

## Admissions Policy

At The Nursery School Company we aim to ensure that all parents and children experience the highest levels of customer service and that our admissions process is fair and consistent.

### 1. Our Admissions Process

To start your admissions journey with The Nursery School Company you will need to contact us by completing our 'Admissions Form' on our website or by calling one of our Nurseries directly. Your dedicated Admissions and Parent Liaison Manager will explain all the information we need to know about your child and arrange a viewing of your chosen setting.

Viewings will be conducted by either your admissions and Parent Liaison Manager or another member of the management team. Following your viewing you will receive a 'Child Registration Form'. Should you feel that The Nursery School Company is the right choice for you, we will need to have your registration form completed and returned to us in order to start your application. Once we have received your registration form, we will be able to determine whether we are able to offer you a place at The Nursery School Company. If we are able to do so, your Admissions and Parent Liaison Manager send you an 'Offer of Placement' letter and the parent contract via email which will confirm the sessions being offered and associated fees.

Should you wish to accept your placement then we will require the registration fee and deposit to be paid and your contract returned to us within 7 days in order to secure your place. Once payment and your signed contract have been received you will receive another letter confirming your place at The Nursery School Company. Should payment not be made or contact not received within 7 days then your requested sessions may be offered to someone else. The registration fee and deposit is not payable for children taking up our FE Only placements.

Unless otherwise requested, you will be automatically offered our Standard FE Placement. This allows us to allocate your offered sessions until they leave for school. In accepting our offer of placement at The Nursery School Company, you are agreeing to the terms and conditions applied to that space once your child becomes eligible to receive funding.

### 2. Fees

The Nursery School Company Fees are annualised over the 51 weeks that our nurseries are open and then split into 12 equal monthly payments. We endeavour to release invoices on or around the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. Fees are due, in full by the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month. Invoices can be paid via bank transfer, tax free childcare accounts or selected childcare vouchers. All absences. Bank holidays and training days are chargeable.

Fees not received by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month will be subject to a £25 late payment charge.

Invoices are not considered paid until funds have cleared into our bank account.

### 3. Information We Will Need To Know

We will need to know certain information about your child, including date of birth, medical conditions, the month, and year you would like them to start and how many sessions a week you would like them to attend. The Nursery School Company has a minimum attendance of 3 sessions per week. Once your place has been secured (in accordance with and subject to these terms) we will require a copy of your child's birth certificate.

### 4. Status Of Your Offer and Ongoing Place at The Nursery School Company

Any offer we make of a place at The Nursery School Company for your child is discretionary and based entirely upon the information that you provide to us and/or the information we receive and obtain during the course of your child's nursery care with us. Your place is subject to review, and we reserve the right to request further information and where necessary alter or withdraw your child's place in certain circumstances.

## **5. How We Allocate Places**

Places are offered based on the following order of priority:

1. Existing children who are currently at The Nursery School Company and are looking to increase sessions.
2. A child who has a sibling already in attendance.
3. An exiting child who is transferring from another Nursey School Company setting.
4. The date of registration to the waiting list, in conjunction with whether your stated preferences match the available space.
5. Priority will be given to full days before sessional requests.

## **6. The Nursey School Company Waiting List**

If we are unable to offer you a place at your chosen setting immediately, then you can request to join our waiting list. Our waiting list is constantly reviewed, and you will be contacted once we are able to accommodate your requested sessions.

## **7. Availability**

Availability is assessed on an ongoing basis taking into account any leavers or room moves. We will inform you if a place becomes available. If your child does not receive a place to start at the requested time, they will remain on the waiting list until such time as a place becomes available or until you request to be removed.

## **8. The Nursey School Company Parents Contract**

Once you have had your offer of placement letter, we will send you copy of our Parent Contract which we will need have has signed and sent/delivered back to us in order to secure your place.

## **9. Settle In Sessions**

At The Nursery School Company we aim for our children to feel safe, engaged, and happy. Therefore prior to your child starting with us, your admissions and parent liaison manager will be in touch to arrange settle in sessions. These are usually carried out 1 month prior to starting over a one- or two-week period. Settle in sessions are provided free of charge except for those on our FE Only placements. Settle sessions can be taken during the FE Only hours if required or can be purchased at our hourly rate.

## **10. Changes To Your Agreed Sessions**

Should you wish to make a permanent change to your booking pattern then this should be requested via your Admissions and Parent Liaison Manager. Please note that whilst we will try our best to accommodate any such request, these are not guaranteed as they are based on availability. Where requests to increase or exchange sessions are possible, we will endeavour to honour this change as soon as possible. Where requests to decrease sessions are available, we will require 2 months' written notice as stated in our T&Cs and are subject to the minimum of 3 sessions per week.

## **11. Start Dates & Deferred Starts**

Start dates are offered in accordance with availability and are offered on a first come, first served basis. Once your child's start date has been agreed, any deferrals or changes to that date are subject to availability. If we are unable to accommodate your deferral request, we reserve the right to retract our offer and add you to the waiting list. Deferral requests cannot be accepted if they are for over 4 weeks from agreed start date and/or are less than two months prior to the start date as this would fall into our 2-month cancellation notice period and all fees would be payable.

