

happy  
days

COMMUNITY Childcare Centre

Parent  
Information  
Pack

# Contents

Welcome

Who are we?

Why we are special

Happy Days & your child

Health & wellbeing

Safe & sound

Staff team

Our Board

Parents as partners

Fees

Registration

Contact us

# Welcome

Dear Parent/Carer,

At Happy Days, we believe as our motto says;

***‘Children are a gift from God to be treasured’.***

We offer the perfect solution to your childcare needs, providing a quality service enriched with Christian values and a spirit of excellence.

Our staff ensure that learning opportunities are maximised, building on children’s individual abilities at each stage of their development in a welcoming, fun and stimulating environment. It would be our delight to be part of building that foundation of a happy, secure childhood which promotes and encourages confidence and skills in your child. Our desire at Happy Days is that children will enjoy their formative, pre-school and school years. One of our main aims is helping you create those precious very special childhood memories.

It is important to us that you as parents can leave your child in our care, knowing they are happy and safe when you can’t be with them. As a proud mum and nana to two beautiful grandchildren, I understand that you may have questions and concerns about the care of your child. My office is located just inside the entrance and if you have any queries, I or the Deputy Childcare Manager; Jeni Caldwell, will be available each day to help in any way we can.

I am thrilled to be leading this wonderful Community Childcare Centre and know your children will find it fun, challenging and also rewarding too. I hope that you will choose to place your child in our care and look forward to welcoming both you and your family to Happy Days.

*Lyndal Speers*

**Childcare Manager**



# Who are we?

Happy Days is an excellent Childcare Centre operated by Ballymoney Church of God that has a reputation as a responsive; community based Church and has long nurtured a vision to provide a full time facility to meet the requirements of families in the wider community. Although the Church complex is extensive the lay out did not lend itself as being suitable for wrap-around Childcare. In 2009, an adjoining 2½ acres of ground was purchased when the former Tyco factory was sold. Since 2010 extensive demolition has taken place and an existing office building transformed into a wonderful resource for childcare. Much of the work undertaken on this project has been on a voluntary basis with professional supervision and direction. All renovations have been carried out in accordance with stringent statutory requirements. Happy Days has been established as a Company Limited by Guarantee with Charitable status.

Since first opening in May 2011, we have been so blessed to see Happy Days go from strength to strength.

# Why we are special

**We know that you are entrusting us with your most precious gift - your child.**

For this reason, we want to provide the best possible care. We offer a safe, fun, inclusive learning environment, enriched with Christian values. We understand that each child is uniquely individual and deserving of an environment that encourages their growth and development.



**Children are a gift from God to be treasured**

# Happy Days & your child

We provide flexible, affordable childcare for children aged from 6 weeks to primary 7. Happy Days is open Monday to Friday from 7:45am to 6:00pm.

We are closed on the following occasions: 1 week holidays in July and Christmas, 2 days at Easter and the May Day Bank Holiday.

Happy Days have implemented a number of measures to encourage and enable access to the services we offer. These include wheelchair accessible toilet facilities on both floors and a through floor lift providing access to the first floor. Extensive car parking within the grounds provides convenient drop off and pick up facilities.

Our first class facilities make the best use of space and provide a welcoming and stimulating environment for all children. We cater for all aspects of your child's needs and there are separate rooms set aside for the different age groups. These are packed with exciting age appropriate materials and equipment.

At Happy Days we understand that the first time you leave your child can be an upsetting experience. To help you and your child adjust, we offer 'settling in' sessions in advance of the start date; when you can 'chill out' in our Parent Room while your child becomes familiar with their play room and staff.

You will be kept fully informed on a daily basis of your child's activities and progress. Very soon you will see how well they have settled, making new friends and enjoying their time in Happy Days.



## Little Treasures

Little Treasures is a bright, comfortable room for babies situated on the first floor with an adjoining very cosy and restful sleep area. A wide range of toys and resources provide attractive and stimulating play to encourage appropriate developmental milestones.



Even at this early stage the babies enjoy craft activities and sensory learning experiences though 'Jelly Baths', 'Cornflour Gloop', hand and foot painting and box play. Music, rhymes and 'sing and sign' are also integral to life in the baby room.



An enclosed changing area and separate milk preparation area are located within the main play room and are visible to other staff members.



## Precious Pearls

Children in the “wobbler” stage between 1 and 2 years are cared for in the colourful and comfortable Precious Pearls Room on the ground floor. It has been equipped with toys which will build, structure and support your younger toddler’s development. Our highly trained staff will ensure your child achieves their full potential.



