

Birthdays Policy

Askea Community Childcare Centre acknowledges that each child's birthday is a 'special event' and needs to be celebrated. The centre implements a Birthday Policy to ensure that the celebration of children's birthdays are managed in ways that are safe, equitable and included in the daily routine.

Principle of Birthdays Policy

This policy is underwritten by the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016; The Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services)(Amendment) Regulations 2016; (Registration of School - Age Services) Regulations 2018;

Rationale

Birthdays are an exciting time for children in early childhood and it is important that they can celebrate these special occasions with their peers.

With 1 in 13 children, however, having at least one food allergy, anyone serving food to children needs to be aware of food allergies and the potential for a life-threatening allergic reaction.

More than 15% of school-aged children with food allergies have had an allergic reaction at school. These reactions range from mild to severe and even fatal.

Policy Statement

At Askea Community Childcare Centre we enjoy celebrating our children's birthdays and acknowledge the importance of these celebrations. In doing so, we are helping the children to develop a sense of self-worth and belonging, by recognising that they are important to others.

In the interest of Health and Safe we request Parents /Guardians to communicate with us when making plans to provide birthday celebrations for children particularly if food is being provided for the celebration. This will also apply for Staff, Students and Volunteers in similar situations.

Procedure for Birthdays

To implement this Birthday Policy we have the following procedures in place:

1. Staff are aware of children's dates of birth and discuss birthdays with the children.
2. Parents/guardians are informed that birthdays are celebrated with the children in the rooms.
3. Staff inform parents/guardians of their right to request that their child does not participate in the celebration of birthdays if this is their wish.
4. Staff and the other children will sing Happy Birthday to the child celebrating their birthday.
5. Staff advise parents/guardians that they may provide a 'shop bought' cake, with original wrapping listing ingredients for allergy purposes, which may have candles for the child to blow out and "make a wish" or they may provide an alternative non-food item (See Appendix 1).

6. Parents can additionally bring a small selection of extra, shop purchased, treats for children if they wish, but must check with staff beforehand to ensure they are suitable.
7. Photos of the birthday party are taken by staff and parents/guardians are invited to leave a camera, if they wish, for photos of the 'blowing out of the candles' by their child.

Communication Plan for staff & families

Staff members will check with parents that they have read and understood the policy and provide any assistance needed.

This policy will also be reviewed with the staff team at induction and annual staff training.

A copy of all policies will be available during all hours of operation to staff members and parents in the Policy Folder located in Reception.

Parents may receive a copy of the policy at any time upon request.

Parents and staff will receive written notification of any updates.

Related Policies, Procedures

- Health and Safety Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Administration of Medication Policy
- Access and Inclusion
- Síolta, the National Framework for Quality in Early Childhood Education
- Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework

This policy must be observed by:

- Managers
- All staff members
- Parents/Guardians

Appendix 1**Non-Food Alternatives to Celebrating Children's Birthdays****at****Askea Community Childcare Centre**

- Non-Food Trinkets: Such as pencils, erasers, colouring books, etc.
- Book Donation: To your child's book corner or their childcare practitioner's classroom library. A special birthday nameplate with your child's name can be put on to be recognized by your child.
- Board Game Donation: Staff are always looking for items to help provide a varied curriculum to children, especially on those rough weather days where we need to remain inside during our outdoor play time. A special birthday nameplate with your child's name can be put on to be recognized by your child.
- Outdoor Play Donation: Outdoor equipment gets used up quickly with over 200 children using items daily. Donate a jump rope, basketball, soccer ball, etc. in your child's honour.
- Guest Reader: Volunteer to come into your child's room to be a special guest reader and share a birthday story, or a story about your child. There are lots of great books that can be shared, and our staff would be happy to make a recommendation if needed.
- Show and Tell: Ask a member of your child's team if your child may bring in special items to show and tell their peers about. Things such as baby photos, or a souvenir from a vacation, etc. are fun ways to let their peers and practitioners know more about them.