



**SHERPA**  
**KIDS**



# **PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK**

**Sherpa Kids | Ireland | Engaging our schools**  
Last updated March 2025



## CONTENTS

• Welcome ( <i>What we do &amp; why</i> )	3
• Our Core Values	4
• This Handbook ( <i>What it's for</i> )	5
• Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct	5
• Privacy Statement ( <i>Your personal data</i> )	6
• Confidentiality - Works both ways	6
• What Matters Most to Us	7
• Cultural Diversity	7
• Our Programme	8
• A Typical Day at Sherpa Kids ( <i>Timetable</i> )	8
• Homework Policy	9
• Children with Additional/Complex Needs	9
• Children attending ASD units at School	10
• Working in Partnership with You	10
• Register your Place	11
• Registering your child via <i>Enrolmy</i>	11
• Pre-payment & Fees	12
• Payment Options	12
• Your NCS ( <i>Where to send your CHICK</i> )	13
• Sample Times/Fees ( <i>Before &amp; After NCS</i> )	14
• Invoices & Making Payments	14
• Your Holidays, Child Illness & School/Service Closures	16
• Changing and/or Cancelling your Booking	17
• Non-Payment of Fees and Withdrawal of Children	18
• Health, Safety and Wellbeing of Children	19
• Snack Sample Menu	20
• Drop off and Collection Policy	20
• Early Collection & Late Drop Off	21
• Separated or Divorced Parents	22
• Fire Safety	22
• Medication and Consent	23
• Emergency Medication	23
• Sun Cream Policy	24
• Child Behaviour Management	24
• Missing Child Policy	26
• Unwell or Distraught Children	26
• Infectious Conditions and Exclusion Policy	27
• First Aid and Critical Incidents	28
• Child Safeguarding Policy	28
• Sherpa Kids - Charity Initiatives	29
• Our Commitment	29
• Other Forms of Communication	30
• Lost or Damaged Property	30
• Complaints & Compliments	32
• Helpful Links & Contacts	32
• Appendices	33



# Hello & Welcome

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

### What we do & why

Sherpa Kids Ireland's overriding purpose is to support Ireland's families by providing enriching programmes (in child-centred play, mindfulness, active games, adventure categories, nutrition, and relaxation) for school aged children onsite at National Schools nationwide.

We provide a safe and secure quality environment for National School aged children through a structured well-balanced child-centered service. We achieve this by thinking ahead, listening to what children want to do to keep them safe, stimulated, and happy. We do this by providing planned activities and providing supervised child-directed play in an enriching tailored environment. We provide a safe and secure environment for school aged children through a structured well-balanced service. Our services meet all standards, legislation and guidelines as recommended and reflected by Sherpa Kids philosophy and values.

#### Sherpa Kids services will also:

- ✓ Ensure **children's learning** and development is facilitated, their needs are met, and their individual interests and abilities are actively encouraged.
- ✓ Provide **challenging and interesting age-appropriate activities** using a variety of resources and suitable equipment to engage and stimulate children's physical, intellectual, social and creative abilities. These activities include arts and crafts, music and drama, sports, science and child-led free play activities.
- ✓ Plan for **a range of daily indoor and outdoor activities** taking into account the health and development guidelines for the age group.
- ✓ Enable **children to participate** in quiet/active activities, as well as group/small group or individual activities.
- ✓ **Encourage children** to feel part of the school and wider community. Be evaluated regularly by children, parents and staff using a variety of assessments and strategies.
- ✓ **Provide full access** to relevant support programmes such as the National Childcare scheme.

We achieve quality standards by thinking ahead, being flexible to children's needs and routines, anticipating



what children might like, listening, training and supporting our staff, and giving you the peace-of-mind you need by keeping them safe and following our policies and procedures at all costs. We abide by our seven core values in everything we do at Sherpa Kids, and this includes in all areas of our School Aged Programmes in order to provide quality learning outcomes for children. We are also committed fully to incorporating the school's values and ethos into our service.

## Our core values are:



**We care**  
for our communities, the children we are entrusted with, our fellow business owners and each other.



**We promise**  
to look for solutions, to uphold Sherpa Kids standards and be honest in all our dealings.



**We believe**  
in creating opportunities, growing relationships, and giving back.



**We lead**  
by example and pioneers.



**We Trust**  
the Sherpa system, our colleagues and ourselves.



**We seek**  
opportunities for growth and development for our stakeholders.

## THIS HANDBOOK

### What it's for

This handbook is for families who wish to avail of our Rise then Shine (Before school), and/or Stay and Play (Afterschool) programmes at Sherpa Kids. It is designed to give you a greater understanding of what we offer children, what to expect from us and what we expect from you. We have a separate Holiday Programme Handbook which you will also receive should you be interested in using our exciting non-term time programmes when schools are closed. We are also committed to providing consistent 'wrap around' care on the days that schools close early and are flexible to adapt to different early closure times. You will be notified separately and in more detail about these services, however, information is provided in this handbook on Early School Closures and relevant fees/policies for additional hours used.

Your online Registration and Safety Form confirms you understand and accept our onsite service policies and procedures, and the terms and conditions set out in this Handbook. Should you have any questions about any of the content contained, we welcome you to get in touch or speak to your Programme Coordinator (the Person in Charge in each service). We encourage you to read this Handbook in full and carefully before you commence use of our programmes. You can also request our Childcare Policies and Procedures Manual which is available for viewing at our service (the school).



## Parent/Guardian

### Code of Conduct

Sherpa Kids is all about providing a quality, child-centred, safe and caring environment for your child and setting a good example of respect and trust. We greatly value our staff teams and their experience working with us matters. We do not tolerate any form of discrimination amongst children or adults associated with the service. Equally, we have a zero-tolerance approach to any communication from families towards staff, other parents or towards children that are aggressive, threatening or disrespectful in any way. We expect that parents/guardians work with us and cooperate with our company policies and procedures and around our shared objectives for each individual child. We take a zero-tolerance approach to any behaviours from parents/guardians (such as raising one's voice, shouting, undermining staff, threatening staff, aggressive body language or any other form of abuse) towards our Sherpa Kids teams. Severe or recurring incidents may result in the request for you to withdraw from our services with immediate effect.

We recognise fully that trust and effective communication between adults is at the heart of every child's best interests. Should we or you ever feel that the trust and communication we strive to uphold fully is damaged in

any way, we will take action immediately to repair or reconcile it in the best interests of the children. This may mean requesting a facilitated meeting with you to discuss how trust and communication can be repaired as quickly as possible, or, failing this outcome, asking you to withdraw your child from our programmes in the best interests of all parties.

## Privacy Statement

Sherpa Kids Ireland is known as the 'Data Controller' of the personal data you provide. We take your privacy seriously and will only use the personal information about you and your child to provide the programmes and services you have requested from us and administer your account. Most of this data is captured on a Registration Form or the information you provide to obtain government subsidised fees.

We may also request information from you if we believe it to be an important factor to the appropriate support and care of your child. This can include information regarding nationality, language, religion, ethnic origin, personal preferences and medical, intellectual and/or emotional/social challenges.

The online Safety Form collects information regarding emergency contact details and phone numbers of your child's emergency contacts and authorised collectors. You are required to ensure these listed persons agree to their information being stored for this purpose.

We will collect, use, disclose and hold information in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Sherpa Kids will not collect any data from you that it does not need to provide and oversee the services to you. We process data:

- In order to market the services of our Company
- To provide you with updates and newsletters to which may you have subscribed.
- In order to hold and use information necessary for or appropriate to the provision of these services including (though not limited to) child registration forms, booking details, medical and health management records, permission forms, photographs, correspondence, and emergency contact and authorised collector details.

To deliver our services effectively and compliantly, we may need to exchange your details with the relevant funding bodies such as the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Pobal, and Childcare Committees, inspectors such as TUSLA and/or the Revenue Commissioners.

Please go to our website to view our privacy notice in full: [www.sherpakids.ie](http://www.sherpakids.ie)

## Confidentiality

### Works both ways

We acknowledge the right for all information, records, and observations to be treated with respect and due attention to confidentiality and privacy. Information we collect will not be shared with third parties, unless required under law or Child Protection/Safeguarding Guidelines. Equally, we uphold our staff and individual children's own rights to confidentiality. This means that while we will always share relevant information with you about your own child, we have a right to protect the confidentiality of other children (who are recognised in Irish law as minors) by withholding information about them from you. We will uphold our family's rights to confidentiality and expect that parents/guardians refrain from sharing any information with staff, other families or with children pertaining to another family, staff or child that may constitute a breach of confidentiality or the sharing of sensitive or personal information.

