



ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Introduction

It is our intention to make our pre-school 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 our setting through open, fair and clearly communicated procedures.

Our admissions policy is inclusive and we welcome children regardless of their gender, special educational needs, disabilities, background, religion, ethnicity, lifestyles and families who have English as their second language. We will liaise fully with parents and professionals to ensure that it would be in the child's best interests to attend the setting.

Policy/Procedure

We welcome and encourage all families in the community with children from the ages of 2 to 11 years.

We will take children when they reach 2 years of age, dependent on the availability of space.

We are flexible about attendance patterns and wherever possible accommodate the needs of individual children and families.

Due to the Admissions Policies of the local schools, where children start school in the Autumn Term following their fourth birthday, most children will start with us during the Autumn term (September to December). We are unable to keep places open or hold places for those children who have a Spring or Summer birthday. However, should places be available they will be offered, although session requested by the parent may be different to those we can allocate due to availability. We will then endeavour to offer the sessions of parental choice in the following Autumn term/academic year.

Children must attend for a minimum of 2 sessions per week, and these sessions are 3 hours long. We recommend that younger children should start with 2 or 3 sessions per week but may increase this to 4 or 5 when parents and staff feel that the child is ready and able to benefit from more sessions, subject to availability of places.

We will require registration of each child via a registration form. This will be available on our website or direct from the setting. The registration will be subject to a registration fee. For details of our fees refer to our Fees and Pricing Policy.

On receipt of registration confirmation will be sent to the parent/carer. Within 9 months of the anticipated start date, if September, and no later than 3 months before the anticipated start date if later, we will confirm any placement and sessions available. This is so that we can offer flexible sessions with the aim to meet the needs of each individual child and parent.



When a child is registered, the registration will be receipted by number, and placed in strict order of receipt, if the start date is the first term of the school year (September). Registrations where the anticipated start date does not fall in September will be receipted in anticipated start date, and then date received. Preference may be given to registrations where there is an immediate start date required, over registrations with a later anticipated start date, but not where an offer has already been made.

Registrations with a start date from January to April will be reviewed within the 2 months prior to start date.

It may be likely that children registered to start later in the school year, particularly during the Summer Term, may have to be waitlisted if a place is not available.

Preference will be given to siblings if another sibling is also in setting, where possible, but this will be subject to availability at anticipated start date.

Prior to any offer being given to new registrations for the academic year, existing parents whose children are already in setting, will be asked to confirm any changes they require to their sessions for September first. This will also include any additional funded sessions they may be entitled to for the Autumn term. Existing children who will qualify for funding for Spring and Summer terms will be offered additional sessions, subject to availability, in the term prior to qualification and therefore these cannot always be guaranteed. Stepping Stones cannot be held responsible for not being able to fulfil the total weekly parental entitlement for funded sessions.

Funding grants for the 15 hours free funding per week offered by the Government are available for children who are already 3 and 4 years old, or for children from the age of 2 who may be in receipt of certain benefits. Funding terms are in September, January and April. Funding can be used across two childcare providers and across counties, but must be taken over a minimum no of days. If a child is to leave our setting, or to change the number of sessions attended, parents are required to give at least 1 months' notice. Fees will be payable (or grant claimed by us), until any leaving date or end of funding term. If we cannot offer 15 hours of free entitlement to a child this will be communicated in writing to the parent/carer with reasons why with a copy of the right to appeal process. We will accept children who wish to move from other settings, mid-term, although we are not obliged to accept a child if a place is not available.

No more than 48 children in total will attend the setting each session time. Sessions times are: Breakfast Club 07.45am-9.00am, Morning 09.00am-12.00 noon, Afternoon 12.00 noon-3.00pm and Afterschool 3.00pm-6.00pm. For holiday club this will be various sessions between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm.



The setting aims to support the childcare needs of its staff where possible. Therefore staff may enrol their children so long as it does not compromise the effectiveness of the member of staff running the session.

Parents/carers are encouraged to visit with their child shortly before admission is due, and should be prepared to stay with their child if necessary for the first session or two. We operate a flexible admissions procedure and where appropriate a child may attend for brief periods at first; gradually building up to a full session. As part of this process we welcome integral family members important to the child.

Our equal opportunities policy is available on the website and a copy is sent out to each parent/carer in their welcome pack.

We actively promote Stepping Stones at community events in the town such as the Brackley Carnival, and mother and baby fairs and groups. A good working relationship is also maintained with the local Sure Start Centre. This gives us the opportunity to be accessible to all sections of the community. We also have open days which are advertised locally in Doctor's Surgeries, Schools and children's groups, and Brackley Leisure Centre.

Parents will be required to pay a registration fee, unless they are only accessing their free entitlement hours provided by the government – details of which are included in our Fees and Pricing Policy.

Parents who are offered a place, and subsequently defer their start date, will be subject to re-assignment of registration based on the new start date.