

1 ADMISSIONS, WAITING LIST & PAYMENT POLICY

STATEMENT

Admissions are made to ensure that each setting operates to as near full capacity as possible, as set out by Ofsted registrations.

Admissions are made at the discretion of the management but places are available to everyone in the community who require day care, before & after school care, holiday club or wraparound care for their children, whilst they are, primarily, at work. Admissions are available all year round without reference to ability or aptitude.

Nursery places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis and can be booked in advance. All funded sessions are now in line with the flexible arrangement as specified by the Government. When you register your child for their funded place we will discuss your needs, and as far as possible with availability and staffing arrangements we will accommodate your wishes.

We operate an inclusion and equality policy and ensure that all children have access to nursery places and services irrespective of their gender, race, disability, religion or belief or sexual orientation of parents.

Implementation of the policy in the Nursery:

The Manager must ensure that:

- New members of staff, including students and volunteers, must read and adhere to the Admission and Payment Policy.
- Parents/carers are aware of the Admission and Payment Policy.
- All the adults who care for the children understand the Safeguarding and Welfare requirements relating to the Early Years Foundation Stage document.
- All staff, students and volunteers are involved in the implementation of the policy.

1. Enrolment Procedure

Parents/carers wishing to apply for a Nursery place should contact the nursery manager or deputy manager via our website or by telephone or by email. Enrollment can also be arranged in person during a nursery tour.

Once a visit has taken place and an interest is expressed, applications for a place must be made via the Registration Form & Parental Agreement, which can be given during the visit or emailed. One form per child will be required. A copy of the child's birth certificate or passport should be provided with the application form, A Non-returnable Registration Fee will become payable when the form is handed in. This fee is still payable to be placed on

the Waiting List. The fee should not be payable by families taking up a government funded (NIL COST) place and taking no settling visits or additional hours outside of the funded entitlement, settling visits may only then be taken during the funded hours themselves but this fee will be returned once attendance starts.

If a space is postponed the registration fee will be kept by the nursery but if a space cannot be offered the registration fee will be refunded.

On receipt of the registration form, the Nursery Manager will add your child to the waiting register and a letter of acknowledgement will be sent to you by the Nursery Administrator. If an immediate placement is available (if requested) then the Nursery Manager or a member of the Management team will contact you directly to offer the placement, subject to a signed contract.

The completion of a Registration Form does not in itself guarantee an offer of a place, as this will be decided by the available places that we have on offer at that time. Place allocation is a complex matter and some sessions have limited availability which is dependent on the number of full time equivalent places being taken up. All parents have the same right to access our NIL COST sessions and these will be allocated in line with the rules below.

If there are more applications than places available then places will be allocated by the Manager firstly to those who have completed the relevant forms and paid their fee (on a date received basis). Full-time places will take priority over part-time or term-time places and sibling places. Employees' children will be considered on the same basis. Where a place cannot be found then children will be placed on a Waiting List.

All new registrations will be acknowledged and the details will be entered onto our database. Child Visit & Starting Procedures will then be followed.

When a place has been confirmed then the child or children will be booked into the base room for their settling visits as per the agreed schedule. These will preferably take place in the weeks immediately before starting. In emergency admissions then these settling visits may need to be altered to accommodate the child's and parent's needs.

Each key person will introduce themselves to the parent/carer(s). Prior and during the settling visits the child's Key Person will assemble all relevant information including Permissions Forms and All About Me information in order to assist us in getting to know the individual children. The first Invoice is usually also presented by hand or via email during the settling visits, ready for payment when the child starts. Key Persons should check with the Manager that payment has been received.

Once a child has started, daily feed back to the parents is made via the key person and through the Daily Diary or Tapestry and this is continued throughout the nursery. The child should be entered onto the electronic learning system and observations begun straight away.

The Management Team will provide the agreed childcare facilities for your child at the agreed times (subject to any days when your child's nursery is closed). If we change the opening hours, we will give you as much notice of our decision as possible and if necessary, work with you to agree a change to your child's hours at the Nursery .

