

TIGERS
Childcare



PARENT INFORMATION PACK

Early Years Centre, Ashbourne

COMPANY INFORMATION

Tigers Childcare is a business name owned by Tiger Time Limited – registered address College Business and Technology Park, Ballycoolin, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15. Company Registration number 488188.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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ABOUT TIGERS EARLY YEARS CENTRE

Our environments are designed into areas of interest where the children can learn and explore. All learning is child lead and planning comes from staff observations and each child's emerging interests. The curriculum is extremely individualised meaning that children have the opportunity to be individuals and to develop at their own pace.

We make learning fun and memorable. Children are encouraged to have opinions and to question and participate. We use hands-on materials for all learning.

Each child is allocated a key worker who is responsible for the children's developmental path. Parents receive daily updates and monthly learning stories on their child's developmental progress and a plan for the path ahead.

Our childcare rooms are designed into key areas of interest for child-lead exploration. Each room will have a small motor area, dramatic play area, block play area, gross motor area, small play area, mess play area, art centre, book corner and quiet/chill out zone. Each area is designed to constantly challenge a child's development and make learning fun.

Our outside play area is also vitally important. We believe that there is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing and as such outside time is time-tabled daily. Our outdoor environment allows for a combination of dramatic play, gross motor development, sensory expropriation and risky taking.

Research has shown that children like to play in outdoor environments that look as if they built them themselves. Taking this into account our garden is very different from your stereotypical child's playground. It allows for a child's holistic development. Many open-ended materials have been used to allow the child's imagination shape and change the space.

HOURS OF OPERATION

- Monday to Friday from 7:30am – 6:30pm for 51 weeks of the year.

Tigers Childcare is closed for all bank and public holidays. In addition, Tigers Childcare is closed for one week of the Christmas school holidays.

LOCATION

Tigers Early Years Centre is located in Rath Lodge, Ashbourne, Co. Meath.

NUMBER OF SPACES/PLACES AVAILABLE

Places in all of our programmes are strictly limited and priority will be given to families residing in the locality of the relevant centre, and families who are regular users of that centre. Enrolment is also limited to the available spaces on site and is restricted to regular users. The following places are available:

- Junior Discoverers Room (children aged 0-18 months) – 8 places available
- Senior Discoverers Room (children aged 1-2 years) – 10 places available
- Explorers Room (children aged 2 – 3 years) – 12 places available
- Active Cubs Room 1 (children aged 2.8– 6 years) – 21 places morning / 16 places afternoon.
- Active Cubs Room 2 (children aged 2.8 – 6 years) – 22 places morning / 14 places afternoon.

Please note that the number of available spaces is subject to change.

POLICY & PROCEDURES

This document must be read in conjunction with our [General Policy & Procedures](#), a copy of which is available on the 'Parent's Page' of our website. The page is password protected. The password is t1g3rs2015.

STAFF/CHILD RATIO

Tigers operate a staff to child ratio, in accordance with Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.

- Discoverers Room (children aged 1-2 years) – Staff to child ratio 5:1 (3:1 where children are under 1 year old).
- Explorers Room (children aged 2 – 3 years) – Staff to child ratio 6:1
- Active Cubs Room (children aged 3 – 6 years)
 - Morning sessional ECCE hours – Staff to child ratio 11:1
 - Afternoon – Staff to child ratio 8:1

STAFF TRAINING/ EXPERIENCE

Tigers Childcare employ only trained and experienced staff members. Our managers have at least FETAC Level 6 in a childcare qualification or hold a degree in Early Childhood Education and all other employees have at least FETAC Level 5 in a childcare qualification. Each employee must also pass a Garda Vetting check before employment.

TYPES OF CARE AND PROGRAMMES OFFERED

We offer a number of childcare options. These options are designed to offer as flexible a service to the parents as possible.

○ Discoverers (children aged 0 – 2)

Children from the age of 0-2 are constantly discovering the world around them. Development is taking place rapidly on a daily basis. The discovery room is designed to meet the needs of a child at this stage of development. We understand that all children are developing at different paces and so our practitioners are on hand to observe each child's progress and track their future learning path.

The room is split into a number of areas for exploration:

Dramatic Play: Children are starting to explore the world around them. They are starting to act out what they see in the real world and so our dramatic play area allows for children to explore real life experience. From the home corner to dolls, animals and real life foods our discoverers love to play with the materials.

