

**Health & Safety Policy**

**Toileting:**

It is the policy of Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd and in the interest of children’s health and safety, that a high standard of hygiene is always promoted, when children are learning to use the toilet. We also bear in mind that every child is different and will engage in the toilet training process in different ways and when they are ready.

All members of staff teach the children about the importance of self-care such as handwashing, flushing the toilet, etc. This is part of the Montessori Ethos and children are encouraged to practice self-care daily whilst at the preschool.

* Antibacterial soap and disposable paper towels are used for hand washing.
* A cleaning schedule is in place to keep the toilets in a clean and hygienic state.
* The staff should treat accidents sensitively. Reassurance and emotional support will be given to the child if an accident happens. A staff member will help the child to change into clean clothes.
* The child’s privacy is respected at all times.
* If a child shows difficulty with using the toilet a staff member will help them up.
* Toilet training can be recorded on Blossom to track a child’s progress.
* Praise and recognition of achievement are used when children are being toilet-trained and we liaise with parents and caregivers as much as possible and offer support.

**Healthy eating and Nutrition**:

At Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd we encourage healthy eating and good nutrition. All meals are made on the premises by our chefs. We ensure that our four week rolling menu is well balanced and consist of the main food groups daily. We support children to develop lifelong healthy eating practices and a positive approach towards food in partnership with parents. We recognise the dietary needs of all children and aim to ensure that all children’s individual and cultural needs are met. Food is only purchased from reputable suppliers who comply with food safety practices. The storage, preparation of food in the crèche complies with HACCP requirements.

In the morning time children are encouraged to take their lunchbox out from their bag, place it into the fridge. They also bring a water bottle which is accessible to them throughout the day. Crisps, popcorn, sweets, biscuits, chocolate or fizzy drinks/juice are not allowed in the lunchbox. We would like to save these treats for special occasions such as birthday parties or Christmas. We provide all food for parties to ensure that there is a balance of foods available and not too many sugary treats.

Reduce, reuse and recycle is very important at our pre-school. The children will become familiar with the paper bin and the waste bin. We will encourage parents not to wrap their children’s food in plastic if possible and to reuse drink bottles. We will send home any uneaten lunch and rubbish as this ensures that parents know what their child has eaten and will allow things to be recycled at home, like primary schools.

Children who attend part or full day have a variety of meals with us such as breakfast, dinner, and afternoon snack. Breakfast is served from 8am to 8.45am and consists of a choice of cereals and toast with water and milk. Dinner is a hot meal served at 1.45pm such as shepherds pie, pesto pasta or chicken casserole. Afternoon snack is served at 4.30pm and is a platter of fruit, vegetables, protein such as cheese or yoghurt and crackers/rice cakes, etc. Mealtimes are a positive and relaxed time for children and staff. We believe that eating together provides encouraging experiences and is a great way to teach good social behaviour.

Drinking water and milk is available to children at all times.

It is the policy of Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd not to provide birthday cake of any kind, provided by parents or ourselves. Birthdays are celebrated with a surprise from our birthday boxes. Children are able to bring in an individual packet of jellies or similar for their friends to bring home.

**ALLERGY POLICY:**

At Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd we understand that many people suffer from allergies. Before a child starts at Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd their parents will be asked if their child suffers from any known allergies. This is recorded on the registration form which is input into Blossom. If a child has an allergy, a risk assessment is completed by the parent and the crèche manager to detail the following:

• The allergen (i.e. the substance, material or living creature the child is allergic to such as nuts, eggs, bee stings, cats etc).

 • The nature of the allergic reactions e.g. anaphylactic shock reaction, including rash, reddening of skin, swelling, breathing problems etc

• What to do in case of allergic reactions, any medication used and how it is to be used (e.g. Epipen).

• Control measures – such as how the child can be prevented from contact with the allergen.

 • This form is kept in the child’s personal file and a copy is displayed where staff can see it with parental permission.