The Management Team will notify you as soon as possible of any days on which your child's nursery will be closed; and try to make available to any of your other children a place, however we cannot guarantee that a place will be available.

2. Waiting List Criteria

Children will remain on the Waiting List until a place becomes available. If we cannot find a place in the timescale required then Registration Fees will be returned.

3. Parental Responsibility

Parents must complete all relevant forms during your child's initial induction before your child can be left unaccompanied at the Nursery. The Nursery must be informed immediately of any changes to the information you have provided:

- Name, address, date of birth, sex, ethnic origin and religion of the child;
- Dietary requirements and allergies
- Name, home address and place of work (including respective telephone numbers) of parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child;
- The person who is responsible for paying nursery fees and their contact details
- Name address and telephone number of doctor and health visitor of the child;
- State of immunisation and infectious diseases suffered by the child and other relevant information on the child's health; for example; allergies;
- Consent (or otherwise) to prescribe medication being administered to the child by nursery staff, if required;
- Consent (or otherwise) to the child receiving emergency medical treatment from senior nursery team, if required;
- Consent (or otherwise) to the child being taken out of the nursery premises (for occasional exercise, excursions etc.) by nursery staff;
- Names of persons authorised to collect the child from the nursery.

You must keep us informed as to the identity of the persons who will be collecting your child from the Nursery . If the person collecting your child is not usually responsible for collecting them we will require proof of identity and password. If we are not satisfied that an individual is allowed to collect your child, we will not release your child into their care.

You must inform us if your child is the subject of a court order and provide us with a copy of such an order on request.

You must immediately inform us if you are unable to collect your child from the Nursery by the official collection time.

You must inform us in advance of any dates in which your child will not be attending the Nursery . You must provide us with at least one month's notice of your intention to decrease the number of hours your child spends at the nursery, this also applies in cases where you intend to withdraw your child from the Nursery , to which you would be ending this agreement. Where insufficient notice is given, you will be responsible for the full fees of your child for one month from that date, as if the hours had not decreased.

You must immediately inform us if your child is suffering from any contagious disease. For the benefit of the other children in the Nursery , you must not allow your child to attend the Nursery if they are suffering from a contagious disease which could easily be passed on to another child during normal daily activities of the Nursery .

4. Basic Fee Structure is available from the Nursery

5. Nursery Payment Schedule

These fees are normally subject to a regular review but may be revised at other times with reasonable notice.

The 2-3 and 3-4 year rate applies from the month following your child's second or third birthday.

An administration fee of £100 per family is charged when a place is booked at the Nursery. **If accessing Nil Cost sessions this is refundable once sessions have started.**

If you decide to postpone your start date or decide not to take up the place offered, the administration fee will not be refunded.

If we cannot offer you the required session we shall refund your registration fee

The Nursery fees are based on a daily fee, which will be notified to you in advance of your child starting at the nursery. Fees must be paid on a monthly basis, in advance, by the 1st of each calendar month. We may review these at any time but shall inform you of the revised fee, you may end this agreement by giving us one month's notice in writing.

All payments under this agreement must be by standing order, cheque, cash or vouchers. If payment is made by cash it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure they receive a receipt as proof of payment from the senior nursery team.

The Management Team will try and accommodate any request made for additional sessions of childcare; extra sessions can only be accepted up to 2 weeks in advance,

however this will not be granted if there is an outstanding balance on your account and we cannot guarantee availability..

If you have requested additional sessions or have been unable to collect your child by the official collection time and we have, as a result, provided you with additional childcare facilities we will charge you for the additional childcare monthly in arrears.

The Management Team will issue reminders where fees are overdue. We may ask you to withdraw your child from the Nursery if you have failed to pay your fees within the agreed payment timescale, when payment is received your child may return to the nursery. If payment is still not received, this will result in the permanent loss of the child's place. If no attempt is made to pay outstanding fees legal action will be taken in order to recover any monies owed.