A zoned area ensures there is a comfortable space for quiet or sleep time. We provide resources for physical play to enhance their confidence and coordination. At this age, this is a vital part of their cognitive development.



Of course there is plenty of scope indoors and outdoors to encourage the children in physical activities as they enjoy this learning experience.

## Gems of Genius

Our Gems of Genius Room is situated on the ground floor. The older toddlers between 2 and 3 years enjoy a varied day with age and stage appropriate toys and resources. Here the emphasis is on learning through play, based on 4 areas of learning and development. Planned activities are centred on the needs of the children as a group and as individuals.



Speech and language is a key feature as they communicate their needs and enjoy learning through stories, pictures and books. This helps prepare them to progress into their pre-school stage. Sensory development is enhanced as children investigate and explore their world.

The children and staff work together to create an exciting play environment where there are endless opportunities to learn and grow. Play Zones provide for Messy, Constructive, Imaginative and Quiet activities, each resourced to maximise your child's potential.

## Ready Rubies

The Ready Rubies Room for 3-4 year olds is also situated on the ground floor. Staff working in this room plan activities to address the 6 key areas of the pre-school curriculum including the physical, personal, social & emotional development of the children.



The children enjoy enhanced learning opportunities available through free play and benefit from their choices and opinions being valued.



Staff promote independence by encouraging this age group to identify their personal belongings and manage their individual hygiene needs. This is an important stage in children's social development as they begin to forge friendships.



# Little Learners

The **Little Learners** Room, also for 3-4 year olds is situated on the first floor. The bright, spacious and attractive room is zoned creating lots of exciting areas for the children to explore and is equipped with the most appropriate resources.

Here the focus, as always, is centred on the needs of the children.



Staff plan, evaluate and promote the 6 key areas of the pre-school curriculum while providing excellent opportunities for the children to learn through play.

The Little Learners benefit from a morning Playgroup session within their room. The planned activities ensure that learning opportunities and fun are extended throughout the day. Each child is encouraged and challenged through a programme specifically tailored to maximise their individual potential.



# Pre-school Playgroup

Our Childcare Centre is in the unique position of being able to offer continuity of care, supporting children's growth and development from 6 weeks old to 12 years.

We believe that pre-school playgroup is an important foundation for life.

## Our Aim

is to provide an excellent standard of pre-school education, tailored to meet the individual needs of your child.

## Our Goal

We want your Child to enjoy their time at **Happy Days Playgroup**; their very own stepping stone to formal education.

**We are delighted to offer free and fee paying Pre-School Playgroup places.**

The **Playgroup** operates within the **Little Learners Room** situated on the first floor and is specifically tailored to meet the needs of the Pre-school child. Play is how young children learn about the world around them and practise vital new skills. Playgroup provides fun-filled play opportunities for your child, promoting their development in all six areas of the pre-school curriculum.



## This is where it all begins!

Playgroup is for 3-5 year olds. Children in their final pre-school year attend 5 mornings per week (Monday to Friday 9-11.30am) from September to June. Younger children can join the group after their third birthday, attending 2 - 3 days per week.

**Happy Days** has attractive purple sweatshirts for purchase at £10.

***“Play, learn and grow together”***

is our theme!

## Learning to Play - Playing to Learn

Children begin Playgroup with a wide variety of experiences and we aim to build upon this. We provide a rich variety of play activities that challenge, motivate and stimulate your child in an attractive, fun environment.

## Your Child's Needs Come First!

While Playgroup sets boundaries and guides learning, all activities are child-focused and led.

Therefore we encourage each child *“to learn at their own pace, gain a positive image of themselves as learners, able to cope with uncertainty and to learn through trial and error.”* (CEA NI Curricular Guidance)

## Wise Owls

Our attractive and spacious Wise Owls Room is currently situated in a comfortable first floor room within the Church complex and is an excellent space for the After Schools children. The room is furnished with the specific interests of your school aged children in mind.



The space has been well utilised and provides opportunities for 'chilling out' after a busy school day, playing games, taking part in structured activities or just relaxing to read a book. Children may also complete homework in a quiet area. The large Youth Hall is perfect for physical activity and of course the children have access to the outdoor facilities at Happy Days.

Happy Days operate a 'Wrap-around' service providing care before and after school. Children can be dropped off and picked up from school in our minibus affectionately named the 'Happy Bus' by the children! In Holiday time school aged children can be enrolled in full day care.



## Outdoors

Outdoor space at Happy Days is fully supervised and secure.

An extensive covered play space and an amazing play area supports the physical and cognitive development of your child and is available throughout the day.

All children will have an opportunity for outside fun and activity on a daily basis.