• Parents train staff in how to administer special medication in the event of an allergic reaction.

 • Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd are ‘Nut Free Zones’. Life Saving Medication and Invasive Treatments In the case of, adrenaline injections (Epipens) for anaphylactic shock reactions (caused by allergies to nuts, eggs etc) or invasive treatments such as rectal administration of Diazepam (for epilepsy) the following applies;

The Manager must have:

• A letter from the child's GP/consultant stating the child's condition and what medication if any is to be administered;

• Written consent from the parent or guardian allowing staff to administer medication; and

• Proof of training in the administration of such medication by the child's GP, a district nurse, children’s’ nurse specialist or a community paediatric nurse.

• A copy of such proof may be required by our insurance provider for appraisal so that our insurance can be extended if necessary

**Smoking & Vaping Policy:**

No smoking or vaping is permitted in Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd and Grounds.

**Hygiene:**

We aim to keep the preschool as clean and hygienic as possible to limit the spread of bacteria and infections/illnesses. It is our policy to comply with current regulations including the Childcare Regulations 2006 and Food Hygiene Regulations.

All staff are informed of the hygiene procedures as part of their induction. Antibacterial wipes and Dettol are the main cleaning agents used in Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd and a cleaning checklist is completed by staff.

We encourage children to wash their hands prior to snack time, after blowing their nose and after using the toilet. All staff must wash their hands prior to and after serving any food and after helping children to use the bathroom.

All cuts and sores must be covered by a suitable dressing

Dealing with spills:

* Disposable gloves must be worn when dealing with spills of bodily fluids
* Disposable towels must be used when dealing with spills of bodily fluids
* A supply of clean clothing is available for accidents
* The area of the accident is then treated with a suitable disinfectant

Cleaning routine for premises and fixtures:

The premises and all of the fixtures will be cleaned daily by the cleaner. The cleaning products used are antibacterial spray, bleach and floor cleaner. Details of cleaning will be recorded on the daily cleaning each day at the end of the morning. The floors are kitchen area will be cleaned and washed daily. The equipment and shelves will be cleaned and polished once a week and as required and the tables will be cleaned every day, at least twice a day, before lunch and after the children have gone home.

Soft furnishings and cloths are cleaned weekly if needed. Playdough is changed weekly to avoid spread of infection and to keep the preschool hygienic.

**Outdoor Play Policy:**

Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd believes opportunities for indoor and outdoor play are crucial to the development of children. Fresh air and exercise are important factors for promoting good physical health. Outdoor play will be encouraged in all weathers with the appropriate care taken to protect children. Adults should be actively involved with children in their games and activities where appropriate, carry out written observations of children in deep meaningful play and should not be solely in a supervisory role. We endeavour to create an atmosphere where children can learn to take risks in a controlled environment. The children have access to manufactured equipment alongside open-ended resources to develop their imagination, solve problems and learn about the world around them. The safety of children accessing the outdoor area is crucial; a full risk assessment will be carried out and reviewed regularly. Although the principles of continuous outdoor play will be adopted, the safety and well-being of children will always be prioritised, and outside play may be temporally restricted if this compromises children’s safety.

* Children and staff must be dressed appropriately for the weather (e.g.: wellies, raincoats, sunhats, etc). Parents are requested to apply sun cream before school in hot weather and to send in a hat with their child. Children are encouraged to drink plenty of water in warm weather.
* The gate to the play area must be securely fastened upon the children’s entry to the garden and a staff member must stay at the gate for the duration of the playtime.
* Children are always supervised in the garden and minimum the staff ratios are always adhered to.
* We will ensure that every child gets at least 20 minutes of outdoor play per day with our aim being 30 minutes to 1 hour.
* We will ensure that all of the toys and equipment in the garden are safe, suitable for use by children and the garden are is assessed for potential risks and waste, etc. before use.
* Staff perform a head count upon returning to the door of the class and count the children in to ensure everyone’s safety.