## What matters most to us

Our Sherpa Kids Staff recognise that **play** is a crucial component of childhood development and that children are hardwired to express themselves, foster relationships and learn through indoor and outdoor play. The link between play and children's long-term social, emotional and academic capabilities is an exciting and celebrated one that we feel passionate about. Sherpa Kids services offer an environment free from a prescribed curriculum, meaning it is an ideal one to balance child-initiated and adult-supported learning through the medium of play and through providing enriching, playful opportunities. We achieve this through our Sherpa Kids Adventure Programme, which is a carefully designed programme of age-appropriate play-based activities within 7 different categories with Sherpa-provided resources in both physical and digital form. It is during these playful interactions that children increase their vocabulary, develop critical thinking skills, learn self-regulation skills, hone problem solving skills and build self-confidence. Our staff know this. The Child's Voice is central to the continuous developing life cycle of these adventure programmes and children have a say each week in what they do and how we can continue to keep them feeling safe and secure. Our services offer those first-hand play-based experiences that allow children to lead in the exploration of their environment, to use all their senses, to negotiate with their peers, to test their knowledge and theories through play, to express their thoughts and emotions and learn to improvise and compromise.

This is the essence of the environment Sherpa Kids provides and the playful, balanced Programmes of learning opportunities it offers. All the resources and materials provided, as well as the daily Programmes and planning, are closely linked with the children's own interests and promote child-initiated, adult-supported play.

Our outdoor play opportunities are deemed a central part of our best practices at Sherpa Kids. We believe that every child has the right to access fresh air, natural materials and some safe risky play in the best interests of their sensory learning, exploration, and overall wellbeing.

We aim to deliver a fresh and vibrant approach to School Aged Children and to "give them such a great time that they do not want to go home!"

## Cultural Diversity

Sherpa Kids services will always be mindful of and sensitive towards cultural differences and the individual needs of the children in our care. Where possible service information and community information will be translated or provided in various languages and support provided to ensure the successful inclusion of children.

We will encourage staff and family input by contributing their knowledge about their own culture into the service activities, policies, and procedures to ensure children's needs are being met and to enhance the overall quality of our service.

## Our Programme



Our Adventure Programme has 7 categories giving children the opportune experiences and a variety of activities. Based on our key development pillars, children are empowered to drive their learning journey and to actively participate in the development of activities; through sharing their own feedback and ideas in our before and after school programme.



### Super Sports

Super fun and sporty sessions designed to develop essential skills for a lifetime of active living.



### Wellbeing Warriors

Discover a range of activities specially designed to help you feel good by boosting happiness, mindfulness, and wellbeing.



### Global Kids

Embark on a journey to become a better global citizen and protect our planet through developing essential life skills and exploring the world around us.



### Flavour Fest

Explore the tasty world of food and nutrition through fun and interactive experiences created to develop healthy habits.



### Power Teams

Join in fun games, thrilling challenges, and exciting group activities to build team skills for life.



### Creative Inventors

Engage in creative activities that combines expressive arts, materials and crafts fuel children's inner inventor and unlock their hidden talents!



### Brain Boosters

Crack codes, solve puzzles, and engage in captivating games and science experiments. Explore the wonders of the world with hands-on STEM activities.

## A Typical Day at Sherpa Kids

In order to ensure our service is a happy, enriching and child-centred environment, Sherpa Kids follows a daily routine. A 'typical' day at Sherpa Kids might look something like this:

	Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	1:10pm Junior Hour	Junior Infants Arrive	Junior Infants Arrive	Junior Infants Arrive	Junior Infants Arrive	Junior Infants Arrive
	1:10pm – 2:10pm	Junior Hour Sports & Games	Junior Hour Sports & Games	Junior Hour Sports & Games	Junior Hour Sports & Games	Junior Hour Sports & Games
	2:10pm – 2:45pm Junior Collections & Seniors Arrival	Set bags & rooms. Mindfulness Check-In. Lounge Wind-Down. Board Games.	Set bags & rooms. Mindfulness Check-In. Lounge Wind-Down. Board Games.	Set bags & rooms. Mindfulness Check-In. Lounge Wind-Down. Board Games.	Set bags & rooms. Mindfulness Check-In. Lounge Wind-Down. Board Games.	Set bags & rooms. Mindfulness Check-In. Lounge Wind-Down. Board Games.
	2:10pm – 3:15pm Wash Hands & Snack	Snack Time	Snack Time	Snack Time	Snack Time	Snack Time
	3:15pm – 3:45pm	Quiet-Time Home work Time	Quiet-Time Home work Time	Quiet-Time Home work Time	Quiet-Time Home work Time	Quiet-Time Home work Time
	3:45pm – 5:30pm Adventure Programme					
	5:30pm – 6pm	Finish Up Projects & Home Time!	Finish Up Projects & Home Time!	Finish Up Projects & Home Time!	Finish Up Projects & Home Time!	Finish Up Projects & Home Time!



## Homework Policy

At Sherpa Kids we believe that a **CHILD'S WELLBEING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT** of a child's development that we can embrace and help nurture. We recognise that children need to relax and play after a busy day at school, and yet, that homework still needs to get done. We therefore encourage children to allocate quiet time for their homework with our best support. We strive to strike a healthy balance by allocating some but not all of the time a child spends at Sherpa Kids on their homework. We respect if parents/guardians prefer their children to complete their homework at home instead, however, we expect you to communicate this clearly to us as we do have an 'opt out' for homework time inclusion.

We allow approximately 30/40 minutes for homework per day, depending on the child's educational stage. We will always be flexible according to a child's age, stage and pace and will encourage focussed, quiet time in a supportive and supervised environment. If a child has no homework or finishes prior to the time allowed, they will be able to choose other suitable activities, for example from our Sherpa Kids adventure box.

Our staff are not expected to enforce that children complete their homework, or that their homework is 100% accurate. They are also not teaching staff and are not expected to fully understand or interpret school curriculum. Staff will, however, provide support to children in order for them to complete homework tasks as best they can in the time allocated and to encourage each child to have a positive, calm attitude towards school and homework. We do not tolerate any form of criticism towards our staff regarding the quantity or quality of homework completed by children during their time at Sherpa Kids. We always strive to support children in any way we can with their homework tasks, most importantly in their emotional wellbeing during the homework period.

If there are any issues regarding homework or your child has any specific or additional needs, please make sure you communicate this to the Person in Charge (Programme Coordinator) and include this information on the Registration form.

Sherpa Kids recognises the importance of the parent/guardian's role in homework support and encourages them to check work completed and play an active role in the homework supervision and support of their child.

## Children with additional/complex needs

Every effort will be made to include children with additional or complex needs in our services and a full assessment with the assistance of the child's parent/guardian, will be made to determine the child's needs and if they can be fully catered for, prior to the child commencing care. We do expect as much collaboration and relevant information as possible from parents/guardian's during this process, and throughout the child's time with us, in the best interests in the child's care plan and experience at Sherpa Kids.

If your child has any additional needs, including communication/speech or behaviour issues or triggers, please include this in the information when registering to ensure that we will be able to facilitate all of your child's needs as best as possible. Parents/guardians need to be forthcoming with information about the extent of your child's needs for the health, safety and wellbeing of your child.

A meeting will be arranged with you to do a full assessment of what is required for your child. There may also be a need for a phased settling in period to ensure that your child is adequately able to cope with his/her surroundings as it is a naturally very busy environment. If our programmes and resources are not capable of fully meeting your child's physical and emotional needs, we will discuss this with you. We will always keep the best interests of the child at the centre of all our actions and decisions. We have a legal ratio of 1 adult to 12 children at any given time, however, this may not be suitable for individual children with more complex needs. We will commit to making all efforts to recruit additional suitable staff members to reduce the ratio or provide 'key worker' or one-to-one support. Please note we are not government funded to provide SNA or one-to-one support to children in our settings. The availability of additional staff members to cater for the individual

additional or complex needs of a child is circumstantial and not always guaranteed. We will work in partnership with you to assess fully the individual needs of your child and decide how they can best be met.

### Children attending ASD units at School

We are mindful that the adult-to-child ratios may be significantly lower while children attend ASD units, either on a full or part time basis at school. Our adult-to-child ratios are set, as per TUSLA, at 1:12. This may not suit children who are used to much lower ratios in ASD units at school. We are always open to discussing how we might best support your child and whether the Sherpa Kids environment is best suited to your child's needs. Please reach out to the Programme Coordinator to discuss. We are mindful that a setting with a higher number of children (example 24+) is not always an easy environment for children with additional needs or sensitivity to certain stimulus. Where we are unable to recruit additional staff to reduce the ratio, to a more suitable one, we will assess the environment in accordance to the individual child's needs. Please note we do not receive government funding for SNA, lower ratios or additional resources to replicate an ASD unit. We will always assess whether the Sherpa Kids environment is best suited to an individual child's needs and communicate with you accordingly on how best to support the child.

