



Parents Handbook

June 2026 - May 2027

Our Mission and Purpose

Our mission is to ensure that children and young people realise their potential, improve their quality of life and participate fully within their community. Kids Together Belfast aims to support children and young people with sensory, physical and learning disabilities whose needs are not fully met at local community level.

The purpose of KTB is to give children and young people a sense of belonging, stability, acceptance and equality. We aim to build friendships and relationships, reduce social isolation and increase social interaction through safe, inclusive and meaningful play and support.

KTB is registered with and regulated by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) Early Years Team and complies with the Minimum Standards for Childminding and Day Care for Children Under Age 12. Inspection reports are available to parents/carers and are displayed within the setting. KTB's link social worker is Claire O'Dempsey.

Aims of the Programme

- Provide a safe, caring and inclusive environment for children and young people with disabilities and complex needs.
- Support play, learning, recreation, social development, wellbeing, confidence and independence.
- Promote participation and access to positive play and activities for children and young people at risk of becoming isolated or vulnerable.
- Work in partnership with parents, carers and professionals to meet children's individual and group needs.
- Promote equality, diversity, inclusion, dignity and respect.
- Support families through advice, activities, groups, training, counselling and signposting where appropriate.

Activities

Activities may include arts and crafts, drama, music, communication activities, rhyme time, team building, physical play, sensory play, cookery, rhyme/sing/sign, tabletop games, IT projects, swimming, cinema, bowling, inclusive outdoor play, social activities and seasonal programmes. Activities are adapted to children's abilities, sensory needs, communication needs and individual profiles.

Our Programmes

Group / Support	Age / Access
Rainbow Group	2-4 years
Children's Afterschools	4-11 years
Youth Afterschools	12-18 years
Children's Social Group	4-11 years
Youth Social Group	12-18 years
Youth Club	12-18 years
18+ Youth Group	18+
Children's Time-for-Me	4-11 years
Youth Time-for-Me	12-18 years
Transitional Learning Centre (TLC)	18+
Family Support Team	Parents and carers
Children and Youth Counselling	Appointment only
Parental Training and Workshops	Parents and carers
Parent/Carer Support Groups, Counselling and 12-week Mental Health and Wellbeing Programme	Parents and carers
Yearly Summer Schemes	All service users

Registration, Child Information and Confidentiality

Parents/carers are required to complete registration and consent forms before their child/young person attends KTB. In some cases, a case history form or additional care information may also be requested. This helps staff understand each child's health, disability, communication, sensory, dietary, behaviour, personal care, mobility and safety needs.

Parents/carers must keep KTB updated about any changes in contact details, emergency contacts, authorised collectors, health, medication, diet, behaviour, family circumstances or professional involvement. Information is stored securely and accessed only by staff who need it to support the child/young person safely. Information will not be shared without consent unless KTB is legally required to do so or there is a safeguarding concern.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

KTB values positive working relationships with parents and carers. Parents are encouraged to share information about their child, contribute to care planning, attend meetings where needed and participate in reviews and consultations about the service.

Staff will share information at handover and may also use phone calls, emails, Seesaw where applicable, meetings, incident/accident forms, surveys, evaluation forms and other methods when needed. Parents can request to speak privately with a Team Leader or Manager at any time.

KTB seeks parent feedback through SurveyMonkey, evaluation forms, verbal feedback, events, meetings, parent groups and the complaints process. Feedback is used to review and improve services.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

The welfare of children and young people is our highest priority. KTB creates an environment where children and young people are safe from abuse and where concerns are responded to promptly and appropriately. Staff are trained in safeguarding and must follow KTB's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and reporting procedures.

The Designated Child Protection Officers are Pamela Hughes, Anna Hughes, Orlaith Bradley, Andrea Muldoon and Megan McGlinchey. Parents will usually be informed if a safeguarding referral is made, unless doing so would place a child or young person at greater risk of harm.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

KTB provides a safe and caring environment, free from discrimination, for children, young people, parents/carers, staff and visitors. We respect different racial origins, religions, cultures, languages, family backgrounds, disabilities and abilities. We will challenge inappropriate attitudes and practices and will not tolerate discrimination, harassment or bullying.