**SUN PROTECTION POLICY:**

Children at Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd will have the opportunity to play in the fresh air throughout the year and, therefore, in the summer months it is important that all children have an application of sun cream before they go into the garden. Children will be asked to provide their own suncream in the summer months. It is the policy of Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd that Parents apply sun cream at home prior to the child’s arrival at the preschool. It is also the policy to gain parent/carer permission before applying sun cream to a child in the service by means of a consent form (signed on enrolment).

Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd are aware that:

• Children are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck, and ears from the sun. Parents are expected to provide appropriate hats.

 • Water resistant SPF 30+, broad spectrum sunscreen must be provided by parents for the exclusive use of their child. The sunscreen must be clearly labelled and will be stored in a cool place out of children’s reach.

 • Children in the garden between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. approx. will be encouraged to stay in shady areas, in addition to the wearing of hat and sunscreen.

• Staff will apply sunscreen to the children in their care at least 30 minutes before sun exposure and every 2 hours thereafter.

• Children will be provided with regular fluids.

 • Staff adhere to the Hand Hygiene Policy between each child’s sunscreen application.

The sun has damaging effects on the skin and even if it is not an extremely warm day there is still a risk of being burnt, even with cloud cover.

**First Aid:**

Staff at Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd must hold a current Paediatric First Aid Certificate. At all times there will be at least one member of staff on the premises that can administer first aid. There will be always a staff member with FAR training on the premises also and on any outings. There is a fully stocked first aid box in each classroom and in the kitchen that is checked monthly with relevant forms checked and signed. The First Aid boxes are kept in a designated area (e.g. in the locked cupboard in the classroom) and are clearly labelled.

A list of local doctors and important numbers are kept on the noticeboard with the parent’s emergency contact details.

**Medical Emergency:**

It is our policy to keep a list of each child in the service and their own personal doctor’s details and contact number. These are in the folder in each class. In the event of a child becoming ill the child’s parents/guardians/carers will be called, if they cannot be reached their doctor will be contacted.

In the event of a child becoming seriously ill, the doctor will be contacted immediately, or an ambulance will be called, and the child taken to hospital.

We do not administer medication on school without consent and parents are required to sign a form prior to their child attending preschool. If a child needs to bring medication with him/her to school, the parent must sign a consent form. Staff are then required to keep a record of every time they administer medication to the child.

Children requiring EpiPens have a special procedure that is updated annually in accordance with most recent recommendations.

There is a standard letter regarding head lice, worms, or other infestations, which is sent out to all members of the class when, and if, the need arises. All parents are asked to check their children for these infestations prior to entering the school.

**Accident Reporting System:**

Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd.’s Accident report forms are located on Blossom which is on the tablet. Staff will fill in the accident report which is then signed by staff and parents. A notification of an accident is sent directly to the parent’s app to inform them. We always call parents if a child has had a bump to the head or a more severe injury. We may also send them a photo of the injury.

Our aim is to reassure parents that the children’s safety and welfare is our greatest priority. There is a special incident form for anything that is out of the ordinary and these are kept in a folder with all the files. These are reported to Tusla as soon as is practicable.

It is the responsibility of staff members to immediately report any accident, incident or potential hazards to the management who will inform parents/carers of children.

Any such accident, incident or potential hazard will be recorded on the Accident/Injury forms. If a staff member has been allocated a specific job such as phoning the fire brigade, this must be clearly defined and a second chain of command in case of absence.

**Fire Safety:**

A monthly fire drill takes place and is recorded. Fire exits are clearly marked and have fire extinguishers beside them. There is a wired smoke alarm system running throughout the whole building and fire safety equipment are inspected annually by Cara Fire.

