



Toni Hamrock

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We are here to support your child.

Parent's HANDBOOK

We would like to welcome you and your child to our pre-school. We hope your child enjoys the pre-school experience and develops throughout the year.

You as parents are the most important source of support for your child's development and learning and we look forward to working in partnership with you to help your child reach their fullest potential now and into the future.

Introduction

Juniors Childcare was set up in 2009; it provides care for children aged 2yrs - 8yrs. The centre has a maximum capacity for 44 children at any one time whether it is seasonal, fulltime, part-time or after-school.

It is managed on a day to day basis by the manager, supervisor and staff. The school is notified to the Health Service Executive (HSE) and registered with the N.C.N.A. The school strives to meet the highest standards and makes changes to any of the recommendations suggested by inspectors.

Mission Statement

At Juniors Childcare we are committed to providing excellent standards of care for the holistic development of your child. Our Mission statement is to prepare and provide the most natural and life enhancing environment for the child - physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. We strive to provide a happy, secure and caring environment for the purpose of inner development and learning.

Aim

Our ultimate aim is to provide a childcare programme through Aistear and Síolta which promotes optimal development for each child supports parents and promote collaborations that help all children realise their potential.

Fee Structure

- Fees can be paid weekly, fortnightly or monthly by standing order, cheque or cash.
- Receipts will be given to all parents.
- A sibling discount of 10% is given.

****One month's notice is required if you wish**

Ethos

The Ethos of our service is very apparent to all who visit: we have an "Open door policy". Children, parents and staff will regard this service as an extension of the home creating a "Home from Home" environment. We believe in ensuring that children who attend this service have the opportunity to experience:

- Sociability, friendship and co-operation of others.
- Equal opportunities irrespective of gender, race and disability.
- Culture diversity.
- Respect.
- A stable loving secure environment.
- Stimulating surroundings.

Opening Hours

The school is open 5 days a week, Monday – Friday from: 8am – 6pm.

Juniors Childcare is open 51 weeks of the year.

The school is closed on:

- Bank Holidays
- Good Friday
- 1 week over the Christmas Period

No fee concessions are given to parents who require their child to:

- Take Holidays throughout the year
- Take extended periods of absence throughout the summer months.

Toni Hamrock (Manager)

A little bit about myself: I trained as a Montessori teacher in 1992; from there I opened my first school on The Mall in Castlebar. In 1996 I opened my first Full time Childcare Centre. Juniors Childcare was opened in September 2009 for over 2 year olds.

MONTESSORI STAFF

Maeve Quinn (Deputy Manager)

Maeve joined our staff in 1996 after finishing the Montessori Diploma and has years of experience working with children of all ages in Ireland and also taught in Australia. Maeve runs a fun and stimulating Montessori class and is also the Deputy Manager in Juniors.

Lisa Hamrock

Lisa joined our staff in 2007 after training as a Montessori Teacher. Lisa has worked in different areas of the school but now works in The Montessori class. Lisa is studying for her FETAC Level 6.

Heather Collins

Heather joined Juniors In July 2015 and will be teaching in the pre-school class. Heather is FETAC Level 6 Qualified.

TODDLER STAFF

The Toddler room is a busy, fun, noisy, stimulating and loving environment provided by the excellent staff working there.

Rose Gordon

Rose joined our staff in 2000 and has FETAC Level 5. Rose works in the Toddler room alongside Darrina.

Darrina Dempsey

Darrina joined our staff in 2009 and is at present training in FETAC Level 5. Darrina works in the toddler room.

Courtney Weir

Courtney joined our staff in 2010 and is a trained Montessori teacher. Courtney works in the ECCE classroom with Maeve. Courtney is studying at present for Level 6 and intends going on to achieve her Level 8.

Nathalie Saive

Nathalie joined our staff in 2009 and is a trained Montessori teacher. Natalie works in both the ECCE room and toddler room. Natalie is studying towards her Level 6.

