

# The Child & Family Centre Early Years and Family Support Service



## Your family's guide to our Early Years Services (0-3 & Preschool)



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# Welcome

Welcome to the Child and Family Centre.  
We cannot tell you how happy we are to  
have you and your child with us!

Whether you are joining our 0-3 service or have a child starting in our preschool, you are about to start a whole new chapter. We know that can be a little scary so, as we tell the children, please know that 'our listening ears are always on'. The Child and Family Centre is a new way of working because it combines childcare and family support services. We are learning as we go and are really open to your thoughts, feedback and suggestions.

We want to build a picture of your child that keeps growing as they do. We want to know and understand them as an individual. To help them learn and develop, please tell us about your child's preferences, hopes, fears and dreams. As their parent\* you know them best so by working together, we can provide a service that is tailored to YOUR child. Yes, we have paperwork for that but more importantly, let's have ongoing conversations. Your child slept badly and is having an off day? Let us know and we can factor it into our daily plans. Anything that gives us an insight into little minds helps us to do big things.

We are so glad that you chose the Child and Family Centre for your little one.

\* We use parent as a blanket term that includes parents, grandparents, foster parents, caregivers and anybody who provides consistent care and love in a child's life

## A little about the Child and Family Centre

The 'Child and Family Centre' can be quite a mouthful so you will hear us saying CFC a lot. Your child might call it crèche or preschool or 'the place with all the rainbows'. We don't mind what you call it as long as you and your child feel welcome and happy here. The CFC is a big beautiful building but it is only brought to life by the children and families that are part of it.

## What actually happens in the CFC?

The easiest way to explain how the CFC works is to think of raising children like building a house. A house needs a solid foundation before you can start adding anything else. Here at the CFC we can help you to make sure that foundation is strong and secure. Think of yourself as the builder and us as the scaffolding - we are here to support you as your house gets bigger. Sometimes building goes to plan and sometimes unexpected things happen. We are here for all of those times.

The CFC provides early years and family support services. While your child enjoys high quality early childhood care and education, we can also connect you with services and supports that benefit you as a family. Examples of these supports include play therapy, adult counselling, speech and language, home visiting and pathways to education and training. All of this work is discussed and planned with your family's needs and preferences at its heart.

So, as part of the CFC, you have access to staff, supports and services that can help you to build a happy and healthy house.





# The Child & Family Centre Early Years and Family Support Service

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## Ethos

Everything the CFC does  
is with your child,  
for your child and about your child

## Curriculum

Both of our Early Years services (0-3 and preschool) use what is called an emergent curriculum. This means that we work with parents to plan activities and projects based on their child's developmental stage, skills, needs, and interests. For example, if your little one loves dinosaurs you might find us painting a giant T-Rex together, making dinosaur teeth cookies or outside looking for giant dino prints.  
The more we know about what interests your child,  
the more we can do.

## Language & Communication

In the CFC we use language that is positive, strengths-based and child-friendly.  
We are big believers in kind and inclusive words!

We are always excited to listen to and learn from children and their families. We hope you can see this in how we communicate. For example, we try to use a combination of words and images on all of our signs. Instead of saying 'you must not' or 'you cannot' we are fans of 'let's try a different way'.  
When speaking with children, we always come down to their level and use language that is appropriate for their age.

## Families as units

We work with children and their parents as family units. Your child's home life affects what happens in our Early Years service and vice versa. By working together and sharing information, we are always building a picture of your child.

The family unit within the CFC is not limited to parents. It also includes carers, grandparents, siblings and significant other people in your child's life.  
If Granny would like to do some story-telling with the children or an uncle would like to build a buddy bench,  
let's work together to make it happen.

## Belonging

What we look like, where we are from or what we can/ can't do doesn't define any of us. The CFC is a warm and welcoming space for all children and families by being inclusive of all ethnicities, faiths, genders and abilities.

You and your family belong here and the CFC is  
YOUR service.





# Meet the TEAM



This is  
**Debbie**



This is  
**Ellen**



This is  
**Emily Louise**



This is  
**James**



This is  
**Kiara**



This is  
**Margo**



This is  
**Suzanne**



This is  
**Yvonne**



This is  
**Debbie**

Her favourite colour is

**yellow**

the children's book that she loves reading the most is called The Monkey Puzzle.