The procedure for the fire evacuation is as follows:

* The Fire Marshall sounds the fire alarm.
	+ Fire Marshalls are Eve, Anna and Jill O’Connor in that order.
* One teacher from each class goes to the nearest fire exit, having first asked the children to follow them leaving all belongings behind.
	+ Class 1 (Zone 1) exits through the porch- Fire point 1
	+ Class 2 (Zone 2) exits through the emergency exit in this classroom- Fire point 1
	+ Class 3 (Zone 3) exits through the Emergency exit in this classroom- Fire point 1
	+ Kitchen staff (Zone 4) exits through the Front door of the building.- Fire point 2 (near bins)
	+ Class 4 (cabin) exits through cabin exit door and proceeds down the ramp- Fire point 2 (near bins)
	+ Class 5 (cabin) exits through cabin door and proceeds down the ramp – Fire point 2 (near bins)
* The last teacher in the class checks the classroom and picks up the roll-book and joins the end of the line.
* The children leave the building in an orderly fashion and follow the teacher to their F
* ire point. The teacher counts the children.
* The Fire Marshall on duty quickly and thoroughly checks the classrooms, the kitchen, the meeting room, the large hall, the corridor and toilets and then she takes the mobile phone and the list of children beside it to the fire point.
* The Fire Marshall uses the mobile to call 999/112 for the fire brigade.
* The teachers call the roll outside and count the children and staff.

No-one must re-enter the building until the fire department deems it safe to do so

The procedure is on the wall in every room, including the kitchen.

**Security:**

We are dedicated to ensuring the safety of the children whilst in the preschool. We are the only users during our opening hours, other groups may occasionally use the building at the weekend or evening. There is a glass door for a clear view of people entering the building and classrooms.

There is a coded entry system at the front entrance gate, which is always closed, and only authorised users have the code and will be admitted. Eve is on door duty every morning and at collection time to ensure everyone’s safety. The main door to the building also has a coded entry system which only staff have access to. Any entrance doors are locked after all the children’s arrival and remain so during sessions with keys in accessible places.

Children do not have access to any areas that may be a safety risk. Children are always supervised and are never left on their own outside the preschool rooms in places such as the garden or toilets. There is a high fence outside surrounding all of the garden areas and during playtime the teachers’ supervise the area to ensure everyone’s safety.

**Lost or Missing children policy:**

All staff Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd have the highest regard for the safety of the children in our care. The preschool team will always be extremely aware of the potential for children to go missing during sessions and will ensure that exits and entrances are kept secure and that locks are in working order.

Even when all precautions are properly observed, emergencies can still arise. Therefore, practitioners will undertake periodic head counts, especially at the transition points in the session (in addition to the registration procedures set out in the Arrival and Departures policy).

If for any reason a member of staff cannot account for a child's whereabouts during a session at the setting, the following procedure will be activated:

* The Manager or person in charge and the rest of the nursery team must be informed that the child is missing.
* A thorough search of the entire premises will commence.
* The staff will be careful not to create an atmosphere of panic and to ensure that the other children remain safe and adequately supervised.
* The manager or person in charge will nominate as many staff as possible to search the area surrounding the premises.
* All staff will be extra vigilant to any potentially suspicious behaviour or persons in and around the preschool grounds.
* If after 10 minutes of thorough searching the child is still missing, the manager or person in charge will inform the police and then the child's parent/carer.
* While waiting for the Gardai and the parent/carer to arrive, searches for the child will continue. During this period, other staff members will maintain as normal a routine as is possible for the rest of the children attending the setting.
* The manager or person in charge will be responsible for meeting the Gardai and the missing child's parent/carer. The manager or person in charge will co-ordinate any actions instructed by the Gardai and do all they can to comfort and reassure the parents/carers.
* Once the incident is resolved, the manager or person in charge and the preschool team will review relevant policies and procedures and implement any necessary changes (paying particular note to the relevant provisions of the settings Risk Assessment policies).
* All incidents of children going missing from the setting will be recorded on an Incident Record Sheet, and in cases where either the police or social care have been informed, Tusla and preschool inspector will also be informed, as soon as is practicable.