## Working with partnership with you

We recognise and value the importance of working in partnership with you and that you play the central role in your child's life. We have an 'open door' policy where families are always welcome, but the needs of the children are always put first. If you wish to discuss a concern in private with a member of our team, please book a meeting in advance so that we ensure additional staff are available to cover and supervise children during this time.

We will aim to give you daily feedback on how your child has got on at Sherpa Kids, and we expect that relevant information regarding your child is communicated to us also in a regular and timely fashion. Please share information with us in the best interests of your child's wellbeing. This might include any difficulties your child might be experiencing at home, such as bereavement, illness, relationship breakdown, new baby – all of these things can impact a child's behaviour and we want to help as best we can. All information will be treated with strict confidentiality.

If we need to contact you about your child's behaviour, we will do so in a helpful and solution-focussed manner. We will work together to resolve any issues and expect that your engagement with us is equally solution-focussed and supportive of the situation.

We recognise that all children have challenging behaviours from time to time, and that a busy peer-to-peer environment may trigger certain behaviours in children that they do not exhibit regularly at home. We expect you to understand when we report challenging behaviours to you that we always have solutions in mind and might require your support and consistency.

Regular effective communication with parents/guardians is vital. Please inform us of any changes of personal details (contact numbers, address) as well as any updates regarding your child's medical or developmental needs.

Our staff are not permitted to use social networking sites to befriend parents/guardians or accept 'friend requests' from parents/guardians who use Sherpa Kids. Our staff teams are not permitted to exchange any information about our programmes/services, their colleagues or children attending the service via social network platforms. We ask that you, as parents/guardians, support our position.



Community and school involvement is also encouraged at our service as we feel the information and experiences this can provide can add to a child's development and learning experience.

If your family or child has a special day or significant event you would like us to celebrate or share, please discuss this with staff.

## Register Your Place

BOOK NOW WITH  
**ENROLMY**

Places for the new school year are available by the end of April each year (exact dates to be notified by email). Bookings reopen for existing and new families simultaneously and places, including those on our waiting list, will be filled on a first come, first served basis.

Please note that we must ensure, in adherence with the regulations and with our insurance schedule, that there is suitable staffing for the number of children due to attend at any given time. Equally, we must ensure full compliance with the Government funding department offering subsidies for fees (NCS). Therefore, **significant or repeated changes to your original booking after your confirmation email has been received may result in losing your child's place.**

We recognise the need for consistency when schools are closed. We offer our Holiday/mid-term programmes (Holiday HQ) to children enrolled in a national school. There may be a limit on Summer HHQ programmes accessible for new Junior Infant enrolled in National Schools due to a recent amendment in the TUSLA regulations, however, we will inform you on an individual basis around this. Our HHQ Holiday Programmes operate on a service-by-service demand basis. If the school your child is enrolled in does not offer Sherpa Kids HHQ Holiday Programmes, a National School nearby may do so. Please refer to our website to check HHQ Holiday Programme locations.

We have a separate HHQ Holiday Programme handbook for families also interested in having their child attend our services when their National School is closed. Information regarding our Sherpa Kids Holiday Programmes (including the Terms and Conditions for these programmes) are published ahead of the school closure periods.

You will be asked to complete Safety Form on behalf of your child to book a place. This form includes all relevant permissions (consent) and a signing page to agree to our Terms and Conditions. This form must be completed online prior to starting at one of the services.

## Registering your child

### With Enrolmy

If your child is new to Sherpa Kids you will need to register your child on the software we use, which is *Enrolmy*. You will be asked to complete your **Registration** on Enrolmy. Once you have registered via the link you will be redirected to our **Safety Form** which includes all relevant permissions (consent), allergies and details necessary for the safety of your child/children. If this form is not completed, you will receive an email reminder after 48 hours.

A **photo** of your child will be taken by the programme coordinator when the child starts attending. This identification photo will not be used for any other purpose other than to upload it to your online Enrolmy registration profile. This is a safety feature in place so staff members can easily identify your child.

**Please Note:** Your child does not have a confirmed place in the service unless you receive a **confirmation email**. Your child cannot start in the service until the above steps are taken. Should the service reach capacity then you will be placed on a waiting list. If you move off the waiting list you will be sent an email notification.

Enrolmy will generate a unique **Account Code** for your family. This account code is to be used on all correspondence and for the payment reference of fees. This is to ensure we can identify who you are quickly and efficiently in our system.

Should the information you use to register your child change (such as your contact number, allergies, class, child's medical care information etc) you will need to log into your online Enrolmy account to update the information. Once you have updated the information, you will also need to let the programme coordinator at the service know. The easiest way to do this is by sending an email to the service email address.

## Pre-payment and fees

A pre-payment of a 4-week booking equivalent fee is required when a booking is made for the next academic year for a booking to be confirmed, or in advance of attendance for a new booking during the academic year. This pre-payment is in place as we invoice in arrears. Bookings for the next Academic Year will open by the end of April (dates to be confirmed). The booking is only guaranteed once the pre-payment has been made.

Pre-payments are required to secure each new school year booking. The pre-payment should be made at the time of your booking for the new academic year to secure your booking. This pre-payment must be made via your Enrolmy parent account when booking. The pre-payment will be applied to the last month of the booking for that academic year. If the service you are trying to book is full, you will be added to the waiting list and you will not be asked to make a pre-payment until a space becomes available.

Pre-payments are fully refundable to all other families only when 4 week's written notice of cancellation is given. Please note, due to historical high volumes of booking cancellations received in September and June, Sherpa Kids can no longer facilitate reductions or cancellations in these months, regardless of 4-weeks notices. We are unable to fill these spaces and therefore it is no longer feasible for Sherpa Kids to facilitate cancellations or reductions during September and June of the Academic Year. Sherpa Kids holds the right to retain the pre-payment where fees are outstanding. Families will be notified if their pre-payment will be set against outstanding fees/unpaid bills.

We have 3 'open' windows of opportunity for you to change your booking with 4 weeks' notice via Enrolmy. These are in September, January, and April. This window will be open for 2 weeks (dates will be advised in advance).

### Payment options

Payments can now be actioned seamlessly through Enrolmy. The most popular option of payment is Direct Debit. When you receive your invoice or statement for 2 or more children, the payment options available are:

#### **Payment Options**

- Pay by **Debit/Credit card** – you pay invoice/statement weekly using your card details.
- **Single Direct Debit** (Bank Transfer) - you pay invoice/statement weekly using your bank details.
- **Recurrent Direct Debit** – payment of invoice/statement using your bank details on 1<sup>st</sup> week and then ongoing payments will be taken automatically. Confirmation of payments due will be sent prior to any payment taken from your account.

#### **Manual Payment Options**



- For a short period of time, we will accept payments directly into our bank account or through Realex. Please note as these payments are not through Enrolmy, it may take up to 7 working days for these payments to appear on your account. Notification will be sent when we are ceasing this payment option. Please quote your Account Code on all payment if using this method.

**IBAN:**  
**IE77AIBK93408915010030**  
**BIC: AIBKIE2D**

## Your NCS



All families can apply for and receive a subsidy (discount) under the National Childcare Scheme towards their Sherpa Kids fees, since we are a TUSLA-registered provider of services. In order to register for the NCS please visit: <https://www.ncs.gov.ie/en/> The basic subsidy is Universal, meaning all families are entitled to a discount per child per hour booked.

Please note that if you are in receipt of NCS you must adhere to the contract requirements as per the government contract. **This means your child must attend the service for the stated time applied for on the NCS**, except in legitimate short-term circumstances where a child might be absent due to illness. **Longer term patterns of absence can result in you losing your funding and becoming liable for any remaining charges.**

- Parents will be able to provide their NCS details upon their Registration via Enrolmy and the parent portal.
- We request that correct details relating to your CHICK codes are received no less than 1 week prior to the commencement of our services. We have no access to receive this information directly from the NCS. It must be provided to us.
- CHICK codes received late will not guarantee subsidised fees and you will be required to pay fees in full for hours attended before the CHICK code was submitted.
- Please note that subsidy claims cannot be backdated, so the sooner your CHICK code is sent the more financially beneficial it will be for you.
- The onus will also be on the parents/guardians to update new/expired CHICK codes via the Parent Portal. If you have any issues, please email your CHICK to [finance@sherpakids.ie](mailto:finance@sherpakids.ie) and we will be happy to assist in updating your records
- The NCS will be processed by Sherpa Kids but to receive the subsidy from the NCS, parents need to confirm the number of hours claimed on the NCS Portal. No subsidy will be paid to parents until this has been actioned.

It is recognised that the NCS scheme is flexible and all hours attended can be claimed. However, due to the high volume of additional 'one off/ad-hoc' bookings, our policy is to process the NCS for REGULAR bookings only.

