

Solas Family Resource Centre

Play Therapy Waiting List & Parent Engagement Policy *Adolescent & Child Therapy*



1. Purpose

This policy outlines how Solas Family Resource Centre manages referrals, waiting lists, and communication with parents/guardians seeking play therapy services. It aims to ensure fairness, transparency, and consistency while maintaining a respectful and supportive environment for all families.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All parents/guardians seeking play therapy services for their children
- All staff involved in intake, assessment, and delivery of play therapy services

3. Guiding Principles

Solas Family Resource Centre is committed to:

- Providing equitable access to services
- Maintaining professional boundaries
- Communicating clearly and respectfully
- Prioritising children based on assessed need and available resources
- Supporting families while managing limited service capacity



4. Referral and Waiting List Process

4.1 Referral Intake

- Referrals may be accepted through designated channels only (e.g., phone, email, or referral form).
- All required information must be completed before a child is added to the waiting list.

4.2 Assessment of Need

- Placement on the waiting list does not guarantee immediate access to services.
- Cases may be prioritised based on clinical need, risk factors, and available resources.

4.3 Waiting List Management

- The waiting list is managed by designated staff and operates on a combination of priority need and date of referral.
- Estimated waiting times may be provided but cannot be guaranteed.
- Staff cannot alter waiting list positions based on pressure, repeated requests, or personal circumstances unless reassessed clinically.

5. Communication with Parents/Guardians

5.1 Respectful Engagement

- Staff will communicate in a respectful, clear, and professional manner at all times.
- Parents/guardians are expected to engage respectfully with staff.

5.2 Updates and Enquiries

- Parents may request updates at reasonable intervals (e.g., every 6–8 weeks).
- Due to high demand, frequent or repeated contact will not expedite placement.

5.3 Consistency of Information

- Information provided by staff reflects current policy and service capacity.
- Individual arrangements or exceptions cannot be made outside of this policy.
- It is not possible for families to select, request, or negotiate specific appointment times outside of those offered.
- If the offered time is not suitable, families may choose to remain on the waiting list for a future slot; however, no guarantee can be given regarding alternative availability.

6. Managing Expectations

- Play therapy is a limited resource with high demand.
- Placement is not determined by urgency expressed by parents alone, but by assessed need.
- Staff cannot alter waiting list positions based on pressure, repeated requests, or personal circumstances unless reassessed clinically.

7. Appointment Scheduling and Availability

- Appointments are offered based on the availability of therapists, rooms, and service capacity.
- Families must adhere to the days and times provided by the centre.

8. Therapeutic Provision Guidelines

- Play therapy is provided on an individual basis.
- Therapists can only work with one child at a time.
- A signature is required by both legal guardians.
- Therapists can only work with one child per family.
- Only one child per family will be seen at any one time. Other children will remain on the waiting list until the previous child has completed therapy.
- Each child must be referred separately and will be considered individually based on need and service capacity.

9. Duration of Service and Discharge

- Play therapy intervention is time limited.
- A child may receive a maximum of 30 sessions.
- Once the allocated sessions have been completed, the therapeutic work will come to an end and the child will be discharged from the service.
- Children who have completed their allocation of sessions will not be re-referred or taken back into the play therapy service at a later date.
- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to seek any additional or ongoing supports required following discharge.
- Where possible, staff may provide information on alternative services at the point of discharge.

10. Boundaries and Behaviour

10.1 Staff Boundaries

- Staff will not engage in negotiations outside of established procedures.
- Staff cannot accept demands to change policies, bypass the waiting list, or prioritise without appropriate assessment.

10.2 Unacceptable Behaviour

- Aggressive, abusive, or inappropriate behaviour toward staff will not be tolerated.
- Continued inappropriate behaviour may result in restricted communication methods or, in extreme cases, removal from the waiting list following review.

11. Alternative Support

- Where possible, staff will provide information on alternative services or supports available while families are waiting.
- Parents are encouraged to explore additional supports during the waiting period.

12. Review and Removal from Waiting List

- Families may be contacted periodically to confirm continued interest.
- Failure to respond within a specified timeframe may result in removal from the waiting list.
- Families may request removal at any time.

13. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it reflects best practice and service capacity.

14. Contact

For queries regarding this policy or the waiting list, please contact:



info@solasfrc.ie