



Little Squirrels @ Shiplake Primary

Admissions Policy

Reviewed and updated September 2023

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

Procedures

- We ensure that the existence of our setting is widely advertised in places accessible to all sections of the community.
- We ensure that information about our setting is accessible, using simple plain English, in written and spoken form and provided in different community languages and in other formats on request.
- Our setting and its practices are welcoming and make it clear that fathers, mothers, other relations and carers are all welcome.
- Our setting and its practices operate in a way that encourages positive regard for and understanding of difference and ability – whether gender, family structure, class, background, religion, ethnicity or competence in spoken English.
- We will endeavour to put the appropriate support in place for children and/or parents with disabilities to take part in activities within our setting.
- We monitor the needs and background of children joining our setting on the Registration Form, to ensure that no accidental or unintentional discrimination is taking place.
- We share and promote our Inclusion Policy.
- We consult with families about the opening times of our setting and, as far as is practical and in the interest of the children, we are flexible about attendance patterns in order to accommodate the needs of individual families, for example in the number and combination of hours they attend each week in consultation with nursery staff.
- Nursery Education Funding (NEF) is provided from Government via the Oxfordshire County Council. Every child is eligible for up to 15 hours funded per week for 38 weeks



a year from the term after they turn 3 years old. The setting will provide the necessary documents in order to claim for this funding.

- 30 hour funding is provided from the Government via Oxfordshire County Council. Not every child is eligible and parents must apply online and provide the setting with an eligibility code. The setting reserves the right to limit the amount of 30-hour claimants.
- Nursery Education Funding for 2 year olds is available to eligible parents. The setting will provide the necessary documents in order to claim for this funding once parents have an eligibility code.
- By Government policy, you can share your NEF hours between two settings. However, we request a minimum of 6 hours per week attendance in our setting to claim the minimum of 3 hours per week NEF funding.
- The Nursery charges a fee for children attending the setting who do not qualify for Government funding, or if they attend more than the funded hours. These fees are outlined separately. However, our priority is to provide NEF funded places.
- The Nursery is fully flexible in which sessions it offers to NEF funded children, in order to do this and remain financially viable the Nursery requests a voluntary contribution charge for each hour of funding as set out in our Prospectus.
- The Nursery requests that Parents/carers confirm their session requirements prior to the start of each term. Confirmed bookings cannot be changed or swapped without prior arrangement. The Nursery requires a half terms notice to reduce or change session requirements. Fees may be incurred.
- The Nursery encourages the use of the Disability Access Fund and the Early Years Pupil Premium.
- We try to accommodate parents' admission requirements with fair and clear procedure however any disputes in relation to this will be dealt with at the discretion of the Governing Body of Shiplake CE Primary School.

Eligibility

- We accept children from 2 years old up to school age subject to available spaces.
- We accept new children throughout the year as they become eligible. This may be at the start of the term or during it depending on ratios. Government funding is however only available from the full term after the child turns 3 (or 2 in the case of 2 year funding).



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- Once a completed application form has been received and the administration fee paid, we arrange our waiting list on a date of registration basis. In addition our policy may take into account the following:
 - Looked after children
 - Date of birth (priority to those starting school the following September)
 - Start date requested
 - Number of sessions requested
 - Staff ratios
- Available sessions will be offered to children already attending the setting before being offered to children from the waiting list.
- We offer funded places in accordance with the Code of Practice for Oxfordshire County Council and any local conditions in place at the time.
- We keep a place vacant, if this is financially viable, to accommodate an emergency admission.
- A minimum notice of a term is required, in writing to the Registrar, if a child is to be withdrawn from the setting. Failure to do so may incur fees.
- If a parent/carer wishes to change their child's session, this request should be put in writing to our Registrar who will accommodate where possible.
- Our Registrar will respond to any queries within a reasonable time scale.
- Any offer requires a response from the family, either by accepting or declining the place, by a deadline. Offers will be made by email where possible. Reasonable attempts will be made to contact the family by phone or in person, if no email response is received by the deadline. If no written response is received within 48 hours of the deadline, regardless of whether the Registrar has managed to contact the family, the child's place on the waiting list may be forfeited.
- We will not discuss another family's registration with other families.
- Our admissions policy is separate to that of Shiplake CofE School and children attending Little Squirrels @ Shiplake Primary will still need to apply for a school place via OCC and meet the chosen schools admissions criteria.