Activities, routines, staffing, resources and the environment are adapted so that children and young people can participate safely and meaningfully. Children are supported as individuals and are not excluded because of disability, communication needs, sensory needs, medical needs, behaviour, gender, religion, culture or background.

Positive Behaviour Support and Safety Intervention

KTB promotes positive behaviour support and uses praise, redirection, visual supports, AAC systems, Makaton where appropriate, sensory input, low-arousal approaches, distraction, choice, routines and safe spaces to support children and young people.

Each child/young person is treated with respect. Staff understand that behaviour is often a form of communication and will consider triggers such as sensory distress, communication difficulty, frustration, emotional dysregulation, anxiety, change in routine, or difficulty accessing preferred items or activities.

KTB has breakaway/regulation spaces including sensory rooms, the mobile unit, movement room, immersion room and outdoor play park. If a child/young person becomes distressed or enters a behavioural crisis, staff will risk assess the safest response for the child, peers and staff. Parents/carers may be contacted if a crisis cannot be safely managed in the setting.

Restrictive practice or hands-on intervention is not used as a behaviour management strategy and would only ever be used as a last resort where there is an immediate risk of harm, in line with KTB's Safety Intervention and Restrictive Practices Policy, staff training, recording procedures and parental consent.

Behaviour by Adults

KTB will not tolerate bullying, aggressive, confrontational, threatening or discriminatory behaviour from any parent, carer, visitor, staff member or volunteer. KTB is a place of safety and security for children, young people, families and staff. KTB reserves the right to take action, including restricting access to the premises, where behaviour places others at risk or breaches policy.

Food, Drink and Dietary Needs

Children and young people may bring their own snack to meet their individual dietary, sensory, cultural, religious or medical needs. Where a child does not have a snack, KTB may offer a suitable snack such as toast/fruit and a drink.

Parents/carers must inform KTB of any allergies, intolerances, restricted diets, PEG feeding, swallowing difficulties, thickened drinks, cultural/religious dietary requirements or other food and drink needs. Children are

supervised during snack and drink times to reduce risks, including the risk of accessing another child's food or drink.

Children with dysphagia, choking risk or thickened drink requirements will be supported in line with information provided by parents/carers and relevant professionals. Thickening of drinks, where required, will be managed in line with KTB's Administration of Medication Policy and individual risk assessment/care information.

Medication

Parents/carers must tell the Manager if their child/young person is taking prescribed medication. If medication needs to be administered during a session, parents/carers must complete the required permission/medication forms in advance. Medication must be handed to staff and must not be left in a child's bag.

Medication will be stored, administered and recorded in line with KTB's Medication Administration and Storage Policy. This includes specialist products such as prescribed thickeners where applicable.

Intimate Care and Personal Care

Where children/young people require toileting, changing or intimate care support, parents/carers must provide written consent and supply any required items such as nappies/pads, wipes, barrier cream, spare clothing and personal care items. Intimate care is carried out respectfully, safely and in line with KTB's Intimate Care Policy. Records are kept where intimate care is provided.

Illness and Infection Control

KTB is unable to care for a child/young person who is unwell. If a child/young person becomes unwell during a session, parents/carers will be contacted and may be asked to collect them. Please inform KTB of any infectious illness.

If a child/young person has sickness or diarrhoea, they should not return to KTB until 48 hours after symptoms have stopped. Parents will be informed of known infections within the project while maintaining confidentiality.

Accidents, Incidents and First Aid

KTB takes precautions to keep children and young people safe. Staff are trained in first aid and first aid equipment is available on the premises. If a child/young person has an accident or incident while in our care, parents/carers will be informed and asked to sign the relevant accident or incident record. Serious accidents/incidents will be reported in line with KTB policy and regulatory requirements.

Arrival, Collection and Uncollected Children

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring children/young people arrive and are collected safely unless transport arrangements have been agreed. A register is taken when children/young people arrive and parents/carers must sign out their child/young person each day.

Children/young people will normally only be released to the people named on the registration form. If a different person is collecting, parents/carers must inform KTB in advance. KTB will not release a child/young person to anyone unknown to staff without authorisation, or to anyone under 18 years of age.

Session times, collection times, fees and subscriptions are confirmed with parents/carers at registration and may vary depending on the programme attended. If parents/carers are delayed, they must telephone the setting as soon as possible. If a child/young person remains uncollected and KTB cannot contact parents/carers or emergency contacts, KTB will follow the Uncollected Child/Young Person procedure and contact Social Care where necessary.