Our new Multi-Sensory Garden is well equipped and provides an inclusive, sensory, fun and stimulating learning environment for children of all abilities and ages who attend Happy Days.



# Health & wellbeing

At Happy Days we recognise the importance of a balanced diet in a child's physical and mental development and are committed to promoting children's health and encouraging healthy eating habits. Our Cook designs the varied menus to appeal to the children and to provide key nutritional elements. All meals are freshly prepared each day and specific dietary needs can be accommodated; we take the utmost care where children have allergies or intolerances.

Weaning babies and toddlers can have daily meals pureed to suit their individual needs. Parents need to provide feeding bottles and formula for babies who are bottle fed.



Strict Health and Hygiene practices are implemented; our Cook and any member of staff preparing snacks or food holds a valid Hygiene qualification. We are delighted that Ballymoney Borough Council have awarded the top rating of **5** under the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.



We understand that from time to time your child may experience sickness. Where normal coughs and colds are to be expected and will not impede your child's attendance at Happy Days we operate a strict 'Sickness Policy' for the benefit of all children and staff. This policy outlines illnesses and recommended exclusion periods and we ask that you respect the specific quarantine periods. Staff at Happy Days will only administer medication in line with strict policy and procedures and with the consent of parents.

# Safe & sound

We know that your child's welfare is your main concern and for this reason Happy Days staff adhere to the strictest of Health and Safety practices.

**Our Centre is absolutely safe and secure giving you peace of mind that your child's well being is our top priority.**

We fully comply with all the very latest legislation and have a full range of policies in place which are available on request.

Absence of Manager	Multi Media
Admissions	Nappy Changing, Toileting & Personal Care
Arrival & Collection Arrangements	Observation/Assessment & Monitoring
Behaviour Management	Outdoor Play
Child Protection	Outings
Code of Conduct for Staff & Volunteers	Parents Access to Records
Complaints & Comments	Partnership with Parents/Carers
Confidentiality	Photography
Data Protection	Planning/Evaluation
Development & Training	Record Management
Emergency Evacuation/Fire Safety	Referrals from Other Agencies
Equal Opportunities	School/Nursery Delivery/Collection
Equipment & Resources	Settling in a Child
E - Safety, Networking & Mobile Phones	Sickness & Infection Control
Fees	Sleep & Rest
Fundraising	Staffing and Employment
Healthy Eating	Sun Protection
Health, Safety & Hygiene	Supporting Children with Additional or Special Needs
Homework	Trainee/Student Placement
Lone Worker	Volunteers
Manual Handling	Whistle Blowing
Medication Administration Protocol	Working with Vulnerable Adults
Missing Child	

A secure door entry system ensures that no-one is allowed on the premises who is not known to staff. You are required to specify which people are permitted to deliver and collect your child. The play areas inside and outside Happy Days are safe and secure; all equipment is regularly checked for breakages and faults.

Happy Days is registered with the Northern Health and Social Care Trust and our Link Social Worker is Paul McLaughlin Tel: 028 2766 1340.

# Staff team

Happy Days has a friendly, experienced and capable staff team.

This team is led by **Mrs. Lyndal Speers** our **Childcare Manager**.

In line with legislation all staff are subject to rigorous pre employment checks and undergo a detailed induction programme. Childcare qualifications are a must have and staff are encouraged to extend and update their training where at all possible. We adopt the required staff/child ratios which specify one member of staff to every 3 children under 2 years old, one to four for 2-3 years olds and one to eight for 3-12 year olds. In special circumstances and where required, a higher staff to child ratio is used. At any time there is a minimum number of two staff present in Happy Days who have been fully trained in First Aid.



# Our Board

Happy Days is a Company Ltd by Guarantee and has been registered as a Charity. In order to fulfil our obligations under Employment, Company and Charity Law we operate robust controls and ensure that good governance practice is embedded in day to day operational management. Our Board meet on a regular basis, current members are as follows:

**Chairman: Pastor Jonathan Payne**

**Company Secretary: Hilary Kyle**

**Parent Representative: Linda Wylie**

**John McCrellis & Hilary Patterson**

**Everything in Happy Days is underpinned by a spirit of excellence and we believe that is what makes our Centre such a success!**

# Parents as partners

We believe that children benefit most when parents and childcare providers work together in partnership. You can be certain that we will always work with you to ensure that our care for your child matches your expectations. Our staff are always willing to meet with you to discuss your child's care and progress or to answer any queries you may have. Partnership is a two way process and we ask for your cooperation in adhering to the approved policies and practices that we adopt which help ensure Happy Days runs as smoothly as possible.