**Uncollected Children:**

If a nominated collector has not arrived fifteen minutes after the end of a given session and no collection advice has been telephoned to the setting, the manager or person in charge will begin to telephone all nominated collectors or emergency contacts for that child until a suitable person is found and arrangements are made for collection. This may be away from the setting. The parents/carers will be offered extra time in the form of lunch club should they be unable to get to the setting within a reasonable time.

If it is impossible to contact anyone regarding the safe collection of the child, the emergency services and the Children’s Social care team will be contacted. The manager or person in charge will remain with the child until such a time as they are settled into the care of the local authority.

**Child Protection:**

The welfare of the child is the primary concern in our service and to this end the parents are requested to fill in a very detailed application form before the child starts school. Eve is the designated Welfare Officer for Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd and in her absence, Jill Kenefick & Anna Fisher are the designated Welfare Officer. All of our staff are Garda vetted and have completed a child protection course.

Child Protection Policy Statement:

Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd undertakes to promote the general welfare, health and full development of children and protect them from harm of all kinds, in line with articles 19 and 34 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We undertake to protect the personal integrity, safety and well-being of each child in the service in line with the provisions of the National Child Protection Guidelines – Children First. Our service shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of any child.

This service has and will develop policies for:

- Recruitment, selection and employment of staff

- Child Protection Procedures

This service is committed to ensuring that staff are trained in the recognition of signs of abuse and on how to report these signs.

All staff is to be informed of current and updated childcare protection procedures. It will be essential for the staff to attend, the Health Service Executive’s ‘Children First’ sessions and any other relevant and current training, to ensure their absolute understanding and awareness of the current child protection guidelines. It will be the aim of our school for all members of staff to attend further levels of ‘Children First’ Training, where possible and to be familiar with ‘Children First’ and any new guidelines produced.

**Guidelines on identifying and reporting child abuse**

**What is child abuse?**

Child abuse is complicated and can take different forms but usually consists of one of more of the following:

* Neglect: Where a child’s needs for food, warmth, shelter, nurturance, and safety are not provided to the extent that the child suffers significant harm.
* Emotional Abuse: Where a child’s needs for affection, approval and security are not being met and have not been met for some time by their parent or carer.
* Physical Abuse: Where a child is assaulted or injured in some way that is deliberate.
* Sexual Abuse: Where a child is used for the sexual gratification of an adult.

**Staff should adhere to the following advice if they suspect that a child is being abused:**

It can be difficult to know if your suspicions about child abuse are real. No one sign or symptom should be seen as conclusive that abuse is taking place. Before you act on them you need to consider whether any alternative explanation might exist and ask yourself these questions:

* Is there any other reason why the child or parent might be behaving in a particular way?
* Is there a pattern to this type of occurrence?
* Did you or anyone else see what was happening?
* Has the child said anything to indicate that he/she is being harmed?
* Could injuries or signs have been caused another way?

**Dealing with Disclosures:**

 At Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd we recognise that children who are subjected to abuse may infer that they are being abused or they may just give a direct disclosure. A disclosure will always be taken seriously, and action will be taken immediately i.e. the Child Protection Liaison Person and Deputy Child Protection Liaison Person will be informed immediately. The situation and alleged abuse will be handled very sensitively, and the child will not be interviewed without first consulting with the Designated Liaison Person who will take appropriate steps to report the matter to TUSLA. All concerns/disclosures are recorded and kept on file. TUSLA Children and Family Services will also be informed if there is a concern about a potential risk to children posed by a specific person, even if the children are unidentifiable.

***Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd guidelines to responding to a disclosure:***

• If a child hints or tells a member of staff that he/she is being abused, it will be handled carefully.

• Stay calm (give the child time to say what he/she wants).

• Do not ask leading questions or details, go at the child’s pace. The staff member will note all the information the child is giving them.

