

Admissions

Policy Statement

It is our intention to make our playgroup accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community. We aim to ensure that all sections of our community have access to the playgroup through open, fair and clearly communicated procedures, and accessible information.

We offer the following Free Early Years Entitlement:

- Funded two's entitlement (15 hours per week, 570 hours per year), both 'targeted' and 'working families' (from April 2024).
- 3-4 year olds Universal entitlement (15 hours per week, 570 hours per year).
- Extended entitlement (the additional 15 hours, 570 hours per year, available for entitled families).

Procedures

- We ensure that the existence of our playgroup is widely advertised in places accessible to all sections of the community.
- We ensure that information about our playgroup is accessible, in written and spoken form. Where necessary, we will seek advice from the Early Years Alliance or other relevant specialists in order to provide information in other formats and languages.
- Children are eligible for a place at the playgroup from the age of 2 until they enter school. They are entered on the waiting list upon receipt by the Administrator of a completed Registration Form.

Place Availability

- We cap the number of children on our roll in line with the number of available Key Children spaces, which is subject to change dependent on our staffing situation, but may be up to 44.
- We cap the number of children in setting and attending at 24 a day.
- We further may choose to cap our numbers of children as follows:
 - We may only allow up to 24 children in the school year group in which the children will be turning 4 years old;
 - We may only allow up to 20 children in the school year group in which the children will be turning 3 years old;
 - We may only allow up to 6 children in the school year group in which the children will be turning 2 years old (and only after those children have reached 2 years of age).
- We reserve the right to alter the number of children accepted onto each year group, upwards or downwards, at any time and at the absolute discretion of the playgroup Committee.
- We arrange our waiting list into the 3 school year groups above. We primarily accept children into the setting in the order they are available to start at the playgroup and when they were placed on the waiting list, this may or may not depend on and be in relation to being within the year group caps set out above. In addition, allocation of places may take into account the following:
 - the vicinity of the home to the playgroup; and
 - siblings already attending the playgroup or primary schools in Linton.
 - the capacity of the setting to meet the individual needs of the child
- We do not explicitly limit places for funded 2 year olds. However, we do need to ensure that we have sufficient staff to meet the required child:staff ratios and admission is subject to year group caps.
- We do not explicitly limit places for the Universal and Extended entitlement and these places are available in all sessions on all days. However, as above this will be dependent on staff numbers and staff:child ratios and will be subject to year group caps.
- For children attending the playgroup from September 2023 onwards, we will be asking families with 15 hours funding (2 year olds or from the term after a child is 3) to use these hours within 3 days at the playgroup, we will not be able to accommodate 4 or 5 mornings only. This is subject to change if required and will be at the absolute discretion of the committee. Non-funded children also may be asked to take their hours over 3 days, depending on the playgroup's circumstances and at the discretion of the committee.
- All funded hours will be expected to be taken in a set pre-booked pattern that cannot exceed eligible weekly or termly allowances. We cannot facilitate ad hoc extra funded hours in playgroup, even where eligible hours are available, as we may not have the capacity to accommodate this for every family due to the number of children on roll.
- Parents/carers are not required to pay the snack charge as a condition of taking up their child's free entitlement place. The snack charge can be removed from a child's invoice at the parent/carers request. A late payment fee will not be charged if we don't receive the payment (because it is voluntary). The current amount for snack per morning is on our website, and on each invoice, and is subject to change on review of fees.

- We ask for a Registration/Administration Fee (currently £20, but subject to change) on acceptance of a place unless a child is fully funded on starting at the playgroup. This is a non-refundable fee, separate to childcare fees.
- By accepting a place at playgroup parents/carers do so with the understanding that a cancellation fee will apply if they choose to withdraw their place, usually a half term's fees per the child's reserved hours, or equivalent funding hours.
- All Admission forms must be signed and returned to us as requested before a child can start at the playgroup.
- If information is provided by the parents/carers that a child who is starting at the setting is currently, or has had involvement with social care, the Designated Person will contact the agency to seek further clarification.
- We describe our playgroup and its practices in terms that make it clear that it welcomes both fathers and mothers, other relations and other carers, including childminders.
- We describe our playgroup and its practices in terms of how it treats each child and their family, having regard to their needs arising from their gender, family structure, special educational needs, disabilities, social background, religion, ethnicity, or from competence in spoken English/English being a newly acquired additional language.
- We describe our playgroup and its practices in terms of how it enables children and/or parents/carers with disabilities to take part in the life of the playgroup.
- Children with disabilities are supported to take full part in all activities within the setting, and the setting aims to make reasonable adjustments so this should be the case.
- We record the gender and ethnic background of children joining the group to enable us to ensure that our intake is representative of social diversity.
- We make our Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality Policy widely known.
- We aim to be flexible about attendance patterns wherever possible, to accommodate the needs of individual children and families, providing these do not disrupt the pattern of continuity in the playgroup that provides stability for all the children. We ask for notice to be given for changing hours. This is at the discretion of the Pre-school Leader and will be limited to be within the attendance/daily caps.
- We require to be informed of any changes of hours prior to the end of each half term/end of term. Any changes will have to start from the beginning of the following half term/new term, and will be charged as such.
- We require notice of at least one half term to be given for cancellation of a place.
- Failure to comply with our policies and procedures may result in the provision of a place being withdrawn.

Children with SEND

- The manager will seek to determine an accurate assessment of a child's needs at Registration. If the child's needs cannot be met from within the setting's core budget, then an application for SEN inclusion funding will be made as soon as possible.
- Children with identified SEND will be offered a place when one becomes available as with any other child. However, the start date for children with more complex SEND will be determined by the preparations made to ensure the child's safety, well-being and accessibility in the setting. If a child's needs determine that adjustments need to be made, the manager will outline a realistic timeframe for completion, detailing the nature of adjustments e.g. risk assessment, staff training, health care plan and all other adjustments required. The child's safety at all times is paramount.
- At the time of Registration, the manager will check to see if a child's family is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, if so, the manager will ask for evidence to enable them to claim the Disability Access Fund directly from the local authority. If the family is eligible but not in receipt of the allowance, the manager will support the family in their application. More information can be found at www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children/how-to-claim.
- Preparation for admitting a child with SEND will be made in a reasonable amount of time and any delay in the child starting would be evaluated by the setting manager to avoid discrimination and negative impact on the child and family. During a preparation period the family and relevant agencies and the local authority will be updated as regularly as possible on the progress of the preparations.

Further Guidance

Early Years Entitlements: Operational guidance for local authorities and providers (DfE 2018)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718181/Early_years_entitlements-operational_guidance.pdf

Policy adopted: September 2017

Last reviewed: February 2024

Signed:

Name: Kerri Westlake

Position: Chair