

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are delighted that you have enquired about a place in Little Learners for your precious child.

At Little Learners we pride ourselves on our unique educational experience. Our system is based on the Montessori Method and uses active learning tools with special emphasis on the introduction to the arts, drama, storytelling, crafts, yoga and dance. The Irish language is used on a daily basis and our Naíonraí teachers are committed to fostering a love of and confidence in its use.

We take our commitment to our children and their families very seriously and we are always available to help and support you whenever needed. Our past and current parents have been a tremendous support to us. This support encourages us to continuously strive to give back to a community that nurture our developing school.

We want our school to be an important part of your child's development and a back up to your family life. We are always innovating new ways to help you and your child.

By choosing to be part of the Little Learners community you are joining a group that earnestly believe in the unlimited potential of young children and the importance of quality early education. The self-esteem achieved in these years will stand to your child forever.

We attach our information pack. If you would like to discuss any aspect of our service or any worries/concerns you have about your child please contact us at any time. All our services are flexible and we will do our best to accommodate your wishes.

If you wish to reserve a place in Little Learner please return the attached enrolment form with a deposit of €200. Cheques are to be made payable to Tenderhearts Ltd. As you can imagine the introduction of the second preschool year has caused an increase in applications so a deposit is the only way to secure a place.

Once again we want to thank you for your interest in our services.

Yours sincerely,

Nessa McNamara

## About Us

**Our vision in Little Learners** is to provide an exciting, unique and creative preschool experience for children and their parents. We want to be the bench mark for innovation and quality.

**Our mission** is to provide a stimulating and varied curriculum. We use the Montessori Method of education as well as introducing children to the Irish language, Yoga, Dance, Music, Drama and Puppetry.

We will support and delight our children and their families by going beyond what is expected of a preschool.

We will provide a secure and well structured career path for our teachers and provide an opportunity for those with creative skills to pass them on to the next generation.

**Little Learners values each child as an individual with their own special personality and interests**

## Why choose us?

- Little Learners is a member of Early Childhood Ireland and supports the ideals of the Aistear and Síolta framework and this is reflected in our everyday curriculum.
- Our premises have custom built play areas and outdoor spaces. Our premises in ABCD has a fully equipped dance studio, our own theatre and large outdoor garden space.
- All our team have been Garda vetted and all of our Montessori teachers hold a degree. Each member of staff has a particular talent that is used for the benefit of the children.
- Little Learners won the Early Childhood Ireland Innovation Award in June 2015. This award acknowledged and celebrated our unique and inventive approach to early literacy, community involvement and involved the adventures of our famous bear 'Ted'.
- Our unique storytelling style has been highlighted as an example of best practice in Childcare textbook Early Speech and Language Matters by Dr Geraldine French used by Universities.
- We use the Irish language on a daily basis which better prepares your children for school.
- Our children have access to a wide range of additional activities including Yoga, Dance, Puppetry, Music and Drama.
- Our famous teddy bear, Ted, is a prize winning teddy. He visits a kindergarten in Ethiopia and Little Learners sponsors a teacher there.
- Little Learners have a special event on the last Friday of every month. Special events include, Space party, Nativity concert, healthy-eating buffet, fairy-tale balls, parades, Mad Hatters tea party and other exciting events.
- Little Learners won the Best Service Business Award in December 2015. This was presented after a business coaching program sponsored by Allied Irish Banks.

### About our Service

Little learners operates from two premises both located in Drumcondra.

The ABCD building is located beside the railway station and features a specially designed children's village, fully equipped Montessori room, large outdoor garden, theatre and dance studio. There is a large car park at the rear of the premises.

54 Iona Crescent is located at the top of Hollybank Rd and has a covered outdoor garden, Naíonra, Fully equipped Montessori rooms, Story tree, castle and rainbow room.

Little Learners is a daily school service that runs until 1pm. We offer a range of programs to suit your needs.

Our preschool/Montessori runs from Sept to June, a 38 week term, and closes for holidays as per the National Schools calendar. Additional holiday and midterm camps are available and are charged for on an as used basis.

Little Learners are HSE inspected and fully insured. All our teachers are garda vetted and fully qualified. We operate a ratio of 1 adult to 11 children but always have at least one extra adult on hand to help ensure the day runs smoothly. Our extra activities teachers are all fully qualified in their area and are chosen for their warmth and enthusiasm.

Please remember that children GROW so the service you choose now has to fit them in 12 or 19 months time. We will always try to accommodate requests for extra times or days but we cannot always oblige when the classes are full. This can cause upset sometimes so please think carefully what service will suit your child best.

### Payments if applicable

All fees are calculated over the school year and are the same regardless of bank holidays, holidays etc. Deposits are returned when child is accepted onto the ECCE scheme (usually October) with a €50 administration charge held.