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Opening Times

Dropping Off

The main school gate (Plough Lane) is opened at 8.40am. The Nursery opens at 8.45am Monday to Friday and the nursery staff will welcome the children into the setting from this time. Children are marked off on the register when they arrive. At 9.00am the main gate to the playground will be closed to safeguard the children in session and we ask that all parents are off the nursery site by this time. Parents or carers arriving with children for an afternoon sessions at 12noon should enter the school via the main office/reception door on Memorial Avenue. Entry into the school is via a secure entry system and a member of staff will come and greet them.

Collection

The main school gate (Plough Lane) and the Nursery door will be opened at 3.15pm for children to be collected. Parents and carers collecting children after the morning session at 12 noon or after lunch club at 1pm should wait for a member of staff at the main office/reception door on Memorial Avenue. The children will be accompanied by a member of staff to meet their parents/carer at the office/reception door.

We will only release a child from our care to adults who have permission to collect them. We ask parents to provide us with a list of people authorised to collect and include a description or a photograph for us to keep on file.

In the event of an emergency, we operate a password system.

Attendance

Good attendance is vital to children's educational achievement, well-being and keeping them safe. Children are expected to attend all scheduled (pre-booked) sessions. An absence form should be completed for any planned holidays or absence, where possible absence should be avoided during term time. Any absence planned or unplanned that extends past 14 days may affect Universal 15 hour and 30 hour extended funding. Un-attended scheduled sessions will still be charged.

It is a statutory requirement that we keep a daily register of all children's attendance including times of arrival and departure. Registers of attendance will be kept accurately, indicating clearly when a child is present or absent. Lateness and absences will be recorded and regularly monitored, and concerns will be raised with parents or carers.



Lateness and absence

We understand that it is not always possible to be on time and we will work with parents to support difficulties with drop-off and pick-ups, however children who are regularly late or miss sessions could find it more difficult to settle in nursery and keep up with the learning and development taking place.

If a child is late or absent without explanation the Key Worker or Manager will:

- Telephone the parent/carer on the first day of absence shortly after 9.15am to establish a reason for non-attendance
- Make further follow-up telephone calls if unexplained absence continues
- Send an email and letter when contact cannot be made by telephone
- Make a home visit if attendance is inconsistent.

Uncollected Children

If a parent/carer is delayed collecting a child, we will normally be able to accommodate the additional care for a short period, but this should be for emergencies only and not become a regular occurrence. We will reassure the child and if necessary, organise additional activities. We request that a parent telephones us in advance where possible if they are going to be late collecting their child. We reserve the right to make an additional charge for collections later than 3.15pm. The late collection fee will be £5 for every 10 minutes.

If we are unable to suitably care for the child because the care falls out of hours or staff to child ratios cannot be met, we request that parents arrange for an authorised adult to collect their child. If we are unable to reach a parent, we will contact other adults from the authorised list and arrange for them to collect the child.

If we are unable to make contact with anyone at the close of our business, we will inform Social Services and follow their advice, at all times we will minimise any distress to the child.

Un-scheduled sessions ("Drop-in's")

We offer additional sessions and lunch club for children who are registered with and regularly attend the setting. We have a set procedure for booking in these sessions. These procedures are in line with our policies on health, safety, security, welfare and equality.



Procedures

- Parents may wish to book an un-scheduled session for their child who regularly attends the Nursery. We can only accept an un-scheduled booking when:
 - The child is already well settled and secure
 - The required adult/staff ratios are met
 - The Manager (or person in charge) has assessed ALL the health, safety and welfare risks and passed a judgement to accept the booking
 - There is a suitable place for the child in the session
- The Manager (or person in charge) makes the final decision on the un-scheduled session.
- Every attempt will be made by the Manager to accept the booking. If the booking cannot be accepted the Manager must make reasonable attempts to explain the reasons why. There may be some circumstances when an explanation is not possible because there is a conflict of interest.
- Our policy "Inclusion, Equality, Diversity and Values" is followed at all times.
- All sessions are booked on a 'first-come-first-served' basis however, priority is given to looked after children.
- Each case will be looked at individually. (Factors such as the child's age will be considered because we have to adhere to EYFS parent:child ratios.)
- Prices for un-scheduled sessions are in visitor and new starter packs.