Messy Play: Children of this age are exploring many things with their senses. It is important that they have the opportunity to touch and feel many different textures. Our messy play allows them to explore their senses with touch and feel in a safe environment.

Block Play: This area allows for an introduction into the use of building materials. Children learn about stacking, order and balance.

Book Area: Books are introduced at an early stage. This allows our discoverers to explore literacy and language development.

Small Play Area: Children can explore the worlds around them and are introduced to different people, animals and objects from the environment in which they live.

Small Motor Area: Through age appropriate puzzles, games and tools the children start to develop the fine motor skills they will need for future development.

Treasure Baskets and Heuristic Play: These open ended play experiences provide infants with opportunities to personally select, discover and handle objects in order to construct their own understanding.

Gross Motor Steps: The steps allow our children to explore crawling and walking up and down a stepped area. The cross lateral development of using this piece of equipment is important to a children future development.

Quiet Area: This is a soft play area for quiet play and chill out time. It is important that children have a quiet space protected from noisy play.

Sleep Room: Our Discoverers have their own sleep area. This area is supervised at all times by an adult and is a relaxing area for rest and sleep.

○ **Explorers (children aged 2 – 3)**

Our Explorers (age 2-3) are becoming experts in the world around them. They need challenges to build on the skills already learned and push them further in their individual development. They need to be able to challenge themselves within a safe environment and with support realise that they are active players in the world around them.

Our Explorer's room is divided into a number of key areas in order to stimulate the children's development:

Dramatic Play: Children at this age are starting to develop language skills at a rapid rate. The dramatic play area allows children to use these language skills and test them within a safe environment. It also allows a child to work out real life scenarios and problem solve through play. Our dramatic play area changes throughout the year in order to allow our Explorers use their imagination in play.

Messy Play and Art Area: Sensory exploration and artistic play take place here. All materials are at a child's level and the children are welcome to use the area as they wish at any time of the day.

Block Area/ Construction Area: This area has an array of building and construction materials. Skills developed in this area are the basis for early maths. Children are encouraged to create, design, and problem solve through the use of building materials.

Small Play: The small play area uses small replicas of the world around us. This area is used for play, sorting and classification. This is all-important to your child's development.

Book area & Quiet space: The book area is filled with an abundance of reading materials to fill our Explorers with the love of reading and literacy. Through the use of stories we hope to build on language development. The quiet area is a protected space for children to rest or play alone.

Small Motor Area: Materials are provided to build on the child's fine motor skills. These materials include puzzles, games, and manipulation apparatus.

Gross Motor Area: Challenges our Explorers to further build upon their movement and motor skills. Climbing and stepping are still a key part of learning although over and under, pulling and crawling movements are introduced.

The Explorers space and also the curriculum offered daily allows each child to reach their full potential. Planning is displayed weekly so that parents are aware of their child's learning path.

○ **Active Cubs (children aged 3 – 6)**

Our Active Cubs (3-6 years) operates as our pre-school classroom. We offer both sessional (ECCE year) and full time places in two creative environments.

The emphasis of our learning is that children are given the building blocks to become active in their learning. This allows for school readiness and gives the children empowerment in their future learning.

All key learning and new concepts are delivered within a circle time. Delivery of information and learning within a group opens up the floor for collaborative discussion. It allows our Active Cubs to ask questions and to problem solve

with the guidance of their practitioners. It allows for the Active Cubs to push their development by asking "what if" questions and to innovate while developing.

Our play space is divided into key areas of interest for the children to explore:

Dramatic Play Area: This area constantly evolves and changes to allow children explore the outside environment within a safe space. It will change from home, to shop, from school to restaurant. Children love to explore, act out and problem solve in this space.

Messy Play and Art Station: Like our Explorer Room, sensory exploration and artistic play take place here. All materials are at a child's level and the children are welcome to use the area as they wish at any time of the day.

Block and Construction Area: The Active Cubs are now experts in the area of construction. In our Active cubs Room we challenge our learners through the introduction of new materials and our favourite large blocks for further fun.

Small Play Area: Allows our cubs to play with the real and fictional world. Whether it's the farm, the garage or the dinosaur world our children's imagination comes to life in this area.

Fine Motor Skills Area: Our little hands get ready for future development through handwriting, lace tying and bottle opening and pouring. It is in this space that we develop through fun activities. Puzzles, games, manipulation and practice help to pave the way. We also explore the use of Montessori equipment.