• Don’t stop the child recalling significant events and don’t make him or her repeat the story unnecessarily.

• Reassure the child, but do not promise to keep it a secret.

• Explain what needs to be done next.

• Do not make comment or judge the alleged abuser. Remember the child may love the abuser but not like what he/she is doing to them.

• Record the discussion as early as possible.

• Remain open and communicative with the child – avoid any special treatment of the child. It is important that routines are adhered to.

**Procedure for reporting child abuse:**

The Designated Person, Eve Berea, is responsible for dealing with suspected or actual child abuse. Any concerns about a child within the school should be brought to the Designated Person.

* Any concerns or suspicions will be reported to Tusla
* If it is an emergency and outside of Tusla’s hours, the concern will be reported directly to An Garda Siochana.

The Deputy Designated Person are Jill Kenefick and Anna Fisher. The role of the Deputy is to fill in for the Designated Person during annual or sick leave, and in cases of allegations against staff, to follow the reporting procedure in relation to the child.

**Reporting Procedure in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff:**

The Designated Person, Eve Berea, will follow the reporting procedure. In the event of an allegation the Deputy Designated Person, Jill Kenefick and Anna Fisher, shall follow the reporting procedure.

-Any concerns or suspicions will be reported to Tusla and outside of Tusla’s hours, the concern will be reported to An garda Siochana.

**Reasonable grounds for child protection or welfare concern:**

• An injury or behaviour that is consistent both with abuse and an innocent explanation, but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse.

• Consistent indication over a period that a child is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

• Admission or indication by someone of an alleged abuse.

• A specific indication from a child that he or she was abused.

• An account from a person who saw the child being abused.

• Evidence (e.g. injury or behaviour) that is consistent with abuse and unlikely to have been caused in any other way."

**Standard Reporting Procedure:**

 When a staff member or volunteer (including a Mandated Person) has a child protection or welfare concern they should speak to the Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection (DLP) without delay. This includes concerns which reach the threshold for a mandated report under the Children First Act 2015. The DLP will report the following child protection and welfare concerns using the Child Protection and Welfare Report form (available on www.tusla.ie) to Tusla.

• Child Protection and welfare concerns that meet reasonable grounds for concern but do not meet the threshold for mandated reporting.

• Child protection and welfare concerns that meet reasonable grounds for concern and have been passed to them by persons who are not Mandated Persons. If the DLP is unsure if a child protection concern meets the reasonable grounds for concern, they should contact Tusla duty social Work for advice and guidance using the informal consultation process. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a situation that exposes him or her to harm or to risk of harm pending TUSLA intervention. In the event of an emergency where you think a child is in immediate danger and you cannot get in contact with TUSLA, you should contact An Garda Siochána. This may be done through any Garda station. In addition to a report to Tusla, if there is a criminal or suspected criminal aspect to the child protection concern, An Garda Siochana will be notified by the Mandated Person or DLP as appropriate. Mandated Persons

• Under the Children First Act 2015 Mandated Persons are legal required to report any knowledge, belief, or reasonable suspicion that a child has been harmed, is being harmed, or at risk of being harmed to Tusla. Children first Act 2015 must be discharged by the Mandated Person and cannot be discharged by the DLP on their behalf. Mandated Persons can however, report jointly with another person.

• Where the Mandated Person or DLP is unsure if the report meets the threshold of harm as outlined in the children First Act advice and guidance should be sought through informal consultation with Tusla Duty Social Work.

• If a child protection concern does not meet the criteria for a mandated report, it may meet ‘reasonable grounds for concern’ for a report to Tusla and this possibility must be considered. If ‘reasonable grounds for concern’ exist a report to Tusla will be made by the DLP.

• The mandated Person may submit the report to Tusla solely, however, the DLP must be informed that the report has been made and be given a copy of the child Protection and Welfare Report form.