To book a full session (8.45am-12midday or 12midday -3.15pm) parents/carers may:

- Phone the Nursery land-line and speak to a staff member
- Speak to a staff member in person
- Email communication is allowed to arrange an un-scheduled sessions in advance but should not be used on the day.
- Un-scheduled sessions requested through the Registrar are subject to the Registrar checking with the nursery staff before confirmation can be given.



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- The staff member approached about an un-scheduled session will take down the details and discuss with the Manager. They will get back to the parent/carer within a reasonable amount of time.
- No booking has been accepted until a staff member has confirmed the place.
- Sessions can be booked:
 - In advance
 - On the day

To book lunch club (12-1pm) parents may:

- Lunch Club sessions may be booked in advance or in person at 8.45am when arriving for the morning session. If we cannot accommodate an extra child for lunch due to ratios we will inform you on request.
- Lunch club cannot be booked after 8.45am on the day it is required. If parents are unable to collect their child at 12noon they must not assume that the child can stay for Lunch Club as ratios might not be met.
- We reserve the right to suspend lunch club bookings to give priority to un-scheduled booking of full or afternoon sessions or to accommodate new starter session requests.

Payment of Fees

We aim to offer the best quality childcare at the lowest cost to parents as possible. All sessions are available to children eligible for government funding of 15 or 30 hours. There is no difference in care, facilities or resources for children who are taking funded places to those paying fees.

In order to offer this and remain financially viable, we request a voluntary contribution for each funded place – this voluntary contribution is calculated per term using the number of funded hours claimed as a basis. Any additional sessions taken up by funded children will be charged at the standard rate.

We invoice in advance of each term. Invoices are usually sent out within the first 2 weeks of each term. Payment is requested within 14 days. Parents have an option to pay in instalments and via childcare vouchers. Payment plans are at the discretion of the Registrar/Bursar of Shiplake CE Primary. All outstanding fees should be settled before the start of a new term.



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Invoices for drop-in sessions are invoiced at the beginning of the following term (with exception of the Summer Term which will be invoiced in the final week of the term).

All parents wishing to take up the 2 year funding or universal entitlement funding must complete and sign a parental declaration within the deadline provided. If a Parental declaration is not received sessions will be charged at full rate. The Nursery Manager or Registrar must see a child's original birth certificate or passport as proof of date of birth for new funding claims.

Parents wishing to claim extended entitlement of 30hour funding must complete a Parental Declaration form within the deadline provided and are responsible for rechecking their eligibility with HMRC. Until Little Squirrels @ Shiplake Primary has received the 30 hour code, National insurance number and seen a valid form of ID, a check on the 30 hour code cannot be completed. 30 Hour funding is not guaranteed until Little Squirrels @ Shiplake Primary has verified the code.

Little Squirrels @ Shiplake Primary will give at least a terms notice of any increase in nursery fees.

As per the admissions policy, if a child leaves nursery without giving a half terms notice in writing, fees may be incurred.

Current fees and charges (revised September 2023)

Pre-booked sessions

£21.85 per 3 ¼ hour session (8.45am to 12.00 / 12.00 to 3.15pm)

£4.60 Lunch Club (12.00 to 1.00pm)

Drop-in sessions

£24.15 per 3 ¼ hour session (8.45am to 12.00 / 12.00 to 3.15pm)

£5.75 Lunch Club (12.00 to 1.00pm)

Late Collection Fee

£10 per every 10 minutes late pickup after session ends

Voluntary contribution

In order to ensure the setting runs smoothly and to meet running costs, we request a voluntary contribution of £3 per funded hour per term.

Reservation Deposit (refundable)

£25 - on submission of Application Form. This fee will be refunded on your first termly invoice.