



Parents Handbook

www.bestbeekids.ie

2026/2027

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Hello & Welcome

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Website	www.bestbeekids.ie
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Service Manager	Rebecca Jade Pepper
Tutor	Rebecca Bigwood
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Service Mobile	087 127 9029
Service Email	earlyintervention@bestbeekids.ie Manager@bestbeekids.ie

Services available & hours of operations

We offer an Early Intervention Class for **children aged 3 to 6 years** who have been **diagnosed autistic**. This program is **funded under the Home Tuition Grant Scheme**.

We offer part - time care from Monday to Friday. From 09:15 am to 13:15 pm.

We open for 42 weeks/year.



Our mission

Here at Best Bee Kids, we are committed to joining parents on the joyful and messy journey of raising tomorrow's astronauts, chefs or artists.
We understand how important it is to **give children the best possible start in life and that includes their first encounter with group settings and learning environment.**

Our values

We welcome all our children in a space where children feel safe to express themselves, try new things, and be their true selves.

We Grow Together learning through play, routine, and relationships. We celebrate progress in all forms, no matter how small or how big. We're here to support—not to change who a child is. We meet each child where they are and build on their strengths.

Partnership with the parents in meeting each child where she/he is in their development.

Everyone Has a Voice whether we use words, pictures, gestures, or sounds—we listen, watch, and respond with love and understanding.

As a company, we want to expand our involvement in the local community and build a strong team of childcare professionals who take pride in the role they play in building the future.

...and no matter what the day brings we make sure that in our programs we include fun and laughter, trains and building blocks, plushies and squishes, some play-doh and loads of glitter.



General Information

Your enrollment on our online childcare management system confirms you understand and accept our onsite center policies and procedures. Please read this handbook carefully and refer to the center's policy and procedure manual which is always available for viewing at our service if you have any questions.

Code of Conduct

Best Bee Kids provides a safe and fun environment for your children. We always encourage a similar attitude amongst the children and adults. We do not condone any form of discrimination amongst the children or adults associated with the programme. Our code of conduct is designed to help us, as individuals, children and our staff team, make appropriate decisions about behaviour choices and to demonstrate professionalism, privacy, integrity and respect. Any issues or information should be discussed in the first instance with the Service Manager or the Director of the service.

Privacy Policy

Best Bee Kids will collect, use, disclose and hold information in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1988, 2003 & 2018).

We process data:

- in order to market the services of our company
- 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 authorized collector details (including details of third parties)
- to provide updates in the form of pictures, newsletters, videos, social media posts. We will always ask for consent before using any identifiable visual of your child.

The legal basis for the processing of this data is that processing necessary for the purpose of the legitimate interests of the children, their parents and our company in the administration and operation of our child care and other services. [Our full Privacy statement is available upon request.](#)

Child protection

Best Bee Kids is committed to safeguarding the children in our care and to providing a safe environment in which they can play, learn and develop.

We are committed to child centered practice in all our work with children and full compliance with Children First and relevant legislation.

[Our full Child Protection and Child Safeguarding Policies and procedures are available upon request.](#)

No smoking

Staff, parents and visitors to our service are not permitted to smoke at any time at our service site.

Car parking

Staff, parents and visitors park at their own risk and have to comply with existing parking regulations.



Home Tuition

Home Tuition is a government-funded scheme that provides individual or small group teaching for children who are unable to attend school full-time or require additional support—such as autistic children in early intervention settings.

Our Early Intervention Class is **funded under the Home Tuition Grant Scheme** by the Department of Education (Ireland). This means the funding goes directly toward providing qualified tutors to work with your child in a structured learning environment.

How the Funding Works

- Parents apply for the **Home Tuition Grant** each school year through the Department of Education.
- Once approved, the Department funds a **set number of tuition hours per week** (e.g., up to 20 hours).
- Tutors or intervention centres are paid directly by the parent from these funds, usually on a monthly basis after tuition is delivered.
- A **log of tuition hours** is kept and must be signed weekly by parents to confirm attendance.

What Happens with Absences?

- **Funding is based on actual hours delivered**—so if your child is absent, the tutor cannot be paid for that time.
- If your child is **sick or absent**, please inform the class as early as possible.
- Consistent attendance is important not only for your child's development but also to ensure that the full funding is used effectively.
- If a child is absent for an extended period (e.g., due to illness), we may need to notify the Department, and temporary adjustments may be made.