• If a child protection concern has come to the attention of several Mandated Persons, the report may be submitted jointly by several Mandated Persons.

 • Mandated Persons are not required to make a report to Tusla where the sole basis of their knowledge, belief or suspicion of harm is of a result of becoming aware that another Mandated Person has made a report to Tusla. At Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd we recognize that child abuse can be very difficult to identify and can manifest itself in many ways. No one sign or symptom can form a conclusive view of child abuse. Everything must be considered in relation to the child’s situation and family circumstances. In line with Children First Guidance, Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd is bound to professional practice at all times to report to TUSLA if there is the possibility of child abuse or neglect suspected and through good practice will inform the parents/carers if a report is to be submitted to the TUSLA Children and Family Services or to An Garda Síochána, unless doing so is likely to endanger the child. It is important to remember, even if the child at risk is unidentifiable, your concerns need to be reported to Tusla.

Consequences for Failure to Report Child Protection Concerns: (Reckless Endangerment of Children - Criminal Justice Act 2006) "A person, having authority or control over a child or abuser, who intentionally or recklessly endangers a child by—

1. causing or permitting any child to be placed or left in a situation which creates a substantial risk to the child of being a victim of serious harm or sexual abuse, or (b) Failing to take reasonable steps to protect a child from such a risk while knowing that the child is in such a situation, is guilty of an offence. (3) Where a person is charged with an offence under subsection (2), no further proceedings in the matter (other than any remand in custody or on bail) shall be taken except by or with the consent of the Director of Public Prosecutions. (4) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on conviction on indictment, to a fine or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 10 years or both."
2. Non-reporting of Concerns: If the decision is taken by Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd not to report concerns to TUSLA or An Garda Síochána, Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd will give a clear written statement of the reasons why it is not taking any action. If the employee, who raised the concern, remains concerned about the situation, they are free as individuals to consult with, or report to, TUSLA or An Garda Síochána. Protection for persons making a report. The provisions of the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act 1998 apply once they communicate ‘reasonably and in good faith'. This provides for the protection from civil liability of persons who have communicated child abuse ‘reasonably and in good faith’. Employees are also protected from penalisation by an employer.
3. Incident Reporting: Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd report all incidents/accidents which occur during the child’s day on Blossom. Should a third party have any concerns about a child’s welfare it is Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd’s policy to follow up fully in accordance with TUSLA standard procedures and if it is deemed to be appropriate it will be reported to the TUSLA Children and Family Services and the report (Appendix B) should be completed by the Child Protection Liaison Officer/Deputy Child Protection Liaison Person. Designated Liaison Person The name of the Designated Liaison Person is listed in the service. This person is responsible for dealing with child protection and welfare concerns. Contact details are also listed in your crèche. A deputy Designated Liaison Person is also assigned to cover absence. The above named persons must ensure that the standard reporting procedure is followed and that they undertake training as necessary in child protection.
4. Confidentiality At Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd all records are kept confidential and are filed in a safe and confidential manner. Only staff can access the files of the children in their care. No information about a child/children is shared with anybody other than authorised personnel (staff working directly with the child, TUSLA staff and An Garda Siochána) and this information is on a ‘need to know’ basis. Secrecy will be given although all information will be handled sensitively taking full account of the legalities required of Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd, it will be processed accordingly. Providing information to the statutory agencies for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality or data protection and Balllybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd will furnish information as necessary to appropriate bodies. We undertake to inform parents of children if personal information is being shared with other agencies unless we feel it may put the child at further risk.

