose of Little Deer's Breakfast and afterschool club service is to provide high quality, affordable and integrated pre and after school services that are accessible to all children in the community. Our service complies with legislative demands in relation to standards of care and promotes the development and welfare of the child above all other considerations.

### Setting Details

Name of Service: Little Deer Breakfast and afterschool club  
Address: Leitrim National School, Loughrea, Co Galway  
Contact Person: Siobhan Geraghty (Designated Person in charge)  
Contact Number: 0879119147  
Contact Email: [siobhangeraghty100@gmail.com](mailto:siobhangeraghty100@gmail.com)

### Services Offered

The following services are offered Little Deer's Breakfast and afterschool club:

- Morning Care 8.00am-9.00am
- Interim hour (end of school/bus) - 2.00pm-3.00pm
- After-School: Sessional/Part Time - 2.00pm -6.00pm,



Deer's Breakfast and afterschool Childcare Service will be registered as a breakfast club and afterschool club. We cater for children from 4 years of age until 12 years of age. (School age childcare). We can cater for up to 12 afterschool children in the morning club and in the afternoon after school finishes. We open for 38 weeks of the year and we operate under the following adult/child ratios:

#### Afterschool Services

<b><u>AGE RANGE</u></b>	<b><u>ADULT:CHILD RATIO</u></b>
4-12 <u>years</u>	1:12

### Statement of Purpose and Function

#### **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 educators and parents work together to fulfil each and every child's developmental potential as well as holistic needs in a safe and comforting environment.

#### **Ethos**

Here at Little Deer's Breakfast and afterschool club, we aim to provide an environment that is happy, stimulating, safe, caring and nurturing where your child is enabled to freely express themselves in every way possible.

#### **Equal Opportunities**

At Little Deer's Breakfast and afterschool club 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 aim to provide children with resources and activities that will encourage them to learn about different values, cultural diversity and physical disabilities. Experiences and activities will reflect a wide range of lifestyles, cultures and beliefs.

**\*All policies and procedures will be reviewed in June of each year**

**and all policies and procedures are available online and hardcopy.**

## **Admissions Policy**

Little Deer's Breakfast and afterschool club is committed to offering its facilities to all adults and children, inclusive of gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, race, sexual orientation and religious beliefs. The service offers an open door policy, which welcomes all parents at all times. This is especially relevant during the settling in period.

### **All children must be school aged before they are considered for enrolment.**

Parents interested in enrolling their child in our service may contact us by telephone, email or call into us. Parents will be shown around the service, introduced to all the educators, given a copy of our parent's handbook as well as asked to fill out various form, e.g. health care, contact details. Etc. At this stage all parents will be made aware of our policies and procedures and asked to sign a contract stating that they will follow them.

Parents/guardians wishing to enrol children in the service must submit a completed registration form to the manager but no enrolment/admission may occur prior to a meeting of a parent/guardian with the manager. All information requested on the registration form must be accurately and fully provided and all documentation requested must be supplied. If the service has reached the maximum number of children that can be catered for at one time, children will be placed on waiting lists.

### **Little Deer's Breakfast and afterschool club Enrolment Policy prioritises the following:**

- Children who are currently attending Leitrim National School (After-school). -  
Brothers or sisters of children currently attending or past attendees of Leitrim National School
- Children of current Primary school staff
- Live within the parish
- In order of receipt date of application form
- The same will apply if there is a waiting list. No children will be placed on the waiting list unless an enrolment form is completed.

## 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, in conjunction with 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.

A good play based curriculum will also adopt the following standards:

- Ensure each child has opportunities to make choices, is enabled to make decisions, and his/her choices and decisions respected.
- Make sure that each child has opportunities and is enabled to take the lead, initiate activity, be appropriately independent and is supported to solve problems
- Allow children to participate actively in the daily routine, in activities, in conversations and in all other appropriate situations, and is considered as a partner by the adult.
- Ensure that the indoor and outdoor environment provides a range of developmentally appropriate, challenging, diverse, creative and enriching experiences for all children. Ensure each child receives appropriate support to enable him/her to interact positively.
- Make sure the adult interactive style is focused on process as opposed to outcomes. It is balanced between talking and listening, offers the child a choice of responses and encourages expanded use of the language. It will follow the child's lead and interests, and challenges the child appropriately.
- Ensure that opportunities for play and exploration provided for the child mirror

- her/his stage of development, give the child the freedom to achieve mastery and success, and challenge the child to transition to new learning and development.
- Planning for the curriculum will be based on the child's individual profile, which is established through systematic observation and assessment for learning.

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The curriculum will be reflected in and implemented through the child's daily routine, spontaneous learning opportunities, structured activities and activities initiated by the child.