### **Use your Account Code in all communications with us and when making all payments.**

We always require no less than 4 week's written notice of changes to service use hours and/or cancellations in order to remain compliant with government funding and to ensure our other legal and regulatory requirements remain fully compliant (for example, adult-child ratios and insurance).

Programme Type	Academic Year	Days/Time	Booking Type	Full Price (Before NCS)	Fees* After NCS
Rise then Shine (All Classes)	Academic Year 2024/25	08:00 - 09:00	Full Session (1 Hour)	€7	€4.86
			Week Pass	€25.00	€14.30
Stay and Play (Junior & Senior Infants)	Academic Year 2024/25	13:30 - 18:00	Junior Hour (1 hour): €7	€7	€4.86
			Part-Session (13:30 – 16:30)	€21	€14.58
			Full Session (13:55 – 18:00): €22	€29.50	€18.80
			Week Pass (5 days from 13:30 – 18:00) - 100	€147.50	€94.00
Stay and Play (1st-6th Classes)	Academic Year 2024/25	14:30 - 18:00	Part-Session (14:30 – 16:30)	€14	€9.72
			Full Session (14:30 – 18:00)	€22.50	€13.94
			Week Pass (5 days from 14:30 -16:55)	€112.50	€69.70

## Sample time/fees – Before and After the NCS

*\*Means-tested Fees After NCS are subject to individual family income. The example given is based on the current NCS Universal Hourly rate of €2.14, available to all. Visit our NCS page in our website to discover your applicable NCS percentage and use the online calculator.*

## Invoices & Making Payments

Invoices and account balances can be viewed directly on your Enrolmy profile (When you registered you would have set up a profile with your details, allowing you to see your account status as well as your details). Invoices for all term time services are raised fortnightly in arrears and can be viewed on the parent portal on the Thursday of the following week. You have 14 days to query your invoice after receiving it, however, payments are due to be made within a maximum of 7 days.

Any account in arrears will be monitored by our Accounts team. Where your account falls into arrears, Sherpa Kids hold the right to suspend your place. Your pre-payment may be set against any outstanding bill and you risk losing your child's place should your account fall into arrears.

Should you be in financial difficulty or find yourself unable to pay your invoices, we ask that you contact us immediately. Your confidentiality will be fully respected.

Please note: Fees are reviewed annually in September by the management and in accordance with any mandated relevant government policies. Parents/guardians will be informed by giving 20 days' notice of any increase in fees. Any increase in fees will be related to the cost-of-living increases and/or exceptional cost circumstances. We strive to keep our costs as affordable, competitive, and consistent as possible, however, we also strive to retain our staff, high standards of quality and overheads/utilities.

### Payment options

Payments can now be actioned seamlessly through Enrolmy. The most popular option of payment is Direct Debit. When you receive your invoice of statement for 2 or more children, the payment options available are:

#### Payment Options

- Pay by **debit/credit card** – you pay invoice/statement weekly using your card details.
- **Single Direct Debit** (Bank Transfer) - you pay invoice/statement weekly using your bank details.

- **Recurrent Direct Debit** – payment of invoice/statement using your bank details on 1<sup>st</sup> week and then ongoing payments will be taken automatically. Confirmation of payments due will be sent prior to any payment taken from your account. Please ensure you select the recurrent option when paying your invoice.

#### **Manual Payment Options**

- For a short period of time, we will accept payments directly into our bank account or through Realex. Please note as these payments are not through Enrolmy, it may take up to 7 working days for these payments to appear on your account. Notification will be sent when we are ceasing this payment option. Please quote your Account Code on all payment if using this method.

**IBAN:**  
**IE77AIBK93408915010030**  
**BIC: AIBKIE2D**

Please note that although we do not charge a transaction fee for any of the above payment options, should any of these payment options fail, there will be a failed transaction charge of €5 on the account.

## Your holidays, child illness & Early School Closures

### Random/unexpected child absence

We understand that children can get ill or have short term 'once off' absences. To ensure your place is secure and our staff and overheads are maintained, all Parents/guardians will be required to pay for any once off or 'ad hoc' days their child/children do not attend the service.

### Your Holidays

Should you decide to take holidays during term-time, your fees will continue to accrue. This is to ensure your place is secure on your return. We are unable to fill short-term childcare spaces, however, we must maintain staff and overheads. Failure to continue to pay fees following your own holiday periods runs the risk of losing your childcare space by being placed on a waiting list.



### Early School Closures

Where schools close early (for example before holiday periods) we will provide Sherpa Kids services directly following early school closure. This means that if the school closes earlier than normal, at (for example) 12 noon on a Friday, we will provide Sherpa Kids from 12 noon onwards to your normal collection times to accommodate families. Families have the ability to select an early closure booking themselves through Enrolmy. There will be an extra charge for those additional hours provided. You will be charged up to your regular booking (collection time) on this day, regardless of whether you collect your child at an early time than normal on this day, and regardless of the school closure times. Should you not wish to avail of Sherpa Kids services on an early closure day, we will require 4 weeks written notice for cancellation. [Please refer to our Cancellation Policy for the Terms and Conditions of Cancellation.](#)

### Service Closure for exceptional circumstances

Normal fees will apply if our services must close due to exceptional circumstances such as extreme weather (National Weather Warning) or Public Health instructions from Government level. Should the facilities provided to us from the school fail or malfunction (such as heating, frozen pipes, no running water) and result in us having to close temporarily for safety reasons or where the school is closed for other reasons outside of our control (such as school events, staff in service days), full charges will still apply. .

### National/Public Holiday Closures

No fees are charged when Sherpa Kids is routinely closed for National and Public Holidays (example Christmas and all other Public Holidays). These dates will be circulated directly to parents/guardians and posted on the parent's notice board well in advance of these closure periods.

### Long-Term Certified absence due to illness

In the case of a long term, medically certified illness of a child, parents/guardians are advised to keep in contact with us via the Person in Charge (Programme Coordinator) on a regular basis. Further arrangements will be discussed with you privately in these cases.

### Weather Conditions where schools remain open

Please note that during bad weather conditions where no public warning has been issued, we will make every effort to minimise any risk to our families. For example, applying salt where ice is likely to form, or clearing snow from entrance and exit routes. If our services are open during bad weather and your child does not attend, the full fee for this period will be charged. We will always risk assess the situation.



## Changing and/or cancelling a booking

We facilitate a growing number of families in a high volume of services. Most of our families now avail of the National Childcare Scheme (NCS) and we are therefore required to meet full compliance on inspection of our receipt of funding to apply subsidies to our fees.

### **4 week's written notice for cancellations or changes (for October – May only)**

We have 3 'open' windows of opportunity for you to change your regular booking with 4 weeks' notice via Enrolmy. These are in September, January, and April. This window will be open for 2 weeks (dates will be advised in advance)

We require no less than **4 week's written notice** from you of changes to a permanent cancellation of your booking to allow us adequate time to make these amendments.

Due to an historically high volume of changes and cancellations received in the first and last month of each Academic Year, Sherpa Kids is no longer in a viable position to accommodate changes or cancellations in September and/or June, irrespective of a 4-week notice given.

Requests for regular booking reductions and amendments should be done via Enrolmy.

All requests for cancellations must be sent to [support@sherpakids.ie](mailto:support@sherpakids.ie) between September and May. Again **4 week's written notice** is required for the cancellation to come into effect.

### **No acceptance of Changes/Cancellations for September and June**

Due to a pattern of high-volume cancellations and changes requests in the first and last month of the academic year, we have a 'no acceptance' policy in place for the duration of both months at either end of the academic school year. Families will be billed as usual irrespective of the 4-week notice for cancellation or reductions/changes to ensure our services remain viable to run during these months.

Failure to balance invoices during these periods may result in the loss of your child's place.

Once a cancellation has been made requests for a subsequent booking must be made to [support@sherpakids.ie](mailto:support@sherpakids.ie) as the system will prohibit you from making further bookings in that academic year.

### **3 'windows' to reduce/swap days in your booking per school year**

We understand that people's circumstances can change and that less hours/days, or different days may be required at any given time. We therefore open 3 windows across the academic year to allow changes to be made, with 4 week's notice (reduction of days/hours, or to change days of your use of Sherpa Kids). Changes include swapping your days and/or reducing your days/hours, either with a permanent or temporary intention. Please note that where a change request alters a Court/Access order in place, we will require supporting legal documentation or an updated Court Access Order to allow us grant such requests. We cannot guarantee change requests that impact custody/access rights in place in the best interests of child safety and welfare.