**Record Keeping**

At Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd we operate within a policy of cooperation with TUSLA Children and Family Services on the sharing of records where a child protection/welfare issue arises and are committed to attending formal meetings to share such information as required by TUSLA. Record Keeping Written records will be kept of all child protection concerns (including those not reported to Tusla) and these will be managed by the Designated Liaison Person. Information will include details of the concern, who raised it, who was contacted, details re informal consultation, any action taken, details re informing parents. If a child has made a disclosure of abuse, a written record will be made. If there are other grounds for concern that the child has been abused or neglected, a written record will be made. Records relating to child protection and welfare issues will be kept indefinitely. Records will be stored securely in line with the Service Record Policy and the childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

All records of concerns, allegations or disclosures of child abuse are kept securely at Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd. Only authorised personnel have access to such records. Authorised Personnel as follows: Managing Director, Designated Liaison Person & Deputy Designated Liaison Person. Safe Recruitment Procedures for Workers At Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd we ensure best practice for recruitment of all staff. All vacant positions are advertised both locally and nationally through websites to ensure the widest possible audience for broad recruitment. All staff are Garda vetted and where applicable – Police Clearance is sought, 2 written references must be supplied and kept on file and are verbally verified. All staff are interviewed, receive induction training, are put on 6 months’ probation, must supply photographic evidence of their identity and this will be retained on file. As employees, all staff are monitored and mentored on an ongoing basis to ensure the highest standards of professional practice. Upon acceptance of an applicant the worker is provided with a job description and written contract which they sign and return to Links Childcare HR Dept. which includes all Links Childcare Policies and Procedures.

**Safe Management of Workers**

 It is the policy of Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd for staff/team meetings to be held in each Centre monthly as a support to employees and to give them opportunity to air any concerns. The manager and area manager must attend these meetings and the agenda is documented and followed up on. Should a staff member have to deal with a child protection and welfare concern or disclosure, Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd will do everything in our power to support the individual. Training and Induction All staff receive induction in all policies and procedures, including Child Protection and Welfare. At Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd we are committed to continuous training and professional development of all staff. Child Welfare and Protection training is an integral part of the company’s annual review of training strategy. Procedures for allegations of abuse against workers When an allegation of abuse is reported to Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd, the matter will be investigated as a matter of urgency and will be assessed carefully. If the decision is made to make a formal report to the TUSLA it will be done so based on reasonable grounds for concern as already outlined in this document. The main priority is to ensure the child’s safety and ensure they are not exposed to further risk and to this end Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd will put protective measures in place. These measures will be proportionate to the level of risk and will not unreasonably penalize the employee unless it is necessary to protect the child. Any action taken will be guided by the employee’s employment contract and rules of natural justice. The Managing Director, must be informed of any allegations immediately. Once the company has been informed of the allegation, Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd will inform the employee privately of the fact that they have been reported and the nature of the allegation will be disclosed to the employee. The employee will then be given opportunity to respond and said response will be passed on to the TUSLA Children and Family Services if a formal report is made. Parents will be informed of all actions planned while taking into account the fundamental rights of all concerned. During the investigation Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd will liaise closely with the TUSLA Children and Family Services to ensure continuity of the investigation. The outcome for the employee will be determined by the outcome of the investigation. The HR Manager will conduct the investigation on behalf of Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd and will have the responsibility of reporting the incident to the TUSLA Children and Family Services. All aspects and stages of the investigation will be recorded by Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd.

**Code of Behaviour between Workers and Children:**

All staff are expected to behave in a respectful and positive manner towards the children in their care. All children must be treated equally in line with the Equal Status Acts 2000-2004. All employees are given a copy of Ballybrack Killiney Montessori & Afterschool Ltd’s Behaviour Policy and must familiarise themselves with the content and abide by same at all times. Staff must not touch the children in an inappropriate manner and be mindful of appropriate contact during toileting. All activities/curricula are devised and carried out with the children’s development and safety in mind and TUSLA ratio guidelines are always adhered to.

**Use of Mobile Phones:**

The use of electronic equipment/communication devices such as mobile phones etc. is not permitted in the rooms to protect the welfare of the children. Photographs are only permitted to be taken on the camera on either the tablet or room phone and are only for use within the Centre following parental permission. All staff must peer monitor and have a duty to report any concerns about a colleague’s behaviour with regard to children.