The daily routine and learning environment will include the following:

- Table Top Activities, including age appropriate puzzles and jig saws
- Books and seated library area
- Small World Play
- Role play area , including dress up clothes, kitchen utensils, hairdressing/barber shop, shop area, garage, doctors area,
- Home Corner
- Block and Construction Area
- Wood working bench,
- Messy play area, including paint
- Sand and Water
- Playdough/Clay
- Art and Crafts Area
- Music Centre
- Interest and Discovery Area, including nature table
- Outdoor Space, including outdoor garden, and large outdoor climbing equipment
- Indoor PE area, including wide range of PE equipment

We balance the daily/weekly activities with individual and small group activities, thus enabling the child grow socially, physically as well as emotionally. The role of all our staff in implementing the curriculum is to act as positive role models in which quality care is their main focus.

*Our main aim is to facilitate your child's individual learning style.*

### **School age programme**

Within the after school programme we offer stimulating and relaxing activities including drama, sports programmes, arts, music and movement.

There is also a homework support facility available within the service. (Please take note of our homework policy)

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 would 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/her clothing in)

We would encourage that parents ensure that their child's jacket and footwear are in accordance with the weather.

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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 you or a relative are collecting your child from school instead of attending afterschool care please ensure a staff member is informed. (Text/Phonecall/Verbally)

All sessional afterschool children are provided with a meal at a suitable time. The menu varies from week to week and is displayed on the noticeboard. All potential allergens are listed on the menu. Suitable alternatives are provided where possible for children with special dietary needs.

It is important to note that your child will be registered for afterschool 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.

### **Little Deer's Breakfast and afterschool club Homework Policy**

Homework is only one of the many activities facilitated within our after school service. The ethos of the service is to provide children with recreational activities that allow for relaxation after their day at school. However, we appreciate that some parents wish to have a certain amount of homework completed by their child and this request will be facilitated where possible.

#### **Procedure**

1. Homework will be facilitated within a quiet area of the setting away from regular activities.
2. A staff member will supervise the homework session.
3. Support will be given if a child requests it. (Continuous individual attention cannot be given)
4. A maximum of 45 minutes is allocated to homework completion. If a child is finished earlier they can read a book quietly from the library section in the room. Where a child presents with a large volume of homework staff will encourage the

child to complete written/oral homework only.

**5. Parents/guardians must check their individual child's homework and sign the child's journal.**

6. Management reserve the right to defer homework at any given time to facilitate participation in special activities or events. (Where possible parents will be notified in advance.
7. Any child who is disruptive or who is not interested in completing his/her homework will be asked to tidy up and return to regular activities and his/her parents will be advised accordingly.
8. Homework is completed from 3.15-4.00pm. If you child attends afterschool activities, we will do our best to accommodate their homework needs. Please be advised that any homework not completed within the allocated time should be done at home.
9. If you have any queries regarding this policy, please talk to a member of staff.

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I \_\_\_\_\_ have read Little Deer's Breakfast  
and afterschool club Homework Policy with \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Behaviour Management Policy**

Within our service positive behaviour, rather than negative behaviour is always encouraged and promoted.

It is essential that all educators, students or volunteers set a good example to all the children under their care. Therefore all educators will be trained in supporting positive behaviour. 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/cause upset etc to other children/ 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/group they are in to allow the child to take a rest. *Under no circumstances will the child be put in the "time out".*

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.

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### **Practices Prohibited at Little Deer's Breakfast and afterschool club**

- Physical punishment of any kind is prohibited under all circumstances, e.g. slapping, rough handling and physical restraint
- Practices which humiliate or attack a child's sense of self and make him/her helpless are not allowed i.e. talking inappropriately at or about a child • Shouting adversely affects the child's self-esteem and is prohibited • A child should not be excluded or left unsupervised
- Avoid discussing the child's behaviour with staff or parents in front of them or others. • Use of any corporal punishment
- Use of or threat-of, any practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitative, intimidating, isolating, emotionally and/or physically harmful to the child or neglectful of the child;
- Bullying of any form;
- Restraint of children by unapproved methods.

**Physical restraint** may only be used in exceptional circumstances to (Any such intervention will involve minimum force for minimum time.

- To prevent an accident such as a child running across a road.
- To prevent injury e.g. if a child is having a temper tantrum

### **What we expect from Our School-Age Children**

- Treat others with dignity and respect at all times.
- Behave well in our service so that everyone can learn and have fun e.g. listen to staff, follow instructions etc..
- Give of your best at all times.
- Play safely in the garden and allow others to play too.
- Be respectful of all at dinner time and allow everyone to enjoy their food.
- Keep the Room clean and safe for everyone.
- Have respect for the property of others.



### **Little Deer's Breakfast and afterschool club Fees**

€6 per hour	
All fees are payable via cash/bank transfer	BIC BOFIE2DXXX IBAN;IE98BOFI90389194620963
Fees must be paid in advance on Friday's for the following week(s) during school term bank holidays, voting and sudden closure days must be paid for	

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