### **Cancelling your Booking**

You can permanently cancel your place at any time and will not be charged anything once we receive a 4-week written notice in advance of your cancellation. Failure to provide this will result in a charge equivalent of up to 4 week's fees. All requests for cancellations must be sent to [support@sherpakids.ie](mailto:support@sherpakids.ie) between September and May. This will also allow us to put your 'prepayment' back on your account.

### **Adhoc / Once Off Additional Hours**

Where capacity allows, you may book additional 'ad hoc' hours with us through Enrolmy. These might be in the case of an emergency where you need your child to remain in our care on a day they are not regularly booked in, or for longer than they normally do on a booked day. You will be charged our regular hourly rate for this short-term or 'once off' booking. It is our policy that the NCS does not apply to these bookings.

### **Increasing your regular booking**

Should you wish to increase your regular hours/days, please do so through Enrolmy for each week in question until the next open window. In the event of exceptional circumstance please email [support@sherpakids.ie](mailto:support@sherpakids.ie) with the details of the change required. You will be charged our regular hourly rate for these additional hours to your booking between open windows. It is our policy that the NCS does not apply to these bookings.

### **Wait List**

When making a regular and/or ad-hoc booking, your booking will go to a wait list if there is no capacity at the time of booking. When a place becomes available, all on the waiting list will be notified and the place will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. The window to confirm will be 24 hours after which point the place will become available to all parents.

## **Non-payment of fees & withdrawal of children**

We understand that family circumstances can change. Should you need to remove your child from our service, you can do so at any time. We do, however, require no less than 4 week's written notice from you to avoid a charge incurring. This is also to ensure we can remain compliant with the NCS requirements and make other necessary arrangements to fully cancel your booking and allocate it to a family on the waiting list.

You will be asked to submit an 'exit survey' where you will be encouraged to share your reason for the decision to leave our service. This is because we value your feedback and/or suggestions on how we can continue to improve our quality and child experiences.

Please note that non-payment of fees, or repeated occasions of an account being in arrears, may result in the request by our management team to withdraw your child from our services. In these circumstances, we hold the right to set your pre-payment amount against an outstanding bill. We promise to give you no less than 2 week's written notice of this last resort so that you can make alternative arrangements.

### **Non-payment of Fees:**

- May result in loss of child's place.
- May result in suspension or withdrawal of your child's place until the matter is resolved. Full payment of arrears will be required to reinstate your booking if a place is available.
- May result in an interest charge of 5% being applied to your subsequent bill.
- May result in your pre-payment being set against the amount outstanding, but only after we have given you 2 week's written notice of this intention.

### **Where delays in payment are expected**

Any expected delays in payments must be first discussed in advance with our Finance Team. We hold the right to refuse to enter into a payment plan should doing so be financially risky or detrimental to the business.

### **Accounts in Arrears**


Any account in arrears will be monitored and if your account reaches arrears your booking will be suspended, and you will be at risk of losing your place permanently. We hold the right to set a paid pre-payment amount against your outstanding bill, however, written communication will be issued to you first to inform you of this intention.

### **Late Payments and Interest Rate applicable**

Late payments will incur interest charges of 5% calculated daily and if fees are not paid, they may be handed to our collection agency that will actively seek all monies owed, including seeking legal redress where deemed necessary. Children will not be permitted to attend any sessions until the overdue fees are paid.

### **Distressed Child/not Settling after trial periods**

As a very last resort, Sherpa Kids also reserve the right to request that the Parent/Guardian withdraw their child/children from the service where a child is distressed for prolonged periods of time, or where they fail to 'settle in' or adapt to the environment after a period of time. A phased period of settling in may be requested

A red paper airplane is shown in flight, with a dashed line indicating its path. The airplane is positioned in the top left corner of the page.

to alleviate distress to a child who is struggling to settle, and we expect that parents/guardians will support this process in the best interests of the child. A 4-week notice for change is not required under these circumstances.

In the scenario where a phased settling in period, reduced hours, or other accommodations made do not alleviate distress for a child, management hold the right give no less than two weeks' written notice of this decision to the Parent/Guardian so that they can make alternative arrangements in the best interest of the child.

Sherpa Kids is child central in its approach and will always prioritise the welfare and wellbeing of the individual child. Where a child is not coping well in the Sherpa Kids environment at any point (due to tiredness, over-stimulation, noise triggers etc) Sherpa Kids staff will contact the parent and request the child is collected in his/her best interests. **Please note we will make every effort to recruit additional, suitable staff members to support children and reduce our legal ratio, however this is not an automatic guarantee we can make.** Sherpa Kids holds the right to reduce a child's hours of attendance temporarily where the child is at risk to themselves or to others due to their exposure to a busy setting of 1 adult to 12 children. During this time, a child-centred well-being plan may be put in place and the parent/guardian will always be invited to collaborate with us.

## Health, safety & wellbeing of children

The health, safety and well-being of children is central to everything we stand for and a priority defining all decisions we make. We aim to provide a safe and healthy environment for all children attending Sherpa Kids and we are in contact with a variety of organisations to advise and assist us in these areas.

Where applicable, parents must provide the Person in Charge or Programme Coordinator with a Medical or Health Management Plan to ensure we can meet all the medical and health needs of children.

We comply at all times with all relevant health and safety in employment legislation. We promote healthy eating and the benefits of Nutritious foods to help fuel our busy bodies.

A range of snacks are provided to the children at Sherpa Kids and these include a variety of healthy food choices. There is a constant supply of fresh fruit (for those who may get hungry between snacks) and fresh drinking water. Food is prepared using the food and safety guidelines from the Food Safety Authority of Ireland. Our staff are HACCP trained. The menu will be displayed each week and we welcome suggestions from children and parents.

If your child has any allergies or any special food requirements or you do not want your child to participate in our Nutritious Programme, please include this on the Safety Form and advise the Person in Charge/ Programme Coordinator. At times we may have children with specific food allergies or needs attend our service and therefore we adhere to a strict **NO NUT** policy.

A typical 2 week's menu at Sherpa Kids may look like this:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Nutri Category
Wholemeal/White Bread (GF Alternative) <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Wheat - Contains Barley - Contains Suitable for Vegans	Pita Breads (GF Alternative) <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Nuts - May Contain	Cream Crackers (GF Alternative) <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Wheat - Contains Suitable for Vegetarians	Rice Cakes <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Sesame - May Contain	White/Wholemeal Wraps (GF Alternative) <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Wheat Soya Flour Barley	<b>Carbohydrate/ Fibre Source</b>
Butter/Cheddar Cheese <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Milk - Contains Suitable for Vegetarians	Butter/Edam Cheese <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Milk - Contains Suitable for Vegetarians	Butter/Cream Cheese Cheese/Slice	Low Fat Yoghurt/Butter/ Cheese Slices <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Milk - Contains Suitable for Vegetarians	Cream Cheese/Butter/ Grated Cheese <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Milk - Contains Suitable for Vegetarians	<b>Dairy</b>
Cooked Ham Slices	Cooked Turkey Slices	Cooked Ham Slices	Cooked Turkey Slices	Cooked Chicken Slices	<b>Protein</b>
Lettuce and Tomatoes Bananas	Melon varieties Apples	Raisins Cucumber Slices	Clementine - Easy Peelers	Sweetcorn Bananas	<b>Fruit/Veg</b>

### Snack Sample Menu: Week 1

### Snack Sample Menu: Week 2

GF/Dairy Free alternative every day! Strictly a Nut-Free Zone.

## Drop Off & Collection Policy

We always want your child to be safe that is why we have a strict policy on who can and cannot collect them.

Before any child starts with us the parent/guardian must give the names and contact details of all additional

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Nutri Category
Wholemeal/White Wraps or (GF Alternative) <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Wheat - Contains Barley - Contains Suitable for Vegans	Rice Cake <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Milk- Contains	Plain Brioche Baps/Rolls (GF Alternative) <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Wheat - Contains Milk - may contain	Wholemeal/White Sliced pan <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Wheat - contains Milk - may contain	Cream Crackers and breadsticks <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Wheat - Contains Milk - May contain	<b>Carbohydrate/ Fibre Source</b>
Grated Cheddar and Mozzarella Cheese <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Milk - Contains Suitable for Vegetarians	Butter/Cream Cheese <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Milk - Contains Suitable for Vegetarians	Butter/Cream Cheese <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Milk - May contain	Buttler/Cheese Slices <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Milk - Contains Suitable for Vegetarians	Cheese/Butter Slices <b>Allergy Advice:</b> Milk - Contains Suitable for Vegetarians	<b>Dairy</b>
Chicken Breast Slices	Cooked Sliced Ham	Mild Salami Slices	Cooked Chicken Slices	Ham & Hummus Dip <b>Allergy Advice:</b> May contain sesame	<b>Protein</b>
Sweetcorn Clementines - Easy Peelers	Carrot fingers and mixed pepper sticks	Sultana Apples	Pears Banana	Cucumber Sticks Apples	<b>Fruit/Veg</b>

people authorised to collect them on their online Safety Form. Should this ever change, a parent/guardian can log into their Enrolmy Parent account to make the necessary updates. Only authorised persons over 18 years of age are allowed to collect children. We will not allow any unauthorised person (or those without details on our file) to collect your child for safety reasons.