Susan Hamrock (Relief Staff)

Under the Early Childhood Care & Education Scheme, your child is entitled to 3 hours per day, 5 days per week for 38 weeks (school term) in our pre-school service.

To help us run the terms smoothly, we would ask you to keep to our following policies:

- Drop off and pick up times are (9.00am – 12.30pm)
- Please respect these times. There will be fines implemented for continuous late pick- ups.
- We would ask parents never to leave their child in the room alone if a staff member is not present.
- We are unable to keep children after their allocated 3½ hours.
- Please inform staff when different people are picking up your child; this will help with any confusion or mix-ups.
- We encourage healthy eating at “Juniors” - no chocolate, crisps, fizzy drinks, etc. in lunch boxes.

Montessori Class Room

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Age Range: 3-4 years

Ratio: 1: 11

Room Capacity: 22

No of Staff: 2

In the Montessori room we follow the Montessori Method of teaching through the different areas, practical life, sensorial, language and arithmetic, cultural activities and creative studies.

Practical Life

These are everyday tasks that children love to complete such as polishing a shoe. Directly they teach the child a skill, indirectly they promote and refine the child's gross/fine motor development, concentration, hand and eye co-ordination and independence.

Sensorial

These activities encourage the refinement of the child's senses and give them experiences that enable them to be more aware of the world around them, indirectly they prepare the child for later language and mathematical work.

Creative Studies - Circle time

Through various groups projects and activities the child's creative attributes will be explored. This will encourage self-awareness, confidence, self-esteem and a positive self-image. Our Montessori Staff has vast experiences in a Montessori classroom and will pass this on to your child, towards the end of their time with us; the children are slowly moved away from the Montessori apparatus and taught by a more traditional approach to prepare them for the next level of their schooling.

Language and Arithmetic

Earlier work in practical life and sensorial exercises will have indirectly prepared the child for basic linguistic and numerical operations. The equipment in this area introduces the child directly to the world of spoken and written language as well as basic numerical mathematical operation.

Culture

The world of biology, geography, zoology and science will be opened to the child. These activities are designed to promote experiences that encourage the child to see and involve himself in the world around him.

Toddler Room

5

Age Range: 2-3 years

Ratio: 1: 6

Room Capacity: 12

No of Staff: 2

Routine and Activities

We focus on your child's overall development and use a variety of toys and equipment to aid and refine your child's physical, intellectual, emotional and social skills. The children are still so young so short work periods are encouraged. Table top activities such as jigsaws, sorting and pairing are introduced to promote motor skills, hand/eye coordination and basic numerical and literacy skills. We have a home-corner, library, role-play, arts and crafts. Outdoor play is encouraged all year round so we encourage parents to send in wellingtons, boots and coats in winter.

Rest

After dinner we encourage the children to rest each day by chilling out on floor mats, cushions and just sitting on the couch listening to a story. In the evening time we have 15 minutes of television for the children.

Food

Dinner is provided for children who are part-time or full time. We go by a three week menu which is displayed in the hall for your inspection. Please let us know if your child does not like something. Fresh water is also supplied.

SAMPLE MENU

- **Monday:** Spaghetti Bolognaise
- **Tuesday:** Boiled ham, potatoes and beans
- **Wednesday:** Chicken Casserole
- **Thursday:** Cottage Pie
- **Friday:** Chips, beans and fish fingers

N.B. All meals are made with fresh ingredients. Water is provided with all meals throughout the day.

Potty Training

At approximately two years of age potty training will be encouraged. This process takes time and patience. The child must be both physically and cognitively ready. The school and parents must work together to make it an enjoyable experience for the child. We will give advice and encouragement on how to make the transition from nappy to pants. Child sized toilets are supplied and various potties. Please send in two changes of clothes during this time clearly labelled.

Illness

Certain symptoms in children may suggest a presence of a communicable virus.

All parents/guardians are asked to notify the Crèche where exposure has taken place.