Did you know that Debbie has an amazing superpower. She is a **brilliant explorer!**



## Let's ask Debbie some questions!

- 1 Debbie, do you have any brothers and sisters and can you tell us their names?  
I have two brothers and one sister. Their names are Mark, Alan and Samanta
- 2 What is your favourite animal?  
I love cats, I have one her name is whiskers
- 3 If you had a pet dinosaur and it was a girl, what would you call her?  
Tilly
- 4 Do you like to sleep with a light turned on or switched off?  
I like them turned off
- 5 How do you come to the Child and Family Centre every day?  
Do you walk here, cycle, scoot, or do you come in the car?  
I walk or drive it depends on the weather
- 6 What is the best dinner that you can make?  
I make a really good Indian curry
- 7 What is your favourite thing to do that keeps you healthy and strong?  
I like to go walking in the evening after work
- 8 If you were a character from a movie, who would you be?  
Dora the explorer
- 9 Can you tell us something about yourself that not a lot of people know?  
I used to be in the Army

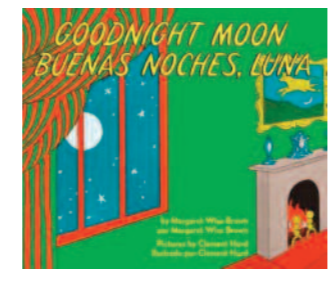




Her favourite colour is **yellow**



Did you know that Ellen has an amazing superpower. She is a **talk to goldfish.**



the children's book that she loves reading the most is called *Goodnite Moon.*

### Let's ask Ellen some questions!

- 1 Ellen, do you have any brothers and sisters and can you tell us their names?  
Rosaleen and Norma
- 2 What is your favourite animal? Dog
- 3 If you had a pet dinosaur and it was a girl, what would you call her?  
Sparklyasaurus
- 4 Do you like to sleep with a light turned on or switched off?  
With a night light
- 5 How do you come to the Child and Family Centre every day?  
Do you walk here, cycle, scoot, or do you come in the car? Car
- 6 What is the best dinner that you can make?  
Shepards Pie
- 7 What is your favourite thing to do that keeps you healthy and strong?  
Eat Broccoli
- 8 If you were a character from a movie, who would you be?  
Tinkerbell
- 9 Can you tell us something about yourself that not a lot of people know?  
I love spiders



Her favourite colour is **red**



Did you know that Emily has an amazing superpower. She can save lives with her **healing hands.**



the children's book that she loves reading the most is called *Rhino Who Swallowed a Storm* by LeVar Burton

### Let's ask Emily some questions!

- 1 Emily, do you have any brothers and sisters and can you tell us their names?  
Yes I have three sisters, Olivia and Maeve are older than me, and Laura is my little sister
- 2 What is your favourite animal?  
I love elephants, they are so loving and loyal
- 3 If you had a pet dinosaur and it was a girl, what would you call her?  
Oh her name would have to be Tall-er-an-our-ous
- 4 Do you like to sleep with a light turned on or switched off?  
I like the lights off when I sleep, I find it calming in the dark
- 5 How do you come to the Child and Family Centre every day?  
Do you walk here, cycle, scoot, or do you come in the car?  
I drive my bright red car here
- 6 What is the best dinner that you can make?  
I love to cook roast aubergine and hummus
- 7 What is your favourite thing to do that keeps you healthy and strong?  
I really enjoy walking and dancing, but what keeps me really healthy is my favourite fruits and vegetables
- 8 If you were a character from a movie, who would you be?  
I would be the main minion Bob!
- 9 Can you tell us something about yourself that not a lot of people know?  
I am a Ninja Ballerina.... But shhhhh!





This is James

His favourite colour is

blue

the children's book that he loves reading the most is called Famous Five.



Did you know that James has an amazing superpower. He can run fast.