Parents/Guardians can add up-to 8 authorised persons to their parent profile. If a named person cannot collect your child, then you must give us consent in writing where possible of the person who will collect them along with their name, address and telephone number and a clear description of them. We hold the right to ask any collector for proof of ID. This is only in the best interests of child safety.

No child will ever be allowed to leave our service with an unauthorised person. Should an unauthorised person attempt to collect a child, the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately. Parents/guardians must always give written consent in advance if someone other than a listed authorised person is to collect their child.

Children are not permitted to leave Sherpa Kids unaccompanied. Should a parent/guardian insist a child goes home independently, a risk assessment will be conducted by our team, and a waiver will be required to be signed by the parent/guardian first.

Parents/guardians are expected always to make brief verbal exchanges with our staff team on drop-off and collection. This is in the best interests of child safety, well-being, and to the line of communication and rapport between parent/guardian and our staff. We understand that you might be in a rush, but we ask that you do seek our attention (if we are not in your direct proximity) when you drop your child off and/or collect your child.

Children are not, under any circumstances, permitted to be dropped early to our services or left unsupervised by parents/guardians at any time.

Authorised collectors of children are not permitted to enter a school premises unless they are invited to do so, or while under the influence of alcohol or drugs that inhibit them in any way.

Should a staff member feel that a parent/guardian or authorised collector is in an unfit state to collect a child (such as under the influence of drugs or alcohol) or should they be deemed a risk to the child, management hold the right not to allow the child be collected at that time but to seek out an alternative authorised collector, and/or to contact TUSLA, a social worker, or the Gardai. Child safety will come first in determining the course of action in the best interests of the child. We ask that all exchanges with our staff and in the presence of children are respectful and calm.

## Early collection & late drop off

### Non-payment of fees & withdrawal of children

If you or an authorised collector is going to be late collecting a child, we ask you to contact the service by phone as soon as you know this. Additional charges will incur where your child remains in the service after their assigned collection time. While we do allow for a 'grace period' of up to 5 minutes, late collections thereafter generate an additional fee. After 3 incidents of lateness in one school year, an increased late fee of €15 per each 10 minutes lateness during service operating hours will apply.

Sherpa Kids is open until 6pm daily and our staff deserve to finish at this time. Children must be collected by an authorised person no later than 6pm. Repeated late collections after service closure may result in the loss of your child's place. After 6pm, a lates fee of €15 per each 10 minutes lateness will apply. For example, 20 minutes lateness after service closure will automatically incur an additional charge of €30.



We ask that parents/guardians do not drop their child late to our Rise then Shine (Before-school) services, as this can be disruptive to other children, and to our morning routines.

Once a child is dropped to one of our Programmes, a parent/guardian is not permitted to remove the child unnecessarily from that programme, even for a short period of time. This can be confusing and disruptive for the child and for others attending that Programme.

If you do need to collect your child early from our Stay and Play (After-school), we ask that you let us know in advance. This is so that we can communicate this to your child and ensure they are ready for early collection. Children can find it difficult to transition from certain activities, particularly before they have finished them, therefore, communicating with us around early collection helps us prepare your child appropriately for this change. However, repeated early collections can result in a loss of your child's booking and NCS funding. We receive NCS funding from the Government to allow a discount to parents. We must report all under-attendance and return the bill to full fees for all hours not attended by a child. Patterns of regular early collections will lead to a loss of NCS subsidy for families and their need to pay full fees for all hours (including those not attended).

## Separated or divorced parents

We strive to approach all family units and family custody arrangements as sensitively as possible with the child's best interests and safety at heart. In Ireland, married parents are automatically joint guardians. We cannot refuse either parent to collect their child unless a written court order is in place and shared with us. We are not obliged to produce a collection time that is not one of the regular options at the service if our 1:12 adult-child ratio does not allow us to accommodate it. We ask that parents communicate the available collection times in the court hearing so that arrangements can be set out in accordance with the drop and collection times at the relevant service. We ask that parents give us the relevant information and supporting documentation regarding any persons with restricted or no access legally to a child. We will adhere strictly to the court order times/days for access/collection and will exercise no flexibility until an updated court order is provided. We refuse to participate in any domestic disputes and request that each relevant adult agree their own method of communicating and updating each other around their child. We are not obliged to duplicate communications in the case of separated or divorced parents. Please note that our Reduction/Swap Booking Changes Policy may not be exercised in the case where any requested change alters that which is set out in a Court Order/Legal Access document. We will require an updated court document to supersede any existing one in order to alter/lessen the hours attended by the relevant child.


Where custody of a child is granted to one parent/guardian only, we will require that you disclose this to us in the interests of child safety. Where any barring orders, custody order, or information on supervised access to children exist, we ask you to give us with a copy of the relevant documentation to keep securely on file. This information is kept strictly confidential.

A parent who has been denied access to a child through a court order will not be allowed on the premises. Sherpa Kids holds the right to contact the Gardai should a parent with denied access to a child enter the premises. If that parent becomes violent or aggressive or insists on removing the child from the premises, then the Gardai will be called immediately.

We do not tolerate any form of abuse or threats made against our staff. Incidents of unruly, aggressive or intimidating behaviour in the presence of staff, other families or children will be taken extremely seriously and not tolerated.

## Fire safety

All our staff are trained in fire prevention and evacuation. Your child will participate in monthly fire drills, so they know what to do in the event of a fire or on hearing a fire alarm. All fire equipment is readily accessible and serviced regularly by the schools we partner with in line with the fire regulations.



Fire notices and fire exits are clearly marked in our premises, please make note of these when you are in our premises. If you are in our premises and you hear the fire alarm sound, please make your way to the nearest fire exit and go directly to the fire assembly point as directed by staff. Do not remove your child from the service if you arrive to collect during a Fire Drill, unless authorised to do so by a member of staff. This is so that your child has an opportunity to participate in the Drill in the interests of their own safety and practice, but also to ensure we correctly account for your child's presence or absence during the Drill.

We have a strict No Smoking and No Vaping policy in place on school grounds for all staff, parents and visitors to our service.

## Medication & consent

We do not routinely administer non-prescription/prescription medications. We ask that medications such as antibiotics are administered before or after your child attends our services.

We only ever administer essential medicines with the correct signed permission from parents/guardians. Medicines must only be brought into our Breakfast Club or Afterschool Programmes for administration by the staff when it is absolutely essential. This means where it would negatively impact on a child's health if he/she were not to be given it. **Medicine should be in its original container with the doctor's instructions.** We cannot give medication without its original packaging. We cannot give medication not licensed for the age of your child or where the instructions are not written in English.

Our staff will always contact you first before administering non-prescription medication such as Calpol to seek permission. Should your child develop a fever or be in pain, we will contact you immediately and ask you to collect your child without delay. In certain circumstances, we will ask your permission to administer the correct dosage of anti-febrile medication (Calpol) to your child.

If we give your child any medicine, staff will sign a medical form confirming this and ask you to sign to confirm you were informed that your child was given medication.

## Emergency medication

If your child has an allergy or a medical condition such as diabetes, epilepsy etc. you will be asked to complete a medical emergency care plan in full before your child commences in our service. Any updates to a child's medical needs or emergency medication are required to be updated on your Enrolmy Profile and to be communicated directly to the service, clearly and in a timely manner (email form).

Our staff have received training on responding to anaphylaxis and administering an EpiPen.

Parents/guardians of children who have a prescribed EpiPen are required to provide us with an additional clearly labelled EpiPen to store appropriately and permanently for the time the child is registered to attend Sherpa Kids. This is to ensure there is minimal risk of an EpiPen being mislaid between the classroom and Sherpa Kids, or to avoid the risk of a child removing the EpiPen from another child's school bag.

Parents/Guardians are fully responsible for supplying an in-date clearly labelled EpiPen to us along with their medical emergency care plan. We will notify you of a pending expiration date, however, we ask that parents/guardians make note of when the emergency medication they have supplied us with is due to expire.

Asthma inhalers are regarded as "oral medication". Oral medications must be prescribed by a GP and have the manufacturer instructions clearly written on them. Inhalers must be provided to the service clearly labelled with the child's name.

Medications, including emergency medications such as EpiPens and Ventolin inhalers should not be stored in your child's school bag. You must inform us in advance if you are sending your child in with medication, including

topical medications such as skin creams. All medicines must be kept in a locked cabinet at our service to avoid accidental ingestion or overdosing by children.