We place great emphasis on our partnership with parents and are delighted to have a parent representative on our Board of Directors. We so appreciate the thoughtfulness and generosity of many Parents/Carers and proudly display a collection of cards & letters received in the foyer. The following are just a few of the comments made:

*“The facilities, food & level of care were simply excellent but the greatest asset of Happy Days is the staff. What a great team, all who genuinely seem to have a passion for childcare showing amazing enthusiasm & commitment to the children, in fact to every person entering the door. Thank you sincerely for the loving & caring environment that you created...Thank you from the bottom of our hearts - we will never forget you all!”*

*“You are a fantastic team and show my son genuine affection and kindness even through his trying moments!! You have been a great support to us both.”*

*“My child is very happy in Happy Days and I have full confidence in the staff and care she receives. I frequently recommend you!”*

*“Staff are always kind, friendly & professional. The building itself is a bright, happy place which my son loves to come to each day. Many thanks Happy Days. Keep up the good work!”*

*“Happy Days are known for the lives they touch. You’ve made such a difference. Thank you so much.”*

*“Thank you for all you’ve done and for making learning so much fun!”*

*“...loved every day in your care, what more can parents ask for? It has been so much easier to head off to work knowing...was so content.”*

*“Happy Days is such an amazing place for my daughter. She has developed so much with the help of the brilliant staff and we could not ask for a better childcare facility. Our daughter loves going to Happy Days, she has made so many friends and loves the staff, they treat her like their own. Everyone from management to the staff in the rooms are so welcoming and friendly and always willing to help.”*

*“An excellent facility staffed by amazing people.”*

# Fees

<u>Age 6 weeks - 5 years</u>	<u>Fees</u>	<u>Primary School Age</u>	<u>Fees</u>
<b>Half day</b> 7:45am – 1:00pm or 1:00pm – 6:00pm	£24.50	<b>Wrap-around</b> Before & after school	£25.50
<b>Full day</b> 7:45am - 6:00pm	£33.00	<b>Term Time After School</b> 2:00pm – 6:00pm	£20.50
<b><u>Playgroup</u></b> 9:00am - 11:30am	£9.50	<b><u>School Holidays</u></b> Full day 7:45am - 6:00pm	£33.00

- ◇ A child must be registered for a minimum of 2 days per week.
- ◇ Fees must be paid in advance on a monthly basis and you are expected to pay the months fees in full by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. A penalty will be applied if fees are not paid in full and on time. The fee will be charged at 10% of the total value of the fees outstanding.
- ◇ Fees should be paid by direct debit. In the event of a direct debit being rejected by your bank a penalty of £25 will be applied.
- ◇ Childcare Vouchers are also accepted.
- ◇ Places are booked on a full time or part time basis on predetermined days.
- ◇ Monthly payment schedule is based on a 51 week year as the setting closes for 1 week between Christmas and New Year and 1 week in July.
- ◇ Where a parent requires 'Term Time' only care, their monthly payment schedule is based on 43 weeks full fee and 8 weeks one third retainer fee.
- ◇ Whilst we endeavour to accommodate individual request, capacity in any room is governed by Social Services regulations therefore days cannot be exchanged on an ad hoc basis.
- ◇ Fees are payable for Public Holidays and any period of unexpected absences such as sickness.
- ◇ Snacks and a freshly cooked lunch are included in the fees.
- ◇ Discount is available for an additional sibling/s in full time care only - 10% for second child and 5% for subsequent children.
- ◇ Fees must be paid irrespective of whether your child attends the place reserved for them or not.
- ◇ Happy Days reserves the right to withdraw a child's place should fees remain unpaid.
- ◇ Advance notice of 4 weeks is required in the event of you withdrawing your child. If your child leaves before the end of the 4 week period the fees for these weeks are still required to be paid and you will be invoiced for them.
- ◇ Happy Days reserves the right to apply a fee for any parent who repeatedly fails to collect their child on time.
- ◇ Additional hours required for exceptional school closures or training days must be booked 1 week in advance and a minimum of 8 children must be registered before a session can be provided.

# Registration

Simply complete the attached Registration Form. This must be filled in by someone with parental responsibility for the child to be enrolled. We ask that you provide all the necessary information such as contact numbers, names of those authorised to collect your child, allergies and so on. This will form the basis of your child's file and ensure that all relevant information is to hand. Strict confidentiality will always be maintained.

At the time of registration a deposit is required of £100 if the child attends on a full time basis and £50 if they attend on a part time basis. This deposit is deducted from the first month's fees.



## Contact us

If you would like further information on any aspect of Happy Days or to register your child please contact us.

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