- *Fever* - a temperature over 98.6 degrees, especially if accompanied by vomiting, sore throat, diarrhoea, headache, stiff neck or undiagnosed rash.
- *Diarrhoea* - any abnormally loose stools in the previous 24 hours.
- *Vomiting* - any episodes of vomiting within the previous 24 hours.
- *Eye/nose* - thick mucus or pus draining from the eye or nose.
- *Sore throat* - especially when fever or swollen glands in the neck are present.
- *Skin problems* - rash, undiagnosed or contagious. Infected sores with crusty yellow or green drainage that are not covered.
- *Itching* - persistent itching of body or scalp.
- *Hair lice* - must be reported.
- *Vaccinations* - must be reported.

Children who have any of the above symptoms should not come into the Crèche until:

1. Your doctor has certified that the symptoms are not associated with an infection and/or they are no longer in danger of infecting other children.
2. The symptoms have fully subsided.

It is the policy of Juniors Childcare not to accept children into the Crèche who appear to be “under the weather”. We have a responsibility to other parents and children and we cannot allow sick children to circulate with healthy children. It would be unfair to the sick child and to other children.

Should your child become sick or have a temperature during the day, it is the policy of the crèche to immediately call the parents or guardians requesting the child to be immediately taken home to recover.

We would ask parents to regularly check their children for Head Lice and notify us if necessary. Other parents appreciate knowing if head lice are about, so that they can check their children or “pre-dose” their own family.

Medication

- No medication will be administered to children unless written consent has been given by parents/guardians. The necessary forms will be provided to you for completion.
- Please inform the staff when your child receives their vaccinations to allow the Crèche to give special precautions and care.

Bumps and Bruises

All possible care is taken to ensure your child's safety, however we would ask parents to appreciate that there will be the occasional bump or bruise as there would be at home. We will notify parents of incidences as necessary.

Late Collection

We would ask parents to respect our opening and closing times. We have a late collection fee if your child is there after 6 o'clock of €15.

After-school

We also run an after-school programme where we supervise homework and do activities with the older children.

Outdoor area

We have a secure outdoor facility and weather permitting we achieve to get out most days for a run about.

Fee Charges

• Full Time Care (2 — 3 years)	€150 per week
• Part Time Care	€95 per week
• E.C.C.E Children	No Charge
• E.C.C.E Children Full Time	€100 per week
• Hourly Rate for E.C.C.E Children	€4.25
• Montessori Class (3 hours)	€65 per week
• After School	€65 per week or €15 per afternoon
• Toddler Group	€65 per week or €15 per morning

Suitable Clothing

- Casual and inexpensive clothes that wash easily (your child may sometimes get stains on clothes when painting or playing outside).
- Clothing that your child can manage when going to the toilet unaccompanied by an adult.
- Layers – so your child can add and remove clothes according to indoor and outdoor temperatures.
- Outdoor clothing. Be aware that we will be going outside every day. Parents must provide suitable clothing for all weather conditions. Wellington boots, raincoats, hats, scarves, gloves, sunhats and sun cream. Each child will have a storage area designated to them so you may leave a set of outdoor clothing at pre-school if you wish. However, do remember to label every item and check them periodically to make sure they are still appropriate for the season and still fit your child. Alternatively, you can just bring suitable attire daily.
- A change of clothes (for toileting accidents, if your child gets sick, if they get wet at water play, or badly soiled at painting, cooking or eating). If we use the change of clothing, the soiled items will be sent home to you for washing. Please remember to bring in a new set!

What does my child not need for Pre-school?

1. Schoolbag.
2. Toys from home – we do not have a rule against children bringing items from home but parents should help their child to realise it may be better to leave personal items at home as they can get broken or lost and can cause disputes. We cannot be responsible for looking after such items. If a child does need to bring something in we would suggest that they show it to the group at greeting time and then put it back in their personal storage area outside the classroom door for the rest of the day.