In the event of a serious medical emergency arising for any child the service will contact emergency services first. Parents/guardians will be informed as soon as possible. A staff member will accompany a child to hospital and stay with the child until the parent/guardian arrives.

All medical information about children is kept securely on the premises and kept for a period of 2 years.

## Sun cream policy

We ask that you apply suncream to your child (or ensure they have protection from the sun) before arriving at our services. We also ask that you, where possible, supply your child with additional sun cream (such as a travel sized bottle) to allow them to 'top up' accordingly.

We advise that Factor 50 suncream is used on all occasions to best protect a child's skin.

The permissions form within your Booking sets out whether you consent to us providing your child with hypo-allergenic Factor 50 sun cream protection on any necessary occasion where you have not provided some.

We will always encourage children to self-administer sun cream, however, it may be necessary to assist younger children to ensure adequate protection from the sun.

## Child behaviour management

Our Programmes aim to be equally enjoyable for all children, and we depend on parent/guardian cooperation and understanding while we strive to achieve that. While we recognise that children will have disagreements from time to time, we also have some easy-to-follow rules that we will support the children to follow and remember. These are:

- Gentle hands
- Listening ears
- Kind words
- Calm selves
- Ask for & offer help
- Work together
- Share with & Include others
- Have fun!



The children will therefore know what is expected of them, and where clear limits are set, appropriate to their age and stage of development and any additional or complex needs they may have.

Children are not permitted to be physically or verbally abusive towards other children, and we take all matters that arise seriously, balancing them with our own knowledge and expertise around child development and behaviour. Should an incident occur, a child's parent/guardian will be notified as soon as possible in order to discuss an outcome.

On very rare occasions and where, together with parents/guardians, we have worked to resolve a severe behavioural issue, we may have no alternative but to reduce the hours of attendance or terminate a child's place



in our Programme. This will always be a last resort and such decisions will be made in the best interests of all children attending.

We have a zero-tolerance approach to bullying at our services. Any bullying behaviour that should arise between children will be dealt with immediately by staff, and parents/guardians are always informed.

If you believe your child is being bullied or bullying, please bring it to the attention of your relevant Programme Coordinator. Together we can deal with it promptly and appropriately.

We have a comprehensive Behaviour Management Policy in place for all staff to adhere to. This is available to you on request, however, it is set out in summary below. We also have a child friendly version of our Behaviour Policy to ensure it is communicated appropriately for all children's ages and stages of development.

- ✓ We believe that children should be encouraged to grow and develop to their full potential in a suitably planned environment.
- ✓ We believe all children have a right to enjoy their time with us and be free from fear.
- ✓ We believe in children's ability to make good choices, ask for support and accept responsibility for their actions.
- ✓ We encourage children to come up with their own solutions to solving problems and support them by offering choices to resolve behavioural difficulties. We support children both individually and as a group in this way.
- ✓ We use a positive approach to behaviour management and encourage good behaviour through praise, encouragement and modelling what is expected.
- ✓ We recognise the importance of parents/guardians in their child's life and it is our policy to always work together with parents/guardians in supporting and achieving positive behaviour.
- ✓ We understand that challenging behaviours can be a result of a child being tired, overwhelmed, over-stimulated, or having more complex needs or sensitivity to environmental triggers. We will always approach behaviour management with the child's individual needs at the centre of all decisions and outcomes. This can include reducing a child's hours of attendance, for example.
- ✓ We encourage children to respect themselves, each other and property. We aim to provide a happy, caring environment with challenging activities.
- ✓ We NEVER use any form of physical punishment, raise our voices, threaten or isolate children from other children, adults or from celebrations as a form of punishment.
- ✓ It is not the service policy to use any form of restraint when managing behaviour except in rare circumstances if we feel a child may cause serious injury to themselves or others. This is only done as a last resort and by fully trained staff.
- ✓ In the case of a particular incident or persistent unacceptable behaviour we always discuss ways forward with parents.
- ✓ On very rare occasions and where, together with parents, we have exhausted every reasonable lead to resolve a severe behavioural issue (or where behaviours can only be managed on an extended one-to-one basis), we may have no alternative but reduce a child's hours of attendance, or terminate the place. This is a last resort and such decisions will be made in the best interest of your child, general Health and Safety, and other children attending the setting.
- ✓ We have a zero-tolerance approach to bullying in our service. Any bullying behaviour that should arise between children is dealt with immediately by staff and parents are always informed.
- ✓ If you believe your child is being bullied or bullying, please bring it to our attention so together we can deal with it.

## Missing child policy

We work hard to always keep children safe and to avoid a situation where a child is found to be missing. To ensure this we implement the following:

- Strict security measures are always in place in our services.
- The main door to the premises remains closed and secure from unauthorised access from the outside.
- Parents are requested not to admit anyone else into the service whilst entering or leaving unless they are knowledgeable that the person is an authorised collector of a child attending, and to check that all doors are securely closed behind them, at all times.
- Children are never left unattended without a staff member present and the necessary staff/child ratios are always adhered to.
- Head counting is done regularly, routinely and manually and checked against the number of children recorded as present in our software system.
- Head counting is done on arrival into and from the outdoor area and during Fire Drills to account for all children.

In the unlikely event that a staff member cannot locate a child on the premises the following procedure is put in place immediately:

- The premises will be searched thoroughly and immediately.
- The register will be called to determine which child(ren) are missing.
- The grounds surrounding the service will be searched.
- The child will be called out by name by a staff member to prompt a response.
- Blind spots will be checked.
- Staff will call the local Garda.
- Staff will inform the parents/guardians.
- A full and thorough review of procedures and practices will take place to determine how the incident occurred and changes will be made if appropriate.
- An accident/incident form will be completed and appropriately signed.

## Unwell or distraught children

If a child attending the service becomes unwell or very upset, we will contact the authorised people listed on the Enrolment form for them to pick up the child as soon as possible. This is in the best interests of the child.

We ask that you please keep children who are unwell at home until they have recovered, as we do not have the facilities to look after sick children.

If a child has been booked into the service but does not attend due to sickness, please inform the Person in Charge (Programme Coordinator) as soon as possible. Should a child not attend school due to illness, we ask that you inform us before 10:30am on that day where possible.

We also welcome parents to visit our service before a child's first session where this is possible to help the child to adjust and feel comfortable with our staff and service. If a child does not settle in a reasonable amount of time, we will contact parents to discuss together how best to support the child.

A phased or staggered settling period may be required in the best interests of the child. We ask that parents support this process and are patient with it until the child develops confidence in attending.

## Infectious conditions & exclusion policy

COMMON RASHES AND SKIN INFECTIONS	RECOMMENDED EXCLUSION PERIOD
Chicken Pox	Until scabs are dry, usually 5-7 days from onset of rash
German Measles (rubella)	7 days from onset of rash
Hand, Foot and Mouth	None, once child is generally well
Impetigo	Until lesions are crusted and healed, or 24hrs after commencing antibiotic treatment
Measles	Four days from onset of rash
Ringworm	Exclusion not usually required
Scabies	Children can return after first treatment
Scarlet Fever	Child can return 24hrs After commencing antibiotic treatment
Slapped Cheek/Fifth Disease/Parvovirus B19	None
Shingles	Exclude only if rash is weeping and cannot be covered
DIARRHOEA AND VOMITING ILLNESS	RECOMMENDED EXCLUSION PERIOD
Diarrhoea and/or Vomiting	48hrs from last episode of Diarrhoea or vomiting
E. coli 0157/VTEC	Further exclusions required - cases excluded until 2 negative stool specimens taken at least 48hrs apart
Typhoid and Paratyphoid (enteric fever)	Further exclusions may be required for some children until they are no longer excreting
Shigella (dysentery)	Further exclusion may be required for certain types of Shigella infections
Cryptosporidiosis	Exclude for 48hrs from last episode of diarrhoea
RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS	RECOMMENDED EXCLUSION PERIOD
Flu (Influenza)	Until recovered
Tuberculosis	Always consult your local DPH
Whooping Cough (Pertussis)	Five days from commencing antibiotic treatment, or 21 days from onset of illness if no antibiotic treatment
COVID-19	Until symptoms subside
OTHER INFECTIONS	RECOMMENDED EXCLUSION PERIOD
Conjunctivitis	None as long as child is generally well
Glandular Fever	None as long as child is well
Headlice	None once treatment applied
Hepatitis A	Exclude until 7 days after onset of jaundice (or 7 days after symptom onset if no jaundice)
Hepatitis B, C HIV/Aids	None
Meningococcal Meningitis/ Septicaemia	Until recovered
Meningitis viral	None as long as child is generally well
MRSA	None as long as child is generally well
Mumps	Exclude child for 5 days after onset of swelling
Threadworms	None
Tonsillitis/Pharyngitis	None as long as child is generally well

## First aid & critical incidents

There is an approved fully stocked first-aid kit and other supporting kits available and a staff member trained in first aid, anaphylaxis & asthma will be present onsite at each service. First Aid kits are checked and restocked monthly or as required. All documentation pertaining to the contents and replacement of items is retained by Sherpa Kids.