Parental Responsibilities

- Parents are responsible for:
 - Submitting the application form for Home Tuition to the Department.
 - Signing weekly tuition logs to confirm attendance.
 - Communicating any changes in schedule or absences in advance.

Late Collection of Child/Children from the Preschool

Parents/guardians should note that due to legislative requirements under the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Children First – Child Protection Guidelines two members of staff are required to be with the child/children.

Parents/guardians are advised to keep within their agreed time for collection of their child/children for the above reasons. **We require that all children should be collected by the designated time to ensure that the Service may close safely.** Where a child has not been collected by closing time and staff have not been notified they will proceed to contact parents/emergency contacts as detailed on the Enrolment Form. At no



time will a child be left unattended and, the Service Manager is authorized to take all necessary steps to ensure the safety and well-being of the child as outlined in the Centers Policies and Procedures Manual.

Please see the Collections and Arrivals Policy and Procedure.

We allow a grace period of 5 min. Thereafter, there is a **Late Collection Fee of €20 for every 10 minutes** late, or part thereof.

Withdrawal of Children

Parents/guardians sign up and agree that they will:

- Give notice, in writing, that the child/children are leaving the Service
- Give four weeks' notice or pay one month of fees (please note Home Tuition scheme does not cover for this so the fees will be chargeable to the parent, in case notice is not given).

Management also reserves the right to request that the Parent/Guardian withdraw their child/children from the Service if they are not 'settling in' or adapting to the environment. The Management agrees to give two weeks' notice of this to the Parent/Guardian so that they can make alternative arrangements.

Change in circumstances

Please remember it is your responsibility as the parent/guardian to advise us immediately should any information provided on the original Enrolment form changes e.g.; contact details, custody arrangements etc.



Our Routine

Our daily routine provides a consistent but flexible structure for children and adults in the group. The routine is divided into different segments, as follows:

Welcome to the service/ Saying good-bye to parents

Starting something new can be exciting—and sometimes a little overwhelming—for both children and parents. We understand that transitions, such as saying good-bye in the morning, can be particularly challenging for some neurodivergent children. That's why we approach every arrival with **patience, routine, and gentle support**.

Our Morning Welcome Routine

- Each morning, your child will be greeted by a **familiar staff member** at the door.
- We use **consistent routines** to help children feel secure. This might include a visual schedule, a special hello song, or a "first-then" board to show what's happening next.
- Children are **never rushed**—we give them the time and space they need to transition comfortably into the classroom.
- Use comfort items from home (e.g., a toy, photo, or sensory item) are welcome if they help your child feel safe.
-

Saying Good-Bye to Parents

We know saying goodbye can be difficult. Here are a few ways we support this transition:

- **Predictable goodbyes:** A short, loving goodbye routine helps your child know what to expect. We encourage parents to use the same words each day (e.g., "I'll see you after playtime today!").
- **Staff support:** A familiar adult will be nearby to offer comfort, redirection, or sensory support if your child is upset.
- **Separation anxiety is okay:** We understand that some children cry or resist at drop-off—it's a common part of early development, especially for neurodivergent children. We will always contact you if your child remains distressed beyond a typical settling period.
- **Visual tools:** For children who benefit from visuals, we may use picture cues or goodbye boards to support their understanding of transitions.

Communication and Reassurance

Our goal is to create a **safe, accepting, and emotionally supportive environment** where children and parents feel confident to say goodbye and begin their day with joy, curiosity, and connection. We know it can be hard to leave your child. If you're feeling unsure, we're happy to check in with you shortly after drop-off to let you know how your child is settling in. Open communication and trust between home and school are key.



Helping Your Child with a Smooth transition into the service

A predictable routine can make all the difference in helping your child feel calm and confident when coming into the service. You can support this by using the same simple steps each day, paired with visual supports such as pictures or a small “morning checklist.”

Key moments to use these supports:

- **Before leaving the house** – talk through (and show) what will happen next.
- **Before getting out of the car** – remind your child of the next step and what they can expect.
- **When greeting at the door** – use the same friendly phrase or gesture each time.

Consistency and visuals help children feel safe, know what to expect, and make goodbyes easier for everyone.