### Let's ask James some questions!

- 1 James, do you have any brothers and sisters and can you tell us their names?  
3 Brothers, Steven, Brendan & Pat
- 2 What is your favourite animal? Dog
- 3 If you had a pet dinosaur and it was a girl, what would you call her? Dona
- 4 Do you like to sleep with a light turned on or switched off?  
Switched off
- 5 How do you come to the Child and Family Centre every day?  
Do you walk here, cycle, scoot, or do you come in the car? Car
- 6 What is the best dinner that you can make?  
Roast Chicken
- 7 What is your favourite thing to do that keeps you healthy and strong?  
Walking
- 8 If you were a character from a movie, who would you be? Joker
- 9 Can you tell us something about yourself that not a lot of people know?  
I have two children Eadaoin and Seamus



This is Kiara

Her favourite colour is

purple

the children's book that she loves reading the most is called The Gruffalo.



Did you know that Kiara has an amazing superpower. She can jump super high and land on one toe! She used to be an

Irish dancer

### Let's ask Kiara some questions!

- 1 Kiara, do you have any brothers and sisters and can you tell us their names?  
I have one older brother called Jason
- 2 What is your favourite animal?  
I love dogs. I have one called Buttons
- 3 If you had a pet dinosaur and it was a girl, what would you call her?  
Roxxy
- 4 Do you like to sleep with a light turned on or switched off?  
I sleep with the light off but the door a little bit open so I can have a some light shining in from the moon
- 5 How do you come to the Child and Family Centre every day?  
Do you walk here, cycle, scoot, or do you come in the car?  
I drive here every morning in my polly polo
- 6 What is the best dinner that you can make?  
Everyone tells me I make a really nice chicken broccoli pasta bake
- 7 What is your favourite thing to do that keeps you healthy and strong?  
I like to go to the gym to keep fit and I always eat lots of fruit and vegetables
- 8 If you were a character from a movie, who would you be?  
I would be Elsa from frozen! I love the snow and her braid is amazing!
- 9 Can you tell us something about yourself that not a lot of people know?  
When I was growing up I always wanted to be a spy but I am very loud and could never sneak around



This is  
**Margo**

His favourite colour is

**blue**

the children's book that he loves reading the most is called Bear Hunt.

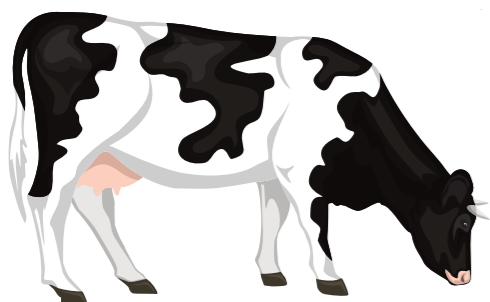


Did you know that Margo has an amazing superpower. She is a wacky scientist!



## Let's ask Margo some questions!

- 1 Margo do you have any brothers and sisters and can you tell us their names?  
I have one sister and four brothers. Their names are Ann, John, Martin, Ger and Tony
- 2 What is your favourite animal?  
I love cows
- 3 If you had a pet dinosaur and it was a girl, what would you call her?  
Dippy
- 4 Do you like to sleep with a light turned on or switched off?  
I sleep with it off but I do have a night light
- 5 How do you come to the Child and Family Centre every day?  
Do you walk here, cycle, scoot, or do you come in the car?  
I drive here
- 6 What is the best dinner that you can make?  
I make really good meat balls
- 7 What is your favourite thing to do that keeps you healthy and strong?  
I like hill walking!
- 8 If you were a character from a movie, who would you be?  
Moana because I love the water
- 9 Can you tell us something about yourself that not a lot of people know?  
I am a farmer

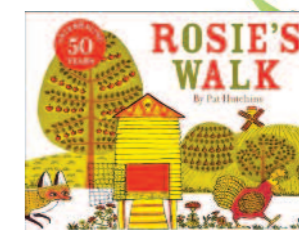


This is  
**Suzanne**

Her favourite colour is

**blue**

the children's book that she loves reading the most is called Rosie's Walk.