All incidents, injury, trauma and illness events including serious incidents are recorded and discussed with parents, staff and where necessary reported to the appropriate authority and Sherpa Kids Head Office.

If a serious accident occurs our policy is to ensure the safety and well-being of the child first. This may mean an ambulance or other appropriate form of medical help is sought before the parent is called. We do not use our cars or public transport to escort children to hospitals, GP surgeries or to their homes.

The safety of staff, children and visitors to our service is vital in the event of an emergency. Emergencies include events as fires, floods, extreme weather conditions, other catastrophic events, the presence of dangerous persons and animals and any other situation or threat which requires a lockdown or evacuation of the premises. We have a critical incident plan in place in the event of an emergency, including a 'lock-in' procedure in the event of an external threat.

Staff and volunteers will initially be made aware of emergency procedures and drills at our service during their inductions and this information will be reinforced with the children during regular practice drills.

## Child safeguarding policy

Sherpa Kids is fully committed to the active safeguarding the children and to providing a safe environment in which they can play, learn and develop. We are committed to child centred practice in all our work with children and full compliance with Children First and Our Duty of Care as mandated persons. Our mandated obligations are understood to mean that we have a duty to minimise risk to children and to report on any potential or existing harm to children that reaches a threshold of concern.

We have a comprehensive "Child Protection and Welfare Policy" (also known as Child Safeguarding Policy and Statement) document onsite at this service which set out our full policies and procedures regarding the protection of our children.

All our staff are fully Garda Vetted and have Police Clearance Certification from abroad where necessary. All our staff are trained in Child Safeguarding and hold a Children First certificate.

We have a named Designated Liaison Person in each of our services and a Child Safeguarding Statement (Risk Assessment) on display.

Our Child Safeguarding Policy and Statement is updated at least annually, or as required should a new risk be identified.

In the interests of Child Safeguarding, we have a No Phones Policy for both Staff and Children.

Staff are only permitted to use service devices to make contact with parents, take authorised photos (with parental consent) and/or to record child attendance in real time.

No service phones are permitted to be taken home by Sherpa Kids staff members.



## Sherpa Kids- Charity initiatives

We feel passionate about local Irish registered charities who are doing positive things for school age children without the help of government funding. Our Charity of Choice is currently A Lust For Life, an award-winning Mental Health Charity with a panel of experts developing crucial programmes and resources that facilitate young people to be the effective guardians of their own mind.

## Our commitment

We recognise the importance of recruiting suitable staff members and training them accordingly. We provide all mandatory training to our staff members and cover the cost of it. We ensure that all staff are fully vetted and appropriately qualified for the position. Our selection and training of staff is carefully designed to ensure staff will:

- Take time to establish a rapport with your children and learn about their unique interests and abilities.
- Model appropriate language and communication skills, safe practices, behaviours, values, and attitudes.
- Be flexible and reactive to children's emerging interests and needs and encourage children to communicate, explore and be creative and spontaneous.
- Allow children to make decisions, problem-solve and express and share their thoughts and opinions.
- Provide opportunities to build upon children's previous experiences to extend their development and learning.
- Assist children in developing positive relationships with other children/staff, so that children see themselves as a valuable member of the community.
- Use praise and reinforcement with children to boost self-esteem, encourage and motivate good practice and celebrate children's efforts and achievements.
- Anticipate conflict and assist children and families to resolve any issues or instances of bullying and harassment.
- Be committed to improving their own professional development and continually challenge their own practices and decision making so as to provide an enriching learning environment for all.

All Sherpa Kids staff undergo a recruitment and training process that involves First Aid training, Fire Safety, Child Safeguarding and Manual Handling as well as any other training as required by national guidelines. Staff will also participate in training which introduces Sherpa Kids systems and performance reviews.

Staff ratios will comply with all requirements set by the national guidelines at all times. Approved off-site excursions may also require a greater ratio of staff to children dependent on the nature of the excursion. Parents will be kept fully informed when such events occur and prior consent for children to go on excursions will be sought.

It is the policy of this service to have adequate insurance by retaining a current certificate of insurance relevant to the type of service we operate at all times. Our insurance certificate is available and in date for inspection.



A red paper airplane flying towards the right, leaving a dashed red trail.

## Other forms of communication

Our Sherpa Kids newsletter will be emailed to our families and community so up to date information about our staff, policies, fees, upcoming service activities and special events is communicated.

We encourage open communication at all times with our families if you have any queries or concerns about the operations of our services, contact the Person in Charge at your service, or Head Office. All concerns will be treated in confidence.

We also will reflect on the fun that we have had in our service and share any ideas and community information that you may find useful. We also have notice boards and display areas which also contain information you will find useful such as staff & service information, the weekly menu and examples of children's activities, so please take the time to check these regularly.

## Lost or damaged property

Please note we do not allow children to use mobile phones, tablets, iPods or other devices while attending our services and we ask that you adhere to this policy. Children are not permitted to bring toys, electronic games or significant amounts of money to Sherpa Kids. We cannot take responsibility if these items are lost, stolen or damaged and will not be held liable for personal items.

Sherpa Kids staff endeavours to remind and assist children about their personal belongings. We encourage personal responsibility by the children and do not accept responsibility for any items of clothing or otherwise lost or left in the school grounds. Unnamed property left on site will be left in the Sherpa Kids Service and if necessary, may also be handed into the school to add to their lost property at the end of each week.

Staff will take due care and responsibility regarding the structural and non-structural property and its use. Parents or guardians may be liable for replacement costs of equipment or property damaged by their children.

## Complaints & compliments

We welcome the feedback of any parent, guardian or member of the Sherpa Kids community or host of our service. It is our intention to deliver the best service and customer satisfaction within the standards and guidelines of our service provision. Please notify the Person in Charge/ Programme Coordinator if there is something you wish to discuss with them or bring to their attention. This can be done verbally or in written form.

All complaints should be put in writing in order for us to deal with them thoroughly and appropriately. You have the option of using the enclosed form to do so.

In the instance of a complaint, a resolution will be sought as quickly as possible and within no less than 14 days. You may be required to attend a private and/or facilitated meeting to discuss the cause for concern or complaint in further detail with us. Depending on the circumstances of your complaint, an investigation may be invoked. A written outcome to your complaint will be furnished to you.



If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction or it is inappropriate to raise it with the Programme Coordinator in the first instance it should be escalated to the Area Manager and subsequently to the Regional Manager.

We ask that confidentiality is strictly maintained during and after the complaints process.

### Our helpful links:

- ✦ New to Sherpa Kids? <https://www.sherpakids.ie/parent-support/>
- ✦ Before & After School: <https://www.sherpakids.ie/before-and-after-school/>
- ★ Find out more about Holiday Programmes: <https://www.sherpakids.ie/school-holidays/holiday-hq/>
- 💡 National Childcare Scheme (NCS): <https://www.sherpakids.ie/parent-support/national-childcare-scheme-ncs/>
- ✦ Find our Term Time Services: <https://www.sherpakids.ie/find-us/?filters=stay+and+play%2Ccrise+then+shine%2Cjunior+hour+stay+and+play+>
- ✦ Find our Holiday HQ (Holiday Programme) Services: <https://www.sherpakids.ie/find-us/?filters=holiday+hq>
- 💬 Need help? For general enquiries contact us at [info@sherpakids.ie](mailto:info@sherpakids.ie) and for bookings support contact us at [support@sherpakids.ie](mailto:support@sherpakids.ie)

Appendix 1

## Sherpa Kids Compliments and Complaint Form

<b>Sherpa Kids Service:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Relationship to child:</b>
<b>Phone:</b>	<b>Email:</b>

**Details of Compliment/Complaint:**

### Compliment -Testimonial Consent

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Print Name)

Acknowledge and approve that the testimonial written above can be used by Sherpa Kids International and Sherpa Kids Ireland for media and relevant publications and online, including all content and quotes or part thereof at Sherpa Kids International and Sherpa Kids Ireland's discretion.

I understand that Sherpa Kids International and Sherpa Kids Ireland is not responsible for any misprint or misrepresentation once the testimonial has been distributed.

**Parent/Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Details of Complaint, Concern, Suggestions\***

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\*Please note any complaints can be emailed or sent directly to Head Office management; this form is not the only means to submit a complaint or concern to us.

**Follow Up Required [office only]:**

**Parent Notified:**

**School Notified:**

**Area Manager/Owner Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

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