6. Sibling Discount

We do not offer a sibling discount.

7. Flexible Funded Childcare and Education Offer

"Government funding is intended to deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality, flexible childcare. It is not intended to cover the costs of meals, other consumables, additional hours or optional activities. Providers can charge for meals and snacks, consumables and optional activities as part of the free entitlement delivery, as long as parents are not required to pay as a condition of taking up their child's free entitlement place. Where parents choose to purchase additional hours of provision or optional activities, this is a private matter between the provider and the parent" Operational Guidance April 2017

Children may access some or all of their funded entitlement with us. Children attending 2 settings will have their 15/30 hours split between the settings. The decision about which hours go to which setting is not always the choice of the parent and does vary by Local Authority. We will advise of our understanding of this if you choose to make such a split and once we know the other settings involved. Information about other settings must be provided by the parent at the time of booking.

We do not have a specific number of places we allocate at NIL COST but we have to ensure that we balance our staffing with our numbers and overall attendance patterns, therefore this means we may not always have the session you require but may be able to offer you alternative attendance patterns which are not NIL COST.

Funded hours are available for eligible families for children the term after they turn 9 months (see government criteria on their website), either with or without additional hours. Our only other charges are an optional amount per day as detailed in our fee structure,

for the basic entitlement which includes a snack or meal dependent on session time. Hours can be taken from our standard session times over a minimum of 2 or 3 days and we will adjust your bill accordingly. Please note though that if attending for funded only hours, this attendance pattern may be changed once the 3 yr entitlement starts, as our spaces in our Preschool rooms are managed term by term. Although we aim to offer continuity of care for your child at all times and would endeavour to find them a suitable place.

At the age of 3 years your child is eligible for the universal 570 hours of funded education which we offer either as an enhanced stretched offer or during term-times. Our various sessions are shown in our Fees Lists and where parents choose to access an Enhanced Offer, over and above the basic government funded provision, then there is an additional charge that covers these additional services. These services include, but are not limited to, snacks, lunches, trips outside the nursery, visitor activities, tea parties, graduations and other gifts. You are not obliged to take up these additional services and you can access your funded only hours at NIL COST as shown in the Fees List. Any additional hours outside our funded delivery are charged for but if you are attending all year round then we ensure your funded entitlement is accounted for on your invoice as a numerical sum. This sum equates to your 'free' entitlement from the government and the balance relates to the fees for your remaining childcare, as shown in the Fees List.

A further 570 hours of extended entitlement childcare are available for eligible families. The eligibility criteria for this is available on the government website. It is the parent/carer's responsibility to check their eligibility through HMRC and they must provide an eligibility code to ourselves for checking with the Local Authority prior to being able to take up the extended offer. We only offer our '30 hours' as 1140 hours stretched over 51 weeks of the year, giving an average of 22.35 hours per week. We are able to offer places at NIL COST, as shown in our Fees List, subject to availability. We do not offer 30 hour places over Term-time only. Please see our Admissions Criteria for further information. Where you choose to attend all year round then your total funding entitlement will be accounted for on your invoice and shown as a numerical sum against your usual fees. This sum equates to your 'free' entitlement from the government and the balance relates to the fees for your remaining childcare.

Should your eligibility for 30 hours change then the company reserves the right to offer you an alternative place based on the Universal Entitlement as places are allocated dependent on the total number of hours in the settings. We will always endeavour to ensure continuity of care for your child in order to support their remaining with the setting but we have to balance our staffing with our overall attendance patterns.

Grace Periods have been put in place to support families where their circumstances and therefore their eligibility might change. These are:

Validity end date:	LA audit date:	Grace Period End date:
1 Jan - 10 February	11 February	31 March
11 Feb - 31 March	1 April	31 August

1 April - 26 May	27 May	31 August
27 May - 31 August	1 September	31 December
1 September - 21 October	22 October	31 December
22 October - 31 December	1 January	31 March

Complaints Procedure for the Government Funded Entitlement

If you consider that your funded place has not been provided correctly, or the terms of your contract have not been fully explained, then you should make a complaint, initially in writing to the Manager of your setting, who will either handle this directly or pass along to her senior for a response. If you still do not get a satisfactory answer to your complaint within 2 weeks, then you may copy your complaint directly to the Owner through admin@littlestelf.co.uk and you will receive a response within 2 weeks of it being received there.