Settling In / Child Induction

Children/young people and parents/carers are welcome to visit the project before the first session where appropriate. During the first session, staff will support the child/young person to become familiar with routines, staff, rooms, snack times, collection arrangements and other children/young people at a pace suitable to their needs.

Outings, Photographs, CCTV and Consent

Written consent is required for outings, photographs, promotional images, emergency medical treatment, intimate care, sun cream, contact with animals, observations/checklists, CCTV areas and other consent areas listed on KTB registration forms. Parents/carers can discuss consent with staff at any time.

Complaints and Concerns

If parents/carers have a query, concern or complaint, they can speak to their child's key person, Team Leader, Manager, Operational Manager or Service Manager. KTB welcomes feedback and views complaints as an opportunity to improve services.

Complaints will be managed in line with KTB's Complaints Policy. A full copy of the Complaints Policy is displayed in the setting and available on request. Parents/carers may also contact the BHSCT Early Years Team if they have concerns about the service or wish to discuss regulatory matters. Contact details are displayed in the setting and available from management.

Pledge to Parents and Carers

We value our relationship with parents/carers and are committed to working in partnership with you to provide high-quality play, care and support. KTB will:

- welcome you to discuss our work, raise questions, have a chat or take part in activities where appropriate;
- keep you informed of opening times, fees, charges, activity programmes, snack menus and procedures;
- be consistent and reliable to help families plan with confidence;
- share and discuss your child/young person's achievements, experiences, progress and friendships;
- ask permission for outings, special events and consent-based activities;
- listen to your views and concerns to ensure we continue to meet family and service needs.

Admissions and Waiting List

KTB aims to be accessible to children, young people and families from all sections of the local community. Admission is managed in line with KTB's admissions criteria, availability, staffing levels, registration requirements, risk assessment and the ability of the service to safely and appropriately meet the child's needs.

A completed set of registration forms is required. Re-enrolment is required each year. Parents/carers will be given a date and time to attend registration and update relevant information.

Contact Details

Manager: Pamela Hughes

Kids Together Belfast, 134 Stewartstown Road, Belfast, BT11 9JQ

Email: pamela.hughes@kidstogetherbelfast.org

Telephone: 028 9061 1034

Policies and Procedures

KTB has clearly defined policies and procedures. Copies of full policies are kept at the project and are available for parents/carers to consult. Parents/carers are made aware of policies at registration and can request copies at any time.

Policy / Procedure	Policy / Procedure
Kids Together Belfast Statement of Purpose	Absence of the Manager
Accidents, Incidents and Illness Management	Additional Needs
Admissions Criteria for each group	Anti-Bullying
Anti-Fraud and Corruption	Biting and Persistent Injury
Business Continuity and Contingency/Disaster Recovery	CCTV
Complaints	Confidentiality and Sharing of Service User Information
Conflict of Interest	Consent
Consent and Operational Procedures for Outings	Counselling
Data Protection	Drivers
Education Authority Pre-School Observation, Assessment and Record Keeping	Education Authority Teaching and Learning
Emergency Evacuation/Closure	Employment
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Equal Opportunities
Financial	Fire Safety and Management
Health and Safety	Healthy Eating
Inclusion	Infection Control
Intimate Care	Lone Worker
Management of Risks Associated with the Care of Individual Service Users	Manual Handling
Medication Administration and Storage	Menu Planning
Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking	Participation
Play, Maintenance and Replacement of Play Equipment	Play Therapy
Positive Behaviour Support and Managing Challenging Behaviour	Record Keeping and Retention
Recruitment of Ex-Offenders	Reserves
Residential	Safeguarding and Child Protection
Safety Intervention and Restrictive Practices	Security of the Setting
Sickness and Holiday Protocol	Smoking, Vaping, Drugs and Alcohol
Specialist Family Support	Staff Code of Conduct
Staff Dress Code	Staff Induction
Staff Meetings	Staff Supervision and Appraisal
Staff Timekeeping and Absence	Staff Training and Development
Staff Working Time and Rotas	Transport
Use of ICT, Social Media and Mobile Devices	Volunteer
Vulnerable Adults	Whistleblowing
Working in Partnership with Parents	

