

Parent Contract & Terms and Conditions

Admission: It is the intention of the Pre-school to make our provision accessible to children and families from all sections of the community. Our admissions policy operates in conjunction with our Promoting Equality of Opportunity Policy to ensure that is applied in a fair and unbiased manner. Children may attend the Pre-school when they reach 3 months of age and can remain with us until they attend primary school.

Admission Fee: Once you have decided to send your child to the Pre-school, you will be required to complete and sign an Admission Form and a signed Parent Contract and Terms and Conditions. Applications must be accompanied by a £60 Admission fee, unless your child will be accessing a fully-funded only place at the point of admission to the pre-school. As part of the admission fee a polo shirt or sweatshirt and rucksack will be provided to your child when they start. Additional uniform items can be purchased upon request.

In the event that a pre-school place is not immediately available, then your child's name will be placed on the waiting list. For our September intake the waiting list will be followed in strict order of receiving your child's Admission form. The Admission fee is non-refundable if the place request is withdrawn for any reason. In the case of a place not being available the Admission fee will be refunded.

Attendance: We are flexible about attendance patterns to accommodate the needs of individual children and families, but ask that children attend for a minimum of two sessions per week. This is to ensure that children benefit from continuity and stability in their learning environment. If you wish to increase the number of sessions your child attends, you must notify the Pre-school by email and you will be advised as to the availability.

Opening Hours: Morning sessions run Monday to Friday: 9.00am to 1.00pm. Afternoon sessions run Monday to Friday: 1.00pm to 4.00pm. The Pre-school is open for 38 weeks per year, term time only. This means that the Pre-school is closed on all bank holidays and local authority school holiday dates.

Staff Training: For up to 3 days per academic year the Pre-school will be closed for staff continuous professional development training.

Local Authority Early Education Entitlement: The Pre-school offers the Early Education Entitlement following the guidelines of the Essex Provider Contract and Handbook. We accept 15 hours and 30 hours of Early Education Entitlement for eligible 2, 3 and 4 year olds. If your child is not eligible for the Early Education Entitlement our standard charge rate will apply.

Once your child is eligible for the Early Education Entitlement, you will need to complete a Parent Agreement Form every term, stating the exact number of hours per week that your child will be attending.

Where a parental contract has been signed agreeing to take the Early Education Entitlement, the Pre-school will secure funding for a full term, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Once you have signed a contract of attendance, you will not be able to transfer the Early Education Entitlement payment to another provider during the same term unless agreed by Play to Learn Head Office.

If the Local Authority refuses to pay the Early Education Entitlement because you are no longer eligible for either 15 hour or 30 hour funding or because you have over claimed, then you will become liable and the Pre-school will charge the fees to you directly.

Child's Birth Certificate: All children in receipt of the Early Education Entitlement are required to provide the original birth certificate for verification. We will be unable to claim funding on your behalf if we do not hold the certificate number and date of issue. We request this information at point of entry to the pre-school.

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Fees and Payments: Our Pre-School fees are set at a competitive level in order to maintain a sustainable and well equipped setting. Additional hours not covered by the Early Education Entitlement are charged at our standard rate. Any combination of attendance can be requested. A full list of charges can be found on the Pre-school website and are also available from the Pre-school Finance team. We accept Childcare Vouchers and Tax free Childcare payments.

Fees are due every term in advance and payment should be made within 28 days of receipt of the invoice and by the payment due date shown. Late payments will incur an automatic fee of £50. Fees can be paid via bank transfer, childcare voucher schemes or tax free childcare. Other payment methods can only be used with prior agreement by the Finance team and will be subject to an additional charge due to bank processing charges incurred by the Pre-school.

Fees are payable by the parents/guardians, individually and/or jointly, who have signed and returned the Admissions Form, Parent Contract and Terms and Conditions.

Fees are reviewed annually and are subject to change. We will provide written notice of at least one term if fees are to be increased for any reason.

Absences: All fees are payable in advance for all sessions booked. No refunds will be made if your child is absent from the Pre-school, even if the absence is due to illness, holidays or other such reason.

Non-Payment of Fees: In the unlikely and unfortunate event that payment is not received, or if fees are not paid as agreed, or if payment is not forthcoming by a particular date the Pre-school reserves the right to terminate and/or amend this contract with immediate effect and withdraw the child's place. The Pre-school also reserves the right to pursue non-payment of fees in the small claims court.

