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Admission and Fees Policy

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Admission and Fees Policy

1. Aim

It is the intention of the Hillside Pre-School Charity to make the Pre-School genuinely accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community in a fair and equal manner.

2. Opening hours and days

Hillside Pre-School is open Monday to Friday 9am – 3pm during Bristol City Council schools term time.

The following sessions are available:

Morning session	9am – 12pm
Afternoon session (Children will need to bring packed lunch from home)	12pm – 3pm
Full day (Children will need to bring packed lunch from home)	9am – 3pm

Hillside Pre-School is closed on Bank holidays and 5 INSET days during the academic year.

3. Childcare options

Our minimum requirement for children to attend Hillside Pre-School is 2 full days or the equivalent of 12 hours per week. The 12 hours can be made up of either funded (15 or 30 hours) or chargeable care.

By exception, parents/carers can request fewer than 12 hours however this is subject to the Pre-School manager's discretion and session availability.

3.1. Free 15 hours universal care

All 3- and 4-year-old children in England are entitled to 570 hours of free early education or childcare per year, which is equal to 15 hours a week for 38 weeks a year. This entitlement is offered during term time only. Free hours are available to all children from the term after their 3rd birthday, as set out below:

3rd Birthday	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Eligible from...	Apr	Apr	Apr	Sep	Sep	Sep	Sep	Sep	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan

3.2. 30 hours extended care

Some 3- and 4-year-old children in England are entitled to 1,140 hours of free early education or childcare per year, which is equal to 30 hours a week for 38 weeks a year. This childcare option is open to eligible working parents/carers, from the term after the child's 3rd birthday. Please see section 5 for how to check eligibility.

3.3. Additional paid (chargeable) care

Parents may request additional, chargeable sessions, if their child is 3 and not yet entitled to free childcare, or if they would like to pay for additional sessions - please see section 9 below for information on fees. This is subject to availability and is reviewed on a termly basis

4. How to apply for a Pre-School place

For both the 15 hours and the 30 hours schemes please complete:

- Hillside Pre-School Registration Form
- EYR1 Parental Declaration Form

Having submitted the forms, the Pre-School will confirm places in line with the timeline for each intake period (September, January and April) and against the admissions criteria listed in this policy.

Places are allocated in line with the 'Allocation of spaces' section detailed in this policy; see section 8.

5. 30 hours extended care

Some children aged 3-4 years of working parents/carers are eligible for free education for 30 hours term time only. This scheme is designed to reduce the costs of childcare and support families to work and progress their careers after having children.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to keep their child's eligibility code valid at all times.

5.1. Eligibility

Parents/carers can check eligibility via [Check you're eligible for free childcare if you're working - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/check-eligible-free-childcare-if-youre-working) (<https://www.gov.uk/check-eligible-free-childcare-if-youre-working>)

5.2. HMRC Code

Parents/carers must apply to HMRC as a joint application and, if eligible, will get a unique 11-digit code which must be provided to the Pre-School. Apply to the HMRC online from the gov.uk link provided on <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk> or calling 0300 1234 097. The Pre-School will register the 11-digit code with the Local Authority. Once the code has been verified, offers for 30 hours may be made.

5.3. Three-month renewal cycle for the extended hours

Once registered on the gov.uk website, parents/carers will be prompted every 3 months to reconfirm the details they entered are still correct. They will be prompted by HMRC by email or

text 4 weeks before, then again 2 weeks before if they have not reconfirmed. If parents/carers miss the deadline, the code becomes ineligible and the grace period will come into effect.

5.4. Grace periods for extended hours

If a child who has a 30 Hours Code becomes ineligible during the first half of a term, the child will be funded until the end of that term or for as long as they remain under compulsory school age, whichever is shorter.

If a 30 Hours Code becomes ineligible during the second half of a term, the child will be funded until the end of the following term or for as long as they remain under compulsory school age, whichever is shorter.

Ineligibility would only affect Extended hours – the child can still have their Universal hours.

Date child becomes ineligible	End of Grace Period + Funding of Extended Hours
1st September to 21st October	31st December
22nd October to 31st December	31st March
1st January to 10th February	31st March
11th February to 31st March	31st August
1st April to 26th May	31st August
27th May to 31st August	31st December

If parents/carers circumstances change and they are no longer entitled to the 15 extended hours (to total 30 hours), parents/carers can either reduce their child’s registration to the Universal 15 hours or choose to pay a top-up fee to fund the additional 15 hours. As outlined in section 9, the option to pay for additional hours is subject to availability and is reviewed on a termly basis.

6. Pre-School capacity

The Pre-School’s capacity and ratios are guided by the statutory Early Years framework. This is set at 24 children with a ratio of 1 adult per 8 children.

7. Notice Periods

Bristol City Council asks parents/carers of 3- and 4-year-olds to make a ‘termly’ commitment. Unless there are ‘life-changing circumstances’, parents/carers can only change providers at the start of a new term (i.e. September, January and April).

If a parent/carer wishes to remove their child from the setting, they must put this in writing to the Pre-School Manager one term in advance. A final invoice will then be provided which must be paid in full, along with any other unpaid fees.

8. Allocation of spaces

8.1. Waiting list

Hillside Pre-School maintains its own waiting list. Children are entered onto the waiting list in the date order in which parents/carers submit their formal request to be added. (The request to the Pre-School can be either by phone call or email.)

8.2. Allocation of sessions

The intake of children occurs at the beginning of September, January or April and sessions will be allocated dependant on demand for spaces and availability.