Fees are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month

Cheques should be made payable to:  
Tenderhearts Ltd *or online to*  
Tenderhearts Ltd T/A Littlelearners  
IBAN IE70 AIBK 93239637415094  
BIC AIBKIE2D

If you are using internet banking please ensure that your CHILDS name appears on the comment line

## Our Programmes

### Little Learners Experience

The Little Learners experience is our service that operates until 1pm. The children who avail of this service are children who are covered under the Government ECCE scheme for 3 hours daily and then stay till 1pm. They will have access to a broad activities programme and will attend our Naíonra, Montessori and theme classes on a daily basis. Their weekly schedule will include the following additional activities: dancing, yoga, puppet show, kinder music, speech and drama and of course Ted. These activities are co-ordinated by specialist teachers and are of the highest quality. Our concerts and shows are testament to that!

Times: 9.15am to 1pm

Days: Monday to Friday

Cost: €150.00 per month

Terms: 38 weeks per year as per the school calendar

### Little Learners All Day

Little Learners All Day is a service for children that need care for a full day. They partake in the preschool in the morning including all the additional activities in the Little Learners Experience. They then have a rest and story time and are ready to launch into our exciting afterschool program. Iona Crescent operates the afterschool service for Junior and senior infants and ABCD hosts first class up. Little Learners all day operates from Iona but in some cases we can offer ABCD too. We also offer hot dinners cooked by a real live Italian Chef (they are delicious!)

Times: 8am-6.30pm

Days: Monday-Friday

Cost: Price on application depending on hours/days chosen.

Term: 38 weeks

An additional service of mid-term breaks and holiday camps are available. Children can attend on a half or full day basis.

### Little Learners (ECCE hours only)

The ECCE service is a government sponsored scheme to support children before they go to National School. Please see details attached of the entry points and age requirements for the scheme. Our ECCE service offers a morning preschool programme.

Times: 9.15am to 12.15pm

Days: Monday to Friday

Cost: Subsidised by Government scheme

Terms: 38 weeks per year as per the school calendar

### What does my child do in Preschool?

Activity	Promotes	Full day 8am-6pm	Little Learner Experience 9.15- 1pm	ECCE Hours Only 9.15-12.15pm
Circle Time	Communication	✓	✓	✓
Theme	Social awareness	✓	✓	✓
Montessori	Child centred, one to one teaching	✓	✓	✓
Arts & Crafts	Creativity, Self expression	✓	✓	✓
Free Play	Social Development	✓	✓	✓
Dance	Movement, Self awareness	✓	✓	x
Yoga	Posture, Concentration	✓	✓	x
Drama	Language, creative thinking	✓	✓	x
Ted	Communication, Thinking	✓	✓	x
Story Zone	Imagination	✓	✓	x
Kinder Music	Listening, Pattern finding	✓	✓	x
Gaeilge	Language, cultural awareness	✓	✓	x
Buntús Sports	Motor skills, Teamwork	✓	✓	x
Gardening	Nature, Nutrition-we love to eat what we have planted!	✓	✓	x
Hot Meal	Made by a fabulous Italian chef	✓	x	x
Ballet	Posture, Movement	✓	x	x
Messy Friday	Creativity	✓	x	x

\*Activities may change or vary as we are always looking for new opportunities for our children

### **Additional Care**

Midterm breaks and holiday camps run all year round as needed. Children can attend on a half or full day basis.

Additional early start or stay on hours are available as a once off request.

### **Religious Ethos**

Little Learners welcomes children of all faiths and none. There is a Nativity show and concert held every December, parents can choose whether they would like their child to participate in the whole event or concert only.

### **Venues**

Little Learners operates from two premises in Drumcondra. Each place offers slightly different facilities and activities. Every effort will be made to facilitate a parent's choice but we cannot guarantee first choice preferences.

Due to the introduction of the second ECCE year, we may have to group children in different venues depending on the services chosen.

### **Enrolment Policy**

Due to the high demand for places our schools fill as follows:

- Existing Little Learners and their siblings
- Full day Children and children availing of the Little Learners Experience (until 1pm)
- Children for ECCE hours only
- Children requiring similar places are dealt with on a first come first served basis

Our website and Facebook page will keep you up to date on what's happening-find us at [www.littlelearners.ie](http://www.littlelearners.ie) or on Facebook [Little Learners](#).

### ECCE Scheme explained

From September 2016 children will be able to avail of the free preschool year when they reach the age 3 of and remain in free pre-school until they transfer to primary school provided that they are not older than 5 years 6 months at the end of the pre-school year. Parents will be able to enrol their child at three different points during the year: September, January and April. The following table illustrates when your child can enrol and how many weeks they are entitled to.

<b>Birth Month</b>	<b>Enrolment Month</b>	<b>Max no of weeks (Start school age 4)</b>	<b>Max no of weeks (Start school age 5)</b>
January- March	April	50	88
April-August	September	38	76
September-December	January	61	61*

NB \*A child must be younger than 5years and 6 months by the 30<sup>th</sup> June of the year they start school to qualify.