## **12. Extra Sessions**

Depending on availability, extra sessions can be booked via your Admissions & Parent Liaison Manager. Extra sessions that are available are usually posted on the Family App weekly, however, last minute availability may sometimes be available.

## **13. Early Drop Off & Late Pick Up**

In the event at you need to drop off early or are going to arrive late for pick up, we ask that you inform us as soon as possible. Whilst we understand that sometimes things happen, we are bound by legal ratios which may prevent us from allowing entry or may impact the nursery financially due to paying staff overtime. Therefore, an additional cost of £15 per 15 minutes will be chargeable.

#### **14. Cooling Off Period**

We offer a 14-calendar day cooling off period which begins after we have received your Registration Fee and Deposit to retract your acceptance of your place at The Nursery School Company. This must be prior to your child starting at the nursery or our 2-month notice period would apply, and all fees would be payable. If your 14 days is prior to starting, then you will receive a refund of your Deposit within 14 calendar days. Registration fees are not refundable.

#### **15. Cancelling An Accepted Place (More than 2 months prior to starting)**

Should you wish to cancel your child's place more than 2 months prior to starting then we ask you to inform us as soon as possible in writing. We will refund your deposit within 14 calendar days of us confirming the cancellation. The registration fee is not refundable.

#### **16. Cancelling An Accepted Place (Less than 2 months prior to starting)**

Should you wish to cancel your child's place less than 2 months prior to starting and your 14-day cooling off period has expired then we ask you to inform us as soon as possible in writing. We will **not** be able to refund either your deposit or registration fee and you will be liable for any fees over and above the value of the deposit, that are payable during the 2-month notice period.

#### **17. Leaving For School**

For children in their final year with us before leaving for reception class, we assume that your child's last day will be at the end of August (31<sup>st</sup> August or the last scheduled session prior to that date). If you wish to leave prior to this date, then you must inform us as soon as possible with 2 months written notice. If you wish to attend later than that date, then we ask that you arrange any further sessions as soon as possible with your Admissions and Parent Liaison Manager. Further sessions are subject to availability and will not be eligible for any Free Entitlement Funding.

Should you wish to defer your child's entry to reception and remain at The Nursery School Company for an additional year, we ask that you inform us in writing at the end of the prior school year, i.e., one calendar year prior to your planned deferral.

#### **18. Suspension of Your Place**

The Nursery School Company reserves the right to suspend your place with us if you fail to uphold the terms in it. We may suspend your place at any time by writing to you if:

- You fail to make payment of your fees by the 7<sup>th</sup> Month.

All fees will be payable during any suspension period.

#### **19. Terminating Your Contract**

The Nursery School Company reserves the right to terminate your contract with us if you fail to uphold the terms in it. We may terminate your contract at any time by writing to you if: You fail to make any payment to us when it is due, and you fail to make payment 7 days following suspension of place:

You do not, within a reasonable time of us asking for it, provide us with information about your child that is necessary for you to provide adequate nursery care to you child:

You knowingly provide any false or inaccurate information about your child or their circumstances as part of our admissions process or during the course of your child's nursery care at The Nursery School Company; or

Your or your child's behaviour is deemed threatening, abusive, or violent.

Terminations for these reasons will be with immediate effect and all fees and deposits paid will not be eligible for a refund.

We may also withdraw your child's place and terminate your contract if your child's circumstances change. As explained previously, your child's place at The Nursery School Company is at our discretion and is subject to review. Should your child's circumstance change and/or should we receive information (whether directly or indirectly) to suggest that your child's circumstances have changed or will change during the course of your child's nursery care at The Nursery School Company, which means that we are or will no longer be able to provide adequate nursery care to you child for any reason, we may end our contract with you and withdraw your child's place.

Where this is the case, we will use our reasonable endeavours to provide you with at least one month's notice of our intentions, but this may not always be possible in circumstances beyond our reasonable control and so cannot be guaranteed. If we do withdraw your child's place for this reason, we will refund you for any nursery services you have paid for but not received.

### **19. The Nursery School Company Bursaries**

The nursery school company operates a bursary scheme for qualifying families. We hope that by removing the challenges of accessing affordable, high quality early years education for these families we can positively impact the futures of these children. For more information please ask your Admissions & Parent Liaison Manager.

### **20. 2-Year-Old Funding**

15 hours 2-Year-Old funding is available for eligible families (see government criteria on their website), either on our Standard FE Placement or our FE Only Placement (see below). Please note however that if attending for funded only hours, this attendance pattern may be changed once 3-Year-Old Entitlement starts, as our spaces in our Pre-school rooms are managed term by term. Although we aim to offer continuity of care for your child at all times.

### **21. Free Entitlement Funding [15 Hours]**

Universal Free Entitlement Funding is Government funding to cover the cost of up to 570 hours per year (15 hours a week) of childcare during term time (38 weeks a year). This is available for all three- and four-year-old children in England.