Did you know that Suzanne has an amazing superpower. She can run so fast it's like she's flying



## Let's ask Suzanne some questions!

- 1 Suzanne, do you have any brothers and sisters and can you tell us their names?  
I have one sister called Donna and no brother
- 2 What is your favourite animal?  
My favourite animal is a donkey
- 3 If you had a pet dinosaur and it was a girl, what would you call her?  
Suzisaurus
- 4 Do you like to sleep with a light turned on or switched off?  
Off
- 5 How do you come to the Child and Family Centre every day?  
Do you walk here, cycle, scoot, or do you come in the car?  
I drive every morning
- 6 What is the best dinner that you can make?  
Spaghetti Bolognese
- 7 What is your favourite thing to do that keeps you healthy and strong?  
I love to dance and go for walks, and I eat lots of vegetables
- 8 If you were a character from a movie, who would you be?  
Belle from Beauty and the Beast
- 9 Can you tell us something about yourself that not a lot of people know?  
I love hip hop dancing





This is  
**Yvonne**

Her favourite colour is

**purple**

the children's book that she loves reading the most is called *The Gruffalo*.



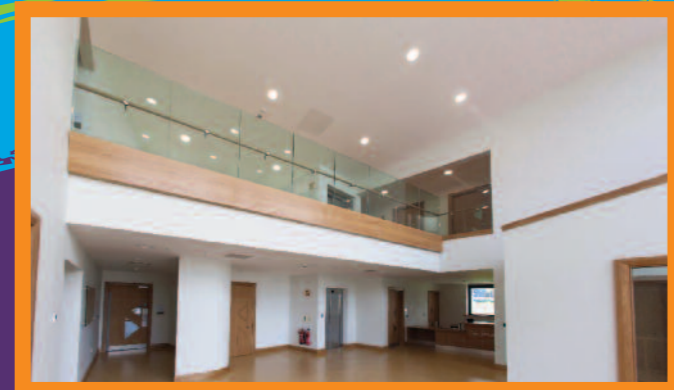
Did you know that Yvonne has an amazing superpower. I am a really good listener. I have super sonic hearing!



**Our space**  
Let's have a look around...

### Let's ask Yvonne some questions!

- 1** Yvonne do you have any brothers and sisters and can you tell us their names?  
Yes I have two sisters, their names are Sarah and Diane. I am the youngest
- 2** What is your favourite animal?  
My favourite animals are lions and tigers - I went to see some on a Safari trip, I can't wait to show you some pictures and videos of my adventure
- 3** If you had a pet dinosaur and it was a girl, what would you call her?  
Fire Fairy
- 4** Do you like to sleep with a light turned on or switched off?  
I turn them off but sometimes I like to leave my lamp on for a small bit of light
- 5** How do you come to the Child and Family Centre every day?  
Do you walk here, cycle, scoot, or do you come in the car?  
I drive to our centre everyday, I have a black car
- 6** What is the best dinner that you can make?  
I love to make Cajun chicken, it's my favourite
- 7** What is your favourite thing to do that keeps you healthy and strong?  
I really enjoy going running, I am trying to get faster each week
- 8** If you were a character from a movie, who would you be?  
I would have to be Mike from Monster Inc. He is really funny
- 9** Can you tell us something about yourself that not a lot of people know?  
This summer, I am learning how to play the guitar.  
I hope I can show you sometime and we can have some fun playing together



We call this the  
**Yellow Brick  
Road**



**(0-3)**

This is our little home away from home, filled with spaces to explore and people to cuddle

**Welcome area**

This is where we say 'hello' and 'goodbye' every day



**Toilets**

And a really fun sink where we wash our hands



**Preschool**

We'll have so much fun playing together here with you and your friends



# Good to know..... at a quick glance



## Term times

The number of weeks that your child spends in the CFC is either the full year (50 weeks) or in line with the school year (38 weeks).

This is decided by your individual subsidy. We will give you a calendar for the year ahead once your child takes up their place here with us.



Drop-off service  
with advance  
notice  
8.30am



Operates from  
9.00am

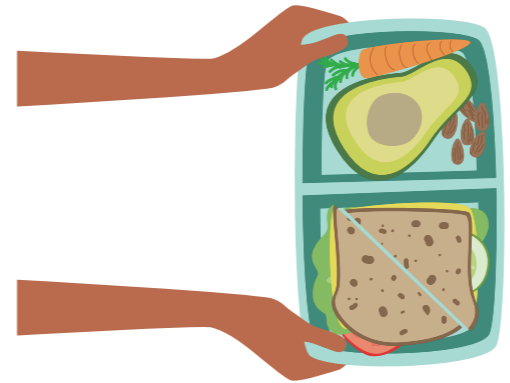


Collection  
12.00pm

or



Collection  
2.30pm



## Healthy eating

All of your little one's snacks and meals (for those doing longer days) are provided here at the CFC. We prepare and serve healthy and nutritious food fresh from our own kitchen and look forward to working with you on creating menus. Children and adults eat together to support good eating patterns and to enjoy chats over food. We try to role model other good health practices so you'll notice that there is no smoking or vaping inside or outside the building.