Curriculum

Our Early Intervention Class follows a curriculum that is **child-centred, play-based**, neuro-affirming and guided by Ireland’s national frameworks: **Aistear** and **Síolta**. These frameworks help us create a high-quality, inclusive learning environment that supports each child’s development in a holistic and meaningful way.

Aistear – The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework

Aistear means *journey* in Irish—and that’s exactly how we see early learning: a personal journey for every child. Aistear focuses on four key themes:

1. **Well-being** – supporting emotional regulation, safety, confidence, and belonging.
2. **Identity and Belonging** – helping children feel valued, accepted, and proud of who they are.
3. **Communicating** – developing all forms of communication, including verbal, non-verbal, AAC, gestures, and play. Approaches such as *Natural Language Acquisition* and *Gestalt Language Processing* can be helpful in supporting different communication styles and understanding the varied ways children develop language.
4. **Exploring and Thinking** – encouraging curiosity, problem-solving, sensory play, and early thinking skills.

In our class, we embed these themes through structured play, sensory-rich activities, daily routines, visual supports, and relationship-based teaching tailored to the needs of neurodivergent learners.

Síolta – The Quality Framework

Síolta ensures that our practice meets the **highest standards of care and education**. It guides how we plan, reflect, and continually improve our service. Some key areas we focus on include:

- **Partnership with families**
- **Inclusive and responsive practice**
- **Play and active learning**
- **Ongoing staff training and reflection**
- **Supportive transitions**

We use **observation and documentation** to track each child’s progress and to plan next steps that are achievable, respectful, and aligned with their individual needs.

Individualised and Flexible Learning



- We follow a **child-led approach**
- Our curriculum is **differentiated**—we meet each child where they are developmentally and build from their interests and strengths.
- Visual schedules, social stories, and routine-based learning help provide **structure and predictability**, which are essential for many neurodivergent children.

Working Together with Families

We work closely with you to share goals, progress, and ideas to help support your child's learning at home and in the community. Together, we ensure your child's learning journey is joyful, respectful, and inclusive.

Outdoor Time

Outdoor time is an important and valued part of our daily routine. For neurodivergent children, time spent outside offers opportunities for **movement, regulation, exploration, and learning** in a space that feels open and less structured than the classroom.

Why Outdoor Time Matters

- **Sensory Regulation:** Fresh air, movement, and natural elements can help children regulate their nervous systems. We include activities that support **vestibular (balance), proprioceptive (body awareness), and tactile (touch) needs**.
- **Social Opportunities:** Outdoor time creates natural chances for shared play, turn-taking, and joint attention in a low-pressure environment.
- **Motor Development:** Running, climbing, jumping, and other gross motor play support physical development in a fun and engaging way.
- **Calm Transitions:** Outdoor play can help children transition between structured tasks, especially when energy needs to be released or moods need lifting.

What Outdoor Time Looks Like

- We go outside **every day**. If it's raining lightly we still go out with raincoats and boots! We also have an enclosed outdoor classroom which can be used in all weathers.
- Our outdoor space is **safe, enclosed, and designed for sensory-friendly exploration**.
- Activities may include:
 - Sand or water play
 - Nature walks
 - Sliding, climbing, or obstacle courses
 - Sensory trays
 - Bubble play
 - Mud kitchen
- Staff observe and support children to ensure they are comfortable, safe, and engaged in ways that match their sensory and emotional needs.

What Children Need

To make the most of outdoor time, we ask parents to:

- Send your child with **weather-appropriate clothing** (raincoats, hats, suncream, wellies, etc.).
- Provide **at least one spare change of clothes**, especially during messy or wet play days.
- Label all clothing and items brought from home.



Supporting Individual Needs

We understand that some children may feel overwhelmed outdoors, especially in noisy or unpredictable weather. We support children with:

- **Noise-reducing headphones**
- **Gradual exposure** to outdoor play
- **Alternative quiet activities** outside or inside if needed
- **Social stories or visual supports** to explain what happens outside

Sensory Regulation

Sensory regulation works best when children have chances to explore and play both indoors and outdoors. Every child has their own sensory profile and preferences across the eight sensory systems, and understanding these is key to helping them keep a calm nervous system and avoid becoming overwhelmed or going into a fright/flight/freeze response. We also respect each child's sensory preferences when it comes to clothing for outdoor play — for example, some children may not be comfortable wearing rain boots or raincoats, feeling the rain on their skin, or hearing certain sounds. Supporting these needs helps children feel safe, comfortable, and ready to enjoy their day.