Universal FE funding is structured to cover the 38 weeks a year of term time. The Nursery School Company however does not offer term time only places. Our places are booked for the period of 51 weeks of the year that our Nurseries are open.

Therefore, The Nursery School Company takes the Government funded hours and stretches them out over those 51 weeks. Applied over the 51 weeks, this equates to 11.18 hours of FE funding available per week. A maximum of 10 hours of funding can be claimed per day.

Your total funding entitlement will be deducted from your invoice and shown as a numerical figure of hours claims. Any remaining balance relates to the fees for your remaining childcare and any consumables costs.

Universal FE funding can be claimed on both our Standard FE Placements and our FE Only Placements (see below).

### **22. Extended Free Entitlement Funding [30 Hours]**

Eligible parents can claim further Government funding in addition to the Universal FE Funding. Extended FE Funding covers an additional 570 hours per year (15 hours per week) of childcare during term time (38 weeks per year).

You may be eligible to claim Extended FE Funding if:

- Both parents are working (or the sole parent is working in a single-parent family)
- Each parent earns a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum wage, and less than £100,000 per year.
- This includes parents who are employed and self-employed.

It is the parent's responsibility to check their eligibility through HMRC and they must provide an eligibility code to the Local Authority prior to being able to take up the extended offer.

Extended Universal FE funding is structured to cover the 38 weeks a year of term time. The Nursery School Company however does not offer term time only places. Our places are booked for the period of 51 weeks of the year that our Nurseries are open.

Therefore, The Nursery School Company takes the Government funded hours and stretches them out over those 51 weeks. Applied over the 51 weeks, this equates to 22.36 hours of FE funding available per week. A maximum of 10 hours of funding can be claimed per day.

Your total funding entitlement will be deducted from your invoice and shown as a numerical figure of hours claims. Any remaining balance relates to the fees for your remaining childcare and any consumables costs.

Extended Universal FE funding can be claimed on both our Standard FE Placements and our FE Only Placements (see below).



Should your eligibility for 30 hours change whilst on a Standard FE placement then you will be responsible for paying for the additional hours on your booking pattern. You may request to change your placement however this will be subject to the terms set out in point 9.

Should your eligibility for 30 hours change whilst on our FE Only placement The Nursery School Company reserves the right to offer you an alternative place, with an altered attendance pattern, based on the Universal Entitlement. 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 have limited spaces for some sessions.

Grace Periods have been put in place to support families where their circumstances and therefore their eligibility might change. These are available from your Local Authority website.

You may access some or all of your 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 usually, but not always, the choice of the parent. We will advise of our understanding of this if you choose to make such a split.

### **23. Standard FE Placement**

Our Standard FE Placement allows you to have the flexibility to use your Government Free Entitlement Hours (15 or 30) to contribute towards the cost of any of our sessions. The FE funding only covers the cost for the provision of childcare and the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

As stated in our 'Operational Guidance June 2018':

*"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 additional activities. Parents can therefore expect to pay for any meals offered by the provider alongside their free entitlement. Parents can also expect to pay for other consumables or additional activities offered by the provider, such as nappies or trips. Where parents choose to purchase additional hours of provision, consumables, or additional activities, this is a private matter between the provider and the parent."*

Therefore, the funding does not include for any of the other services that our nurseries provide. These include, but are not limited to:

- Meal and Snacks
- Nappies, Formula & consumables
- Additional hours
- Uniform
- Enrichment Activities (within the classroom and beyond the classroom)
- Laundry Services
- Forest and/or Beach School

All products and services not covered by Funding will be charged at The Nursery School Company's current consumables rate during funded hours whilst on our Standard FE placement.

For up-to-date consumable charges, please ask your Admissions & Parent Liaison Manager\*. Consumables charges are not charged per item/activity. As with fees, their cost is annualised over the 51 weeks of the year that our nurseries are open and divided into 12 equal monthly invoices. All absences. Bank holidays and training days are chargeable.

### **24. FE Only Placement**

Our FE Only Placement allows you to use Government Free Entitlement Hours (15 or 30) without any additional costs. FE only hours however can only be used during certain sessions, and we have limited numbers of these placements available. All FE Only Placements are subject to the legal staffing ratios and room occupancy levels. As stated above The FE funding only covers the cost for the provision of childcare and the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). All our additional services are not included in this offer. Parents can pay a voluntary consumables fee during these sessions should they wish to have access to these additional services. For up-to-date consumable charges, please ask your Admissions & Parent Liaison Manager.

Meals & snack during FE Only session will be charged however parents do have the option to provide fruit for an afternoon snack should they prefer to access their funded hours without any additional costs. For up-to-date meals charges, please ask your Admissions & Parent Liaison Manager.

## **25. Complaints Procedure for The Universal 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 4 weeks, then you may copy your complaint directly to The Nursery School Company Operations Director through [catherine@thenurseryschoolcompany.co.uk](mailto:catherine@thenurseryschoolcompany.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 childcare or education. 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 Ombudsman or Department for Education via [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) or your local MP.

Policy adopted on: 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023

Date for review: 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024

Signed on behalf of the nursery: *C. Harvey*