

ADMISSIONS and retention POLICY.

This policy acknowledges the admission and retention criteria utilised in respect of all groups administered by Daisy and Rainbow Childcare.

It is our intention to make our childcare provision genuinely accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community, and further, to ensure that all children and families have every opportunity to feel supported through the process and that this support is on-going throughout their time spent in the setting.

- Please also refer to the Settling-in Policy -

1. We will ensure that the existence of the Rainbow Nursery and the Daisy Pre-school is widely known in all local communities. We will ensure that all local services that interface with families with young children know about us and can signpost to us. We will use social media and ensure our website is easily found via the search engines.
2. Our services and its practices will be described in terms which make it clear that it welcomes both fathers and mothers, other relations, and other carers, including childminders, and people from all cultural, ethnic, religious, and social groups, with and without disabilities.
3. Families will be consulted about changes to session times to avoid excluding anyone and to ensure that parents' and children's needs may be best met.
4. Our equal opportunities policy will be visible in its practice and widely known by families.
5. The full diversity of children and families using our services will be monitored, to ensure that no accidental discrimination is taking place. Where possible this will be utilised to target invitations, awareness-raising activities, and publicity.

Admissions Criteria

- At Rainbow Nursery we accept children aged from 3 months to 5 years old.
- At Daisy Pre-school we accept children aged 2 to 5 years old.
- Wherever possible we will prioritise for the admission of vulnerable children through referral.
- At least one childcare place is kept vacant within each age group provision to accommodate emergency admissions.
- We will be flexible about attendance patterns to accommodate the needs of individual children and families. A parent's and child's individual needs will be met as closely as is possible.
- We understand that it may be hard for a parent and child to separate and the child to settle to play and learn with us. To best support the child to settle to our routines and to get to know their keyperson well we will only accept children for care when booking in a minimum of two separate sessions over two separate days for periods of at least two hours at Daisy and four hours at Rainbow. Children will be booked to attend with us every week at the same agreed times.
- We will seek to ensure that the physical and emotional needs of the children we have within the setting will continue to be fully met and will not be adversely affected by any new admissions.
- When a place for a child is requested from a member of our own staff team we will consider the following –
 - The child should be no younger than 2 years old
 - The child should be able to separate from the parent with ease and able to build a significant relationship with a new keyperson.
 - The child's needs should be considered as paramount.
 - A trial period of a month would be put into effect.

- The parent should have the capacity to recognise that the keyperson will take the role of the significant carer in the workplace. Any professional decisions made by the keyperson will be accepted and acknowledged by the parent. When acceptable to all parties any parent who is a keyworker with us will perform that role with their own child.
- The decision re the suitability of the childcare placement will remain with the employer.
- When admitting new children into the setting we will seek to ensure that the child remains our key focus and assess whether we can fully meet the needs of the child before offering a place.

Waiting List Admissions Process

- Following an enquiry, a pre-registration invitation will be sent
- Upon receipt of the Pre-registration the parent carer will receive an acknowledgment that their child is on our waiting list. It will be made transparent that there is no obligation for us to offer a place nor for the parent to accept it when offered.
- When places are limited, we will prioritise based upon our childcare ratios first and foremost and the following numbered criteria supported by practitioner knowledge and information regarding each individual child application. We know that we may need to use several criteria to inform our decisions.:
 - 1) Those children whose parents are paying a retention fee for a child who has temporarily left our care.
 - 2) Those children who have been on our waiting list the longest will most normally be given priority.
 - 3) Age of child i.e., older children will normally be given preference.
 - 4) A sibling of a child already in attendance.
 - 5) Locality i.e., offering places to those families in our local catchment.
 - 6) An election to offer a reduced number of hours initially and to increase as further places become available.
 - 7) Perceived adult and / or child needs i.e., if there are child special educational needs, children on a Child in need or child protection plan, issues which restrict the child's access to play at home, the parents needs to be able to return to work.
- Places will be confirmed with parents / carers no earlier than two calendar months of prior to the proposed start date.
- As a childcare place becomes available, we will email giving a three working day response time. If no response is received after two days a text reminder will be sent. When a response is lacking the child will be removed from our waiting list.
- Upon assessment of the parents request for sessions an initial offer of agreed hours is made. At this juncture the registration fee payment is requested securing the agreement for a place. (NOTE Funded children are not required to pay a registration fee)
- Further child data is collected to enable the induction process to progress.
- During the induction phase with our childcare team further conversation may lead to a change in the initial offer of hours if our assessment is that this may not meet the needs of the child.

Managing the Waiting List

- We understand that some parents will have their child's name on the waiting list for a protracted period. We are keen that we maintain communication.
- Every four months an email update will be sent providing information about our expectations that parental needs will be met through the provision of a childcare place. At this juncture parents will have the opportunity to remove their child from the list.

- When a Pre-registration requested start date has elapsed, we will send an acknowledgement of the situation and a Renewal Invite to stay on the Waiting List.

Universal and Extended Hours provision

- We will make the offer of the extended entitlement to parents at each of our settings working within both National and Local, DCC, guidance.
- Parents will only be made a confirmed offer upon receipt of verification of their 11-digit code, which will need to be in place at least one day before the start of the new term.
- We will direct parents to the Childcare Choices website to enable them to make an informed decision about available childcare funding.
<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

At Rainbow Nursery

- We will enable parents to access the entitlement only on a full day care contract (Not term time only), hence providing a consistent weekly offer across the full breadth of the opening weeks offered at the Nursery.
- Eligible parents will be able to access the offer up to 22hrs per week /1140 hrs per year across the 51 weeks the setting is open.

At Daisy Preschool

- We will enable parents to access the offer only across the term time opening which is currently in place.
- Eligible parents will be able to access the offer up to the full 30hrs per week /1140 hrs per year across the 38 weeks the setting is open. Currently, due to opening hours, only 29 hours may be claimed each week

Retention of Places

- We will retain children on our registers for childcare only until the 31st of August or whichever is the relevant month prior to planned primary school start time.
- We will keep a child's place open only when we have a negotiated and well communicated agreement in place with the parents a fee may be associated with this action.
- If a child does not attend and access their space over a continuous period of four weeks, we will seek to make communication with the parents, follow this up with other professionals if appropriate, however ultimately will not be obliged to keep the place open.
- We will monitor any repeat or patterns of absenteeism to ensure that the family has appropriate support in place to be able to access the place.
- For any child who is being deferred from school, or the parent is debating homeschooling, a family meeting should be held in the term prior to the deferral to agree and share any background to the decision and any plans to assure best practice. Funding will continue for children on the universal or extended hours' contract only until the end of the term that the child turns 5 years old in. Parents will be alerted to that if their child is an autumn or spring born child.

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Signed: Monique Park