If you still consider the complaint has not been dealt with satisfactorily then you may contact the Local Authority in which the setting operates and follow their complaints procedure. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to ensure we are delivering our funded hours within the national guidelines and whilst we might not offer our funding in the way you might like to access it, the Local Authority can help you in finding a setting that might better suit your needs, if this is the cause of your complaint.

Ofsted are not concerned with, or have time to deal with, issues relating to funding or fee charges that are made for children. Their responsibilities lie clearly with the regulation and inspection of the welfare and safeguarding requirements and the children's learning and development.

Any other complaints about funding should be made directly to the Department for Education via gov.uk or your local MP.

A parent is not required to pay any fees for this **free** entitlement. A £100 registration fee is required to secure a space but this is refundable for families accessing a NIL COST session.

Each parent should receive a written bill clearly showing the services being charged for and the hours they have received free of charge for early learning and childcare

Note: The Nursery is also registered for 2 year old funding.

8. Charging for non-funded hours or other services

Extra hours (either due to parental choice or for additional hours over the free weekly entitlement) will be charged at the normal rates for 3 & 4 year olds.

The charge will not be calculated as the difference between the normal rate charged per hour and the amount paid by the County Council.

9. Working families tax credit

Working Tax Credit is an in-work tax credit for families, which includes an element to support the costs of registered or approved childcare for working parents.

For further information please visit the government website

<https://www.gov.uk/working-tax-credit>

10. Childcare Vouchers

Tax Free childcare is available through the government website

<https://www.gov.uk/working-tax-credit>

Other Workplace Benefit Schemes are available to help you save money. Childcare Vouchers could be available through your employer. These vouchers are exempt from Tax & National Insurance Contributions. This means both employees and employers make tax savings. Employees should approach their employers about joining their scheme. Childcare Vouchers can be used to pay for their child's hours or sessions. More information about the Workplace Benefit Scheme can be found here

<https://www.workplace-nursery.net/>

For more information please visit <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>:

The Family Information Service (FIS)

Telephone: 0345 60 80 192

Email:

11. Bank Holidays and Planned Holidays

The nursery is open for 51 weeks a year except during bank holidays. No refunds will be given for the bank holiday closures, as this will already have been taken into account when calculating your child's fees.

No refunds will be given for periods where your child's Nursery place is vacant due to illness or holidays.

12. Notice of Absence

Parents/carers must inform the Management team by 10:00am if their child is not attending the Nursery on that day. If a child is missing from a session without prior

notification the nursery will assume there are mitigating circumstances and will make every effort to contact the parents/carers and/or emergency contacts.

13. Termination of the Child's Registration

You may end your child's registration at any time, giving us at least two month's calendar notice where you are required to continue paying full nursery fees throughout that period.

We may immediately terminate your child's registration if you fail to pay your fees.

We reserve the right to terminate a child's registration where the nursery deems the child's actions to be detrimental to other children. A period of four weeks' notice will be given, where possible.

We reserve the right to suspend a child's registration, where the Nursery deems the child's actions to be detrimental to other children. The withdrawal shall continue whilst we try to address the problem with the child's parents. A period of four weeks will be given, where possible.

14. Removal of a Parent, Carer or Visitor

We reserve the right to ask a parent/carers or visitor to leave the premises if they are found to be causing offence to anyone on the Nursery 's premises. If this action occurs persistently the nursery reserves the right to terminate the child's place at any time.

For further detailed information - refer to 'Suspension and Exclusions Policy'

Signed by manager(s) _____

Date _____

Review of Policy

This policy is reviewed annually

Date of Review: