

1.2 Admissions Policy

It is our intention to make our Playgroup genuinely accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community. In order to accomplish this we will:

- Arrange our waiting list in order of date placed on the waiting list. We will contact you by post when a place becomes available. If we have had no response by the due date, we will make reasonable attempts to contact you (via email and phone). If we still have no response after two weeks, we will offer the place to someone else.
- Hold places only after completed registration forms have been received.
- Describe the Playgroup and its practices in terms that make it clear that it welcomes both fathers and mothers, other relations and other carers, including child-minders, and people from all cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups, and where possible, with disabilities.
- Monitor the gender and ethnic background of children joining the Group to ensure that no accidental discrimination is taking place.
- Make our Equal Opportunities Policy widely known.
- Extra sessions cannot be guaranteed, and priority may be given to children with additional needs or those on a child protection plan.
- Be flexible about attendance patterns so as to accommodate the needs of individual children and families.
- We ask you to inform us if your child is attending any other playgroup or nursery, and if you are already claiming West Sussex Free Entitlement for the child.
- When allocating sessions, priority is given to allocating extra sessions to existing children, before offering sessions to new children. Within this, priority will be given to children due to start school in the next academic year
- We will endeavour to offer all of the child's free entitlement hours where it is requested, however this may not always be possible due to lack of availability. Priority for the full entitlement may be given to children with additional needs, or those on a child protection plan.
- We currently take a maximum of 24 children per session.
- Please note that accepting a place at Heather Playgroup in no way ensures a place at North Heath School, and that Playgroup staff have no influence over allocation of school places. These are allocated centrally via the West Sussex County Council School Admissions Office.
- Requests for changes to sessions will only be accepted in writing, subject to availability, from the beginning of a term. In exceptional circumstances changes may be agreed by the manager mid-term.
- All admission and consent forms must be completed, signed and returned to us before your child starts. If not returned by the date stated in the covering letter the place may be offered to another

child on the waiting list.

- Before we can claim any Free Entitlement on behalf of a child, we will need to see ID, either birth certificate or passport.

Under 3's Admissions

We accept a limited number of under 3's.

- Children will need to be at least 2 ½ years old
- Four under 3 places will be available on Mondays and Thursdays, from 8.45 – 11.45 only. Other mornings may be offered, subject to availability and staffing levels.
- Under 3 admissions will be first come first served in waiting list order dependent on birth month (see appendix 1), taking into account the exceptions listed above.
- Under 3's will be charged at a higher rate of £5.20 per hour due to the extra staffing required.
- Charging will be changed to the three year old rate upon child's 3rd birthday.
- The Under 3's Matrix (see appendix 1) shows start dates dependent on child's month of birth. This is to ensure all children are offered the opportunity to access at least 5 terms of preschool, regardless of school start age.
- We will accept two year old funding from WSCC where appropriate. To check if you are eligible, contact the Family Information Service on 01243 777807, go online at http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/living/children_and_families/childcare_and_early_education/free_entitlement_for_2_3_and.aspx. Alternatively your local Children and Family Centre will be able to give advice on eligibility.

FEES

Fees are due half a term in advance. Failure to pay may mean the place will be withdrawn. Any families experiencing difficulty in paying must see the Manager to discuss payment plans as soon as possible to avoid losing their place.

To secure a place the registration form must be returned to playgroup by the due date. For non-funded and partially-funded places, the place will be held once the first half-term invoice payment has cleared.

Fees are currently charged at £4.20 per hour for all non Free Entitlement hours for 3 and 4 year olds and £5.20 per hour for under 3's. We are able to accept childcare vouchers.

Most children qualify to receive Free Entitlement from West Sussex County Council in the term following their third birthday. Please see separate WSCC leaflet to determine eligibility.

If you wish to withdraw your child from Playgroup, we require half a term's notice in writing. If sufficient notice is not given, any fees due will need to be paid to the end of the current term. If your child claims Free Entitlement, this will not be available to be claimed by another setting until the start of the next term. Under some circumstances it may be possible to transfer Free Entitlement funding to another setting. No refunds are given for sickness and holidays.

In the event of emergency closure, no refunds will be given. We endeavour to remain open if at all possible, and will strive to offer alternative sessions to make up the hours in the event of a closure where possible. However during busy times hours to suit may not always be available. Charges may apply if a child is repeatedly collected late in order to cover emergency staffing costs.

I have read and understood the Admissions Policy and accept the above Fee Payment Terms

Print Name

Date

Signed

Policy updated October 2016
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