Lunch/Snack Time

Healthy Eating

At BeeUtiful Minds, we take a gentle, inclusive approach to food and mealtimes. Our goal is to support children in developing a positive relationship with food, while respecting individual needs, preferences, and sensory experiences.

- We encourage balanced and nourishing meals, and we ask families as **much as possible, not to send in sweets or sugary treats** for everyday lunches and snacks. Instead, we aim to create an environment where children can explore a variety of foods at their own pace, without pressure.
- We understand that every child's relationship with food is different. If your child has any particular preferences, sensory sensitivities, or restrictive eating patterns (including ARFID), **please let us know**. The more we understand, the better we can support them.
- All food should be clearly **labelled with your child's name** and packed in **containers suitable for refrigeration**.
- Mealtimes are an opportunity to build confidence and independence. We invite children to help with setup and clean-up, and we encourage them to open and close their own containers where possible.

If possible, please choose lunchboxes and bottles your child can manage themselves to support this process.

- Any food not eaten will be returned in your child's lunchbox so you can track what was consumed.
- While we love to see children socialising, **we do not allow food to be shared** between children, for health, allergy, and emotional safety reasons.



We appreciate your help in reinforcing this message at home.

If you have any concerns, questions, or would like to talk to us about your child's needs around food or mealtimes, we're always here to listen and collaborate.

We do not allow any treats or foods brought from home to be shared with other children.

Lunch Box Ideas:

Sandwiches, Baps, Wraps, Multigrain rolls, Crackers with suggested fillings, Lettuce, Tomatoes, Cheese, Coleslaw, Turkey, Ham, Beef, Corn Beef, Jam, preserve to include foods from each of the food groups as suggested by the HSE.
Chopped up seasonal fruit kept in an airtight container; Strawberries, Raspberries, Grapes, Mangoes, Kiwis, Apples, Oranges, Mandarins, Melon, Peaches, Nectarines, Plums
Drinks; Low Sugar Juice Drinks, Smoothies, Milk, Water, 100 percent fruit juice, diluted 1:5 parts. No fizzy drinks allowed
Treats: Ryvita fruity crackers, cheese cut up in cubes, plain biscuit, fruit cake, homemade biscuits/scones.

Our full Healthy eating Policy is available upon request.

Allergies/ Nut FREE

We operate a Nut FREE zone. No nuts of any types are allowed on premises.

The management will take reasonable steps to provide an allergy-safe and allergy-aware environment for a child with allergies. Information relating to children's allergies are kept in their Child Record (on ChildPaths) and are displayed in the kitchen so that all staff are aware of allergies.

It is the Parent's responsibility to inform us in writing about any allergies or dietary requirements that the child has.

Birthdays

For birthdays, we ask parents to not supply any treats/party bags for other children. Together in the service the children will make rice crispy buns for all children's birthdays (These will be in line with any allergens we have within the service). Together we will celebrate each child's birthday and they will pick a small gift out of our birthday box.



Personal Belongings

We encourage families to label all of their child's belongings so we can help them find their way home safely. While we will always do our best to look after items, our environment can be busy and unpredictable, and there is always a small risk of things being misplaced or damaged.

We understand that some children have a comfort object or "safety item" that helps them feel secure, and we deeply value the role these can play in their wellbeing. Children are never required to share their comfort items with others, and we will support them in keeping these safe during their time with us.

If you feel your child would benefit from bringing such an item, you are very welcome to send it in. We simply ask that families keep in mind the possibility of loss or damage and make choices that feel comfortable for them.

Settling In

We warmly welcome all new children and their families to visit us before their first day. This gives your child an opportunity to explore the space, meet our team, and begin building familiarity in a safe and supported way.

Every child transitions differently, and we will work closely with you to make the process as smooth and positive as possible for both your child and your family. You know your child best, and we value your input in helping them feel comfortable and secure.