## Your child's bits and bobs

You don't need to bring much to the CFC but at the start of each week/term, we ask parents to drop in some bits that we keep here for your child:

### For the 0-3 service:

Milk (expressed breast milk or formula) and bottles, nappy-changing supplies (nappies, creams), spare clothes and vests. Raincoat for babies and rain gear and wellies for wobblers and toddlers. Please feel free to bring along any comfort items that your child loves.

### For preschool:

A change of clothes (or two!), spare socks and rain gear and wellies.



## Fees

The government is providing financial support for childcare through the National Childcare Scheme. The subsidies provided depend on many factors so they are different for different families. The CFC team will happily guide you through the application process and help you to get your chick number. This number then tells us what subsidies you are entitled to and we can work from there.





## Talk to US

Before your child ever starts at the CFC, we will have met with you both. That marks the start of a journey together where we will talk... and then talk some more. You know your little one better than anybody else which means we have a lot to learn from and to share with you. There are a variety of ways you can talk to us.

### Your child's settling-in period

For children in the 0-3 service, there is a 30 minute settling-in period every morning where we encourage parents to stay and take part in some gentle activities with their child.

For pre-schoolers, we also invite parents to settle their child ahead of their 9am start.

While both of these times are busy as the day begins, the team will always make time to check in with you. If you want to share anything at all about your child, talk to us.

### Family meetings

For children in the 0-3 service, these meetings are regular and ongoing. For pre-schoolers they take place once a term. These provide the time and space to chat about how your child is doing overall, to celebrate all that is going well for them and to look at any areas where they might need a little extra support or help.

### Chats with the team

Please know that our door is always open. Members of the CFC are always on-hand for a quick chat. A longer meeting can be scheduled if there is anything you want to discuss or follow up on.

### Feedback loops

We use a system here in the CFC called 'feedback loops'. This simply means we want to know what we are doing well and what we could do better. We ask children and families questions, work on your responses and come back to see if things are working better.

For example, we might ask children to taste test our menus or invite you to look at our paperwork to see if it's parent-friendly. Remember that your feedback helps to shape the services that the CFC provides for you and your family so have your say





## Over to you Paperwork

### Good to know

Here in the CFC we love trees. A full copy of all our policies and procedures is a very long read and a lot of paper.

This family guide gives you the headlines of the most relevant policies as your family starts out with the CFC.

If at any stage you would like to see our more detailed policies and procedures, please let James or Yvonne know and they will print a copy for you.



### Making Memories

We know that little hands just love leaving their mark on paperwork. Here's a page just for that - Whether they chew it, draw on it or you print their little handprint here, together you can create a small keepsake of your little one's first week in the CFC.



## Tell us all about YOU

# Hello!

We are so excited that you are coming to our preschool. We can't wait to learn all about you and your family. Before you start in preschool, we have some questions that will help us to learn all about you. Mom and Dad can help you.

**1** What is your name?

1

**2** Do you have any brothers or sisters? Can you tell us their names?

2

**3** Do you have a favourite colour? You do, what is it?

3

**4** If you could choose any animal in the whole world to have as a pet, which animal would you choose?

4

**5** Everybody has a superpower. We know a little boy that can run faster than his big brother! What is your superpower?

5

**6** What is your favourite thing to do that keeps you healthy and strong?

6

**7** Do you prefer walking, cycling, scooting or being in the car?

7

**8** What is your favourite dinner in the whole world?

8

**9** What movie have you watched more than two times?

9

**10** Do you have a favourite story or book? Can you tell us what it is?

10

**11** When you think about preschool, in your imagination what does it look like?

11

**12** If you could wish on a star, what would you wish for?

12

Here's a box for you to draw in. Please draw us a picture of anything you feel like drawing.





# Tell us all about your little one

## Hello!

We are really looking forward to welcoming your family into our 0-3 service. To help us start building a picture of your little one, we have some questions for you. As their parent, you are their voice until they develop their own so please add anything at all that you want us to know.



1 What is your little one's full name?



2 What is their position in your family (first born, only child etc.)?

3 What are their siblings' names?  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
4. \_\_\_\_\_

4 What was their birth weight?  
\_\_\_\_\_ kg/grams  
or  
\_\_\_\_\_ lbs/ozs

5 Does your little one prefer being up in your arms or being down?

6 What things does your little one enjoy (i.e. tummy time, songs etc.)?

7 What things don't they enjoy?  
?

8 What kind of play does your little one like?  
✓

9 Please tell us a little about what your little one drinks and eats

10 Are there any allergies or intolerances that you know of?

11

Can you please tell us a little bit about how they go down to sleep? For example, do you sing or read, is the light on or off etc?

Lined writing area for question 11.

12

How do you find your little one around strangers? For example, are they shy, happy etc?

Lined writing area for question 12.

13

What are your hopes for your little one as you become part of the CFC?

Lined writing area for question 13.



14

What worries do you have about becoming part of the CFC?

Lined writing area for question 14.



15

Can you please give us a general idea of what your routine at home is?

You know, what time your little one gets up, takes naps, eats and plays.



Lined writing area for question 15.

16

Please tell us anything and everything you want us to know about your precious little one.



Lined writing area for question 16.

17

If you had to describe your little one, what would you say about them?



Lined writing area for question 17.





# Child Protection

## Casting a safety net around every child



Every child has the right to be protected from neglect, harm and abuse. Here in the CFC safeguarding children is at the heart of everything we do. That means that every member of our team responds appropriately to all concerns about the safety and welfare of children. Child safeguarding is about protecting every child from harm, promoting their welfare and creating an environment which helps them to grow and develop. You will see a copy of our Child Safeguarding Statement on the wall in the reception area.

### Designated Liaison Person (DLPs)

All of the CFC team are experienced practitioners who are trained in child protection. As part of Limerick Social Service Council we are also lucky to have access to two Community Social Workers as part of our wider team. As well as giving us advice and being able to answer questions, Suzanne and Fidelma are what are known as our Designated Liaison Persons: They can help us and you with anything we need to know or do in relation to child safeguarding.

If you ever have concerns about a child's welfare or safety, you can talk in confidence with



**James or Yvonne**  
here in the CFC

or

you can contact our DLPs Suzanne and Fidelma directly on



**(061) 314111**

**Suzanne Leen**  
suzanne.leen@lssc.ie

**Fidelma Horgan**  
fidelma.horgan@lssc.ie

They work from Limerick Social Service Council's base in Henry Street but you will get to know them over time as they pop in and out of the CFC.

### Good to know

There is no such thing as a silly question. It is better to talk out any worries that you might have about a child with someone who is trained to know what to do. While we work hard to give children a voice, when something isn't right, we have to be their voice.

In the event that we have to call for illness or in an emergency situation, please list the two points of contact:

### Emergency contact 1

Name:

Telephone No:

Relationship to your child:

### Emergency contact 2

Name:

Telephone no:

Relationship to your child:

### Important

It's really important that these contact details are kept up to date - if phone numbers change, please don't forget to let us know.









## Where you will find us:

📍 Limerick Social Service Council - Child & Family Centre,  
Southside Education Campus, Galvone, Limerick V94 725D

☎ (061) 319094

👤 **Operational Manager**  
**James Connery**  
☎ (083) 3755342  
✉ james.connery@lssc.ie

👤 **Early Years Manager**  
**Yvonne Galvin**  
☎ (083) 8783598  
✉ yvonne.galvin@lssc.ie

🐦 @SouthsideCFC

📘 Southside Child & Family Centre

An illustration of two hands holding a black tablet. The text on the screen is green and reads: "We engage with social media as a respectful, informative and fun space, while maintaining the privacy of children and families."

We engage with social media as a respectful, informative and fun space, while maintaining the privacy of children and families.