We appreciate that if a family is experiencing financial difficulty, it may be hard to make full payment in one instalment. In such situations, and on a case-by-case basis, the Pre-school Head Office will consider payment in instalments.

Unpaid Cheque Fee: In the event of a cheque being returned to the Pre-school account marked as unpaid, we will contact the parent or guardian of the child concerned and ask for an alternative payment to be made. Any charges that have been passed onto us by our bank will be included.

Late Collection Charge: You are required to inform the Pre-school as early as possible if you are going to be late collecting your child. This is to ensure that sufficient staff cover can be arranged. If a child remains uncollected 15 minutes after the standard finish time of a session, the Pre-school reserves the right to charge a late collection fee until the child is collected. Late collection charges will be invoiced and require immediate payment.

Termination or Cancellation: If you wish to remove a child from the Pre-school parents/guardians are required to give at least a term's notice in writing. In lieu of notice parents/guardians will be liable for 6 weeks fees. If you want to reduce the number of sessions attended, parents/guardians must give at least a term's notice of the change in writing. Fees will be payable (or Early Education Entitlement maybe by us), until the date, whether your child attends the Pre-school or not. Any postponements of the agreed start date for your child will require one calendar month's written notice, failing which fees will be charged from the original start date.

Removal: In extreme cases, and as a last resort, we may require you to permanently withdraw your child from the Pre-school on grounds of a child's disruptive or inappropriate behaviour if it is in the best interests of your child and/or other children who attend the setting. We will consult with you before making such a decision.

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Liability: The Pre-school accepts no liability for any pecuniary or other loss suffered by you arising directly or indirectly as a result of the Pre-school being temporarily closed or the non-admittance of a child to the Pre-school for any reason.

Property and Belongings: The Pre-school cannot be held responsible for the loss or damage to children's property unless damage is caused due to the negligence of our staff. Every reasonable effort will be made by the staff to ensure that children's belongings are not lost or damaged. Parents should supply sufficient, practical clothing, labelled with your child's full name, for your child's daily needs.

Pre-School Closure: On occasion there may be circumstances beyond our control (for instance weather conditions, flooding, medical emergencies) that means the decision has to be taken to close the Pre-school. The Pre-school is obliged on these occasions to pay the staff and the Pre-school reserves the right to charge for any session which your child would have attended, if the Pre-school had not been closed due to circumstances beyond its control.

Visits/Trips: These will be charged separately and the Pre-school will be closed on these occasions. Parents/Guardians are expected to accompany their child/ren on visits or trips to places of interest. There will be no refund of fees for the sessions that would have taken place that day.

Disclosures: The Pre-school needs to be informed about any medical and non-medical condition, health problem, allergy or suspected learning difficulty affecting your child. We also need to be informed of any family circumstances or court order that may affect your child whilst in our care. Please ensure that such information is disclosed on your child's Pre-school enrolment form. In addition, you are required to inform the Pre-school in writing of any changes to the information held by us (e.g. changes to emergency contacts, allergies, medical conditions).

Child Illness: In order to control the spread of infection the Pre-school reserves the right to contact you to ask that you collect your child if they appear unwell during the day, or to contact an emergency contact (as stated in the Enrolment form) to collect on your behalf. It is our policy that unwell children need to be at home in order to recover from illness; this includes both infectious and non-infectious illness. All parents are required to inform the Pre-school if their child has been unwell over the weekend or overnight before a session and if the child has been given medication.

Security: Under no circumstances will a child be allowed to leave the Pre-school with anyone unknown to the staff, unless previously arranged by you. If you make prior arrangements by telephone, the Pre-school will require the name, address and telephone number of the chosen person, as well as proof of identity on their arrival. A password will be required.

Abuse to Staff: The Pre-school will not tolerate any form of bullying, harassment, intimidation or violence towards any pre-school staff member. If a parent intimidates or acts in an aggressive way towards a staff member, they will be asked to leave the premises immediately. This may result in the loss of your child's place at the Pre-school. More serious incidents will be reported to the police for further action.

The Agreement: The Admission Form and the Parent Contract & Terms and Conditions represent the understanding between the Pre-school and the Parent(s)/Guardian(s). The signing of the Parent Contract & Terms and Conditions gives rise to a legally binding contract on the above terms between yourselves and the Pre-school and constitutes commencement of the Agreement. Any breach of the Parent Contract & Terms and Conditions will result, if necessary, in your child's place being withdrawn and possible court action to recoup any money owed to the Pre-school.