While we find that most children settle best when goodbyes are consistent and not prolonged, we will always adapt our approach to your child's needs. Wherever possible, we recommend a calm and confident handover at the door of their room, as this can support a smoother transition for them and minimise disruption for other children.

It's important to remember that settling in is a process, and the time it takes can vary. Attending regularly, engaging with activities, and seeing their parents or caregivers interact positively with staff can all help your child feel more at home.

Our full Settling In policy is available upon request.

Medical considerations

If a child attending the program becomes unwell or upset, we will contact parents for them to pick up the child as soon as possible. Please keep children who are unwell at home until they recover, as we do not have the facilities to look after sick children.

If a child has been booked into the program but does not attend please inform us by text/ email. The HSE guidelines for Sickness Exclusion periods are available on our website. We will adhere strictly to these guidelines and we ask parents to do the same. This is in the interest of all children attending our setting.

Medical Conditions

At the time of enrolment, the parent/guardian must advise the service of any medical conditions that the child has been diagnosed with. Parents and guardians also need to indicate if any medication (whether



prescription or homeopathic) is to be administered to a child during any session of care. Parents need to discuss the specifics with the Service Manager or the qualified staff member. In some instances, specific Medical Management Plans, risk management and minimization plans, equipment and other resources may also need to be provided before the child can attend the service. Parents will also need to supply all prescription medication in its original bottle with the child's name, appropriate dosage and frequency, date of dispensing and use by date.

Our full Medication Administration Policy is available upon request.

Infectious disease

Measures will be taken by management and staff to control the spread of infection. Appropriate processes and hygiene practices will be employed from recognised health authorities and put in place for children to observe and participate in a safe and healthy environment. We ask if an infectious disease becomes apparent at home that the parent/guardian contacts our service about the child's condition so appropriate action can take place. If this becomes apparent at our service, we will contact parents/guardians or emergency contacts about the child's symptoms and the immediate need to collect the child from our service. We will also remind parents of the necessary exclusion's periods and/or need for a medical practitioner certificate to allow the child to attend the service again.

Our full Infection Control Policy is available upon request.

First Aid

At all times 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 session of care.

Incidents & Accidents

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. 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 transport children to doctors, hospitals, or homes. **All report forms will be sent to the parent and electronically signed on the app by the parent.**

Emergency Procedures

The safety of staff, children and visitors to our service is vital in the event of an emergency. Emergencies include events such as fires, hurricanes, 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.

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.

Communication with Parents

All important communication will be sent in writing to parents.

All important communication from parents is **expected and accepted only in writing**, this includes but is not limited to: changes to bookings, changes in circumstances, allergies, dietary information, medical conditions, permissions to collect, additional needs or preferences, etc.



ChildPaths

All Parents are invited to download and use the ChildPaths app. On this app we aim to regularly post pictures and updates on what the children are up to on a daily basis.

All report forms will be sent to the parent and electronically signed on the app by the parent.
E.g Accident/Incident Form.

All Parents MUST update all the child/family information and sign permissions on ChildPaths before each child starts in the setting!

ChildPaths does not allow pictures to be downloaded and we do not give consent to anyone to use these pictures or information in any way.

Pictures are only shared among the parents of the children in the same group/ session. Parents have the option to opt-out from having their children's pictures taken.

There is a monthly fee of 3.75 (euro) per child which is paid directly to ChildPaths by the parent.

Phone

If Parents want to get in touch please message us directly on ChildPaths. However, for urgent matters please phone us on our service number 087 127 9029. Messages can be sent to the phone directly if urgent however, mobile phones are scarcely used during sessions so please do not expect a prompt reply.

Emails

All important communication will be sent by us on emails. It is parents' responsibility to make sure they are receiving our communication and that our email addresses are added as "contacts". Please get in touch with us ASAP if you don't receive our emails.

Our email addresses are:

Berta - info@bestbeekids.ie

Becky - earlyintervention@bestbeekids.ie

Rebecca - manager@bestbeekids.ie

Social Media

We have a new facebook and Instagram [page](#). We will use this as a notice board/communication tool for parents for marketing purposes. Any pictures posted will NOT have faces or names of any children in them. We will advertise our holiday programs on our webpage and will support any reviews and interactions online with parents and the local community.

Please do NOT send any child-related communication on facebook and instagram. All bookings & program information will be discussed only by email.