Where it is considered that an individual child's needs cannot be satisfied without the support of a one-to-one worker, the Pre-School Management Team shall seek funding for the additional member of staff, or liaise with the SEN Team at Bristol City Council as well as seek advice from BAND (Bristol Association for Neighbourhood Daycare).

All placements shall be offered by letter/email, accompanied by a Registration Form, and a Parent/Carer Welcome Pack.

Once all available Pre-School places have been allocated, the next vacancies shall only be allocated as a result of one or more of the following:

- At the next scheduled intake
- If a child leaves the Pre-School, creating a vacancy

If the next scheduled intake is over-subscribed, individual consideration shall be given to qualifying children requesting a place part way through a term, (eg. at the request of an external agency such as the local Health Visitor, etc), in addition to the admission priorities defined below. These requests shall be considered by the Pre-School Manager and referred to the Board of Trustees for approval, if necessary.

8.3. Admission priorities

In the event of the Pre-School being oversubscribed, places will be allocated as follows (in order of priority) and subject to session availability:

1. Children with Social Care involvement (e.g. Looked after children, children under a Child Protection Plan or Children in need)
2. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan. (An EHCP consultation would be completed prior to admission to determine if the Pre-School can meet the child's individual needs.)
3. Children no longer in care, who have been adopted or are unable to return home (e.g. children with a Special Guardianship Order or Child Arrangement Order.)
4. Children who are siblings of current pupils (defined as brother, sister, adopted, looked after children or half brothers and sisters living in the same family home.)
5. All other children will be offered places in the order of receipt of their completed application forms.

9. Chargeable care

9.1. Cost

Paid sessions may be available at a cost of £24 per session (3 hour block); as at the date of this policy.

E.g. A morning session 9am – 12pm would cost £24. A Full Day session would cost £48 (2 sessions at £24)

Session fees are subject to annual review at the Pre-School AGM and may increase. Any increases will usually take effect from September.

9.2. Payment

Any chargeable sessions will require payment to be made by the 1st of the month in which the sessions are due to take place. Invoices for any chargeable sessions will be issued monthly by the 15th of the preceding month. E.g if the paid sessions take place during October, payment for these would be required by the 1st October and the invoice for these would be issued by the 15th September.

Payment for any chargeable sessions should be made by Bank Transfer. Failure to pay for the additional sessions by the required monthly date may result in the child not being able to attend the session.

By exception and agreed in advance by the Pre-School Manager, cash shall also be accepted and must be handed to the Pre-School Manager or Deputy Leader and a receipt will be provided to the parent/carer.

9.3. Non-Attendance

If a child does not attend a session which has been booked due to e.g. illness, holiday etc, a refund will not be given.

9.4. Chargeable care notice period

If a parent/carer wishes to cancel their chargeable sessions, they must put this in writing to the Pre-School Manager one month in advance. A final invoice will then be provided which must be paid in full, along with any other unpaid fees.

10. Payment for consumables

At Hillside Pre-School we believe the Government funded 'free' 15 or 30 hour childcare should be free or at least as affordable as possible for families. Due to this belief, we ask for a voluntary donation of £30 per child to be paid in September each year (pro rata cost if your child joins in January or April).

This donation is used to help fund extra activities that are not directly related to, or necessary for, the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework. (EYFS framework is the Government education curriculum we follow for 3 – 4 year olds).

Please note - The extra activity costs are not covered by Government / Bristol City Council funding which is why we ask for a voluntary donation.

Examples of the extra activities would be:

- Mother's / Father's Day activities,
- Christmas related activities
- Cultural celebrations (e.g. Chinese New Year, Diwali)
- End of academic year celebration/event

We do not currently charge for snacks or toiletries – these costs are absorbed by us (Hillside Pre-School charity).

Our Consumable Charge is optional so parents/ carers can 'opt out' by simply ticking the appropriate option when you complete your child's registration form.

If parents/ carers do decide to 'opt out' then your child potentially may not take part in the extra activity but undertake an alternative activity which falls within the EYFS guidance/ funding.

The consumable charge is subject to annual review at the Pre-School AGM. Any changes will usually take effect from September.

11.Late Pick Up Charges

Late collection causes significant disruption to the pre-school day and potential increased staff costs. It can also affect the adult:child ratios and needs to be avoided except in cases of genuine emergency. Therefore, if a parent/carer is late collecting their child, an additional charge will be made of £10 per child at 12pm or 3pm (depending on the session the late collection relates to), and a further £5 for every 5 minutes thereafter.

Appendix 1: Definitions of Terms

Looked After Children

In Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 the term “Looked after children” is defined as...

Local authorities have specific duties concerning the care of looked-after children. Under the Children Act 1989 a child is looked after by a local authority if they:

- are in their care
- are provided with accommodation, for a continuous period of more than 24 hours

Section 22(3) of the Children Act 1989 places a duty on local authorities in relation to looked after children:

It shall be the duty of a local authority looking after any child—

(a) to safeguard and promote his welfare; and

(b) to make such use of services available for children cared for by their own parents as appears to the authority reasonable in his case.

Definition taken from GOV.UK: [Children Act 1989](#)

Children in Need

A child in need is defined under the Children Act 1989 as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Local authorities are required to provide services for children in need for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting their welfare. Children in need may be assessed under section 17 of the Children Act 1989.

Definition taken from GOV.UK: [Keeping children safe in education 2024](#)