Book and Quiet Space: An abundance of books allows us to explore social and emotional issues as well as to travel to far-flung places in our imaginations. This space allows for group stories as well as asking as a quiet space for children who wish to relax.

Music and Sound: Our room has an area for music play. This allows a child to explore and be creative. Whether listening or creating there is lots of fun to be had.

Gross Motor Skills: Our important fine motor skills depend on our gross motor skills being developed and strong. Our program has a focus on outdoor play, inside movement breaks and active play. There is a constant focus on making sure that each child has strong building blocks for core body movement and so active play is part of the daily timetable.

○ ECCE Scheme Pre-School

We provide a sessional pre-school service to children aged between 3 and 5. This service is offered under the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme, which provides a free pre-school year to children in the year before they are due to start primary school. In general, children are eligible for the ECCE scheme if they are aged between 2 years 9 months and 3 years 8 months on 1 September of the year that they will be starting.

We have a morning and afternoon class. The morning class runs from 8:30am – 11:30 am and our afternoon class runs from 1pm – 4pm, Monday to Friday for 38 weeks of the year. Our pre-school calendar is available for you to view in the centre.

Certain enrolment criteria apply to ECCE scheme pre-school places.

○ Part-time Care

Part-time places are available, subject to availability, and at the discretion of Tigers Childcare.

ORDER OF DAILY ACTIVITIES

Discoverer & Explorer Rooms

Our timetable is directly related to each individual child's development and routine. The timetable will be displayed weekly for parents to view. Parents will also receive daily written feedback on their child and monthly learning stories with regard to their child's development.

Pre-School Classes

Tigers Early Years Centre operates a play-based curriculum model, which is based around Aistear. Aistear is the national framework for early years education. Our rooms are broken into learning stations. These stations allow children a choice in their learning. Using a key worker system, we observe each child's development over time, and individual plans are made to scaffold each child's learning experience.

In a typical Tigers Pre-School classroom, you would find the following learning stations:

- **Dramatic play station** • **Small play corner** • **Construction station** • **Montessori corner**
- **Writing/ Art station** • **Puzzles and small motor area** • **Library and chill out zone**

A day in Tigers Pre-School allows children to experience learning through play. We believe that children of pre-school age learn best through play and hands-on experience. It is in their play that children make sense of the world. Staff follow a timetable to allow for structure during the day. However, the timetable is flexible and allows for the child-centered practice of following a child's emerging interests.

A typical day at tigers will see the children taking part in the following activities:

- **Free-play**
- **Circle time**
- **Station time**
- **Arts and crafts**
- **Drama and movement**

The curriculum pays particular attention to areas of language development, pre-reading skills, early maths, language and skills, and social and emotional development.

COLLECTIONS AND SECURITY

Parents will be given an enrolment form before their child starts in the programme. This enrolment form leaves space for parents to fill in two names, apart from their own, of people whom they give permission to collect their child. If someone other than these authorised people arrive to collect a child, the parent must be called and the collection approved before the child leaves the premises.

In the case of separated parents, we are not permitted to refuse a parent the collection of a child unless legal documentation has been provided.

FOOD

We ask that parents provide one snack per day for their child. Please do not pack sweets, crisps, popcorn, sugary treats, fizzy drinks or fruit juices. We ask that all snacks provided are healthy.

If your child is still taking a bottle or formula milk from a beaker, we ask that you provide both the formula and the bottle/beaker each day. Please be sure to label both the food the bottle/beaker.

Children who attend Tigers for the full day will be provided with breakfast (if they start at 7:30am), a hot lunch, and an afternoon snack.

Tigers will provide water throughout the day for all children. We do not provide fruit juices or fizzy drinks and we ask that parents adhere to this policy when providing snacks from home.

Our hot meals are provided by Moon and Spoon who specialise in catering for children of all ages. They work closely with a consultant dietician to ensure that all of their dishes provide optimum nutrition. Using a mix of fun names, aromas, textures and flavours the food appeals specifically to children's senses. Because the menu is entirely balanced, it helps children develop excellent dietary habits from a very early age. You can find out more about Moon and Spoon on their website – www.moondandspoon.com.

NAPPIES/CREAMS/WIPES

If your child wears nappies we ask that you provide nappies, wipes, cream etc each day.

CHANGE OF CLOTHES

Please ensure that you pack a change of clothes (including vest if necessary) for your child each day.

FEES

A booking deposit is payable upon application for a place on one of our programmes. Please read our policies and procedures with regard to circumstances in which a deposit will/will not be refunded. A €30 (non-refundable) registration fee is payable at time of registration.

Ashbourne						
	Junior Discovers (age 0-18 months)	Senior Discovers (age 1-2)	Explorers Room (age 2-3yrs)	FULL DAY Active Cubs (age 3 - 6 yrs)	ECCE * FULL DAY Active Cubs (age 3 - 6 yrs)	ECCE Scheme Paying (Over 10 months)
FULL TIME	1,070	1,070	1,070	910.35	706.10	304.95

* ECCE fee based on child being eligible to join the ECCE scheme in September of each year. Will be pro-rata if child joins scheme/service later in the year.

Unless otherwise agreed, all fees, are payable monthly in advance on the first of each month and again, unless otherwise agreed, are to be paid by direct debit. A €20 monthly administration fee will be charged where fees are not paid by direct debit.

Fee invoices are issued via email on a monthly basis. An email address must be provided on the registration form.

Fees are to be paid without deductions. For clarity please note that fees are due in full irrespective of a child not attending because of, but not limited to, illness or holiday.

Tigers Childcare is entitled, at its discretion, to charge an additional €10 per day for each day or part of a day payment is late. In addition, Tigers will be entitled to terminate service with immediate effect if any payment stands overdue by seven days or more and please note such termination will be without prejudice to Tigers' right to enforce all of its entitlements herein to include payment.

Late Pickup Fee

Please note that in the event a child is not collected on or before the centre's closing time i.e. 6:30pm, a fee of €10.00 per minute or part thereof may be charged until such time as the child is collected. Repeated late pick-ups may result in Tigers terminating service.

CHILD PROTECTION

We have a moral and legal obligation to ensure that all children in our care are protected, and their health and welfare are safeguarded. Our staff are legally mandated to report any concerns. We have a responsibility to identify, report and record any suspicions of child abuse to Tusla, the Child and Family Agency. We have a responsibility to respond to all child protection concerns.

GOVERNMENT SUBVENTION SCHEMES

If you are applying for a childcare subsidy all relevant information must be provided before your child commences at one of our services. The information required will vary depending on the subsidy you are applying for. Please note that Tigers Childcare act as an intermediary between the parent and DCYA/Pobal. We have no input into the amount of subsidy awarded to a child/family nor do we have any input into the length of time it takes for a subsidy to be approved. Any queries relating to such matters should be referred directly to the relevant Government department or County Childcare Committee. Until such time as a subsidy is approved, our full fee will apply. Subsidies are passed on monthly in arrears.

HOW TO REGISTER

To register your child, you need to complete the attached registration form and return it to us. You will be sent an invoice for payment of the deposit and registration fee. This must be paid via bank transfer before your child commences at our service.

ECCE Pre-School Registration

When registering your child for their free ECCE pre-school year the registration form must be accompanied with a copy of your child's birth certificate and proof of their PPSN. A deposit of €65 is also required to secure their place. The deposit is fully refundable subject to a child taking up their place and being eligible for the ECCE Scheme. The €65 deposit is also fully refundable in circumstances where a place is not offered to a child.

Places are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Priority will be given to families residing in the locality and families who are regular users of our centre. Priority will be given to children who qualify for a place in September each year and who are enrolling for 5 days per week. Tigers will not 'hold' places for children who qualify for an ECCE place at a later date. In such cases parents can enroll their child from September and pay a monthly fee until such time as their child qualifies.

Is My Child Eligible for the ECCE Scheme?

From September 2018 there will be one entry point in September for children to join the ECCE class. The age of eligibility has been reduced from 3 years to 2 years and 8 months and the upper age limit remains at 5 years and 6 months. Children must be 2 years 8 months by September to start on the ECCE scheme.

To avail of the ECCE programme from :	Children must have been born between the following dates (inclusive)
September 2019 (until June 2020)	1st January 2015 - 31st December 2016
September 2020 (until June 2021)	1st January 2016 - 31st December 2017
September 2021 (until June 2022)	1st January 2017 – 31st December 2017
September 2022 (until June 2023)	1st January 2018 to 31st December 2018