



Eastlea Community Centre

Stockton Road, Seaham, County Durham, SR7 8DX

Children, Young People & Family Services



Tots 'R' Us Nursery

Admissions, Attendance & Fees Policy

Last Updated: 13th January 2020

Eastlea Community Centre – A Registered Charity: 1160391

Ofsted Registered Nursery: EY489173

Admissions, Attendance and Fees Policy

At Tots 'R' Us Nursery we believe in supporting good attendance at Nursery. Children, who attend the Nursery regularly, arrive and are collected on time, are more secure and better able to make the most of the learning and development opportunities that we provide. At a young age, continuity and consistency are important contributors to a child's well-being and progress. Research shows that regular take up of early education in a high quality setting has a long lasting impact on children's social development and intellectual attainment throughout school and later life (Research brief: The Effective Provision of Pre-school Education Project EPPE 2003). We therefore view good attendance and punctuality as vitally important for the learning and well-being of all our children. Positive relationships with children and their families are key to achieving this.

Aims

- To work in strong partnership with parents and carers to ensure that every child attends Nursery regularly and is punctual
- To provide a safe and comforting routine when children arrive, throughout the session and again when children are collected
- To support all children and their families to establish good routines which will continue throughout the child's education

Admissions

The Nursery is open to children aged two and above. Places are allocated from the waiting list when a place becomes available. Children can remain at the Nursery until they are old enough to start mainstream nursery or school.

The Nursery manager is responsible for maintaining the waiting list and contacting prospective parents/carers when a place becomes available. The Nursery is registered with the local authority to accept government funding. Children are entitled to fifteen hours a week free early education (FEE) the term after they are three years old. Some two year olds may be eligible for free early education if certain criteria are met.

A registration visit or home visit must be completed before a child can start Nursery. At this visit, parents/carers will meet the Nursery manager or deputy manager and the child's key person, who will explain more about the Nursery and gather information about a child's individual needs. Parents and carers must complete and sign registration forms and parental consent forms.

At all times, we try to minimise the disturbance to the children in the Nursery, while at the same time being open to visitors and prospective parents/carers. Opportunities for prospective parents/carers and children to visit the Nursery prior to attending are available by booking in with the manager.

We will:

- Ensure that the existence of the Nursery is widely known in all local communities
- Place notices advertising the Nursery in places where all sections of the community can see them
- Arrange our waiting list in order of date of application and date of birth
- Keep a place vacant, if this is financially viable, in order to accommodate emergency admissions
- Describe the Nursery and its practices in terms which make it clear that it welcomes fathers, mothers, relations and other carers, including Child-minders and people from all cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups, with or without disabilities
- Monitor the gender and ethnic background of children joining the group to ensure that no accidental discrimination is taking place

- Make our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy widely known
- Be flexible about attendance patterns to accommodate the needs of individual children and families

Where children are accessing their 15 hours Free Education Entitlement in the Nursery or any other preschool provision, Tots 'R' Us Nursery reserves the right to refuse any request for sessions that are in addition to the 15 hours FEE. This will ensure that as many children as possible will have the opportunity to access their free education entitlement.

Attendance

All parents are made aware of the importance of regular attendance prior to entry and of the importance of collecting children on time. We have a separate policy for children who are late or not collected.

The Nursery collates and monitors attendance information for all children as part of our duty to ensure the welfare and safeguarding of all children.

All parents are made aware of the expectation that they inform the Nursery by telephone, if their child is unable to attend for any reason. This should be done on the first day of absence. Morning sessions are 8.30am to 11.30am and afternoon sessions are 12 noon to 3.00pm. The Nursery can be contacted by telephone on 07484032308 or 0191 5812399.

Government funded early year's education places (15 hours entitlement for eligible 2 year olds, the universal 15 hours entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds) are not subject to compulsory education laws which take effect from the start of statutory schooling at age of 5. However at Tots 'R' Us Nursery we strongly promote maintaining high levels of attendance in order that individual children can achieve the maximum benefit from their funded hours.

We recognise that sometimes families may need extra support to maintain high levels of attendance and punctuality, therefore, good communication is essential between the parent/carer and the child's key person.

As part of this policy we ask parents/carers to:

- Provide up-to-date contact numbers and notify the Nursery of any changes of address or contact details
- Ensure that your child attends the sessions agreed in individual contracts with the Nursery
- Notify the Nursery by phone if your child is going to be late that day
- Notify the Nursery by phone, if your child is not able to attend, on the first day of absence and the reason for the absence. (Up to an hour following their expected time of arrival on that day if at all possible)
- Contact the Nursery if this absence is continuing i.e. if your child will be absent the following day or days
- In the case of lengthy absence keep the Nursery well informed
- Avoid making appointments for your child that occur during Nursery time
- Bring and collect children promptly
- Ensure that your child is brought and collected by a responsible adult as noted in the registration/consent form

The Nursery will:

- Ensure parent/carers understand the importance of punctuality and attendance
- Support strategies that will enable good attendance and punctuality to be maintained
- Monitor attendance and punctuality termly
- Write to all parents each term to inform them of their child's attendance, praising good attendance and informing parents of the implications of poor attendance

- Follow up any non-notification in the event that a child is absent from Nursery on the first day of absence
- Speak informally to parents/carers if poor punctuality seems to be having a significant effect upon the child's wellbeing, learning and developmental progress
- Write to parents/carers if punctuality does not improve, after informal conversation
- Follow Safeguarding procedures by informing the relevant Children's Social Care if poor attendance or punctuality indicates that the child's welfare could be in jeopardy
- In the case of persistent patterns of poor attendance the Nursery will contact the Local Authority in terms of the possible withdrawal of the early education funding
- Withdraw the child's place in extreme circumstances – but not if this could further endanger the welfare of the child

Clearly we will make every effort to support good attendance and punctuality, as suggested above. However, if there are no other indicators of concern or vulnerability and your child has failed to attend for 4 consecutive weeks or more, without a justifiable reason, we may withdraw your child's place. We can only do this once all other routes have been exhausted and the Nursery has provided evidence of this.

Children who are absent due to illness

When a child is absent due to illness we ask that you notify the Nursery at your earliest convenience. This is so that we can communicate to other families about any possible contagious illnesses. Personal details of children who are unwell are kept confidential. Some childhood illnesses are reportable to the Health Protection Agency (HPA) and Ofsted, therefore notification is important to ensure the reporting requirement is met. There may also be other action required as the result of any notifications such as deep cleaning of areas.

Children moving to another setting

If a parent/carer decides to move their child to another setting then the Nursery must be informed as soon as possible so that we can take them off our register and notify the local authority in the case of funded early education places. We will also ensure that individual child's records and Learning Journal are forwarded to the new setting that they will be attending. This is essential to support the wellbeing of the child and the smooth transition between settings during this time of change.

Fees Payment

Free Education Entitlement (FEE) for all qualifying two, three and four year olds will be in line with the contract held between the local authority the child lives in and Tots 'R' Us Nursery.

The Nursery charges a competitive fee per session for those children who do not qualify for FEE. Charges are available upon request. The Nursery is also signed up to the Tax-Free Childcare scheme. If you get Tax-Free Childcare, the government will pay £2 for every £8 you pay your childcare provider via an online account. Alternatively, payments can be made directly to the Nursery if parents/carers are not eligible for the Tax-Free Childcare scheme or choose not to sign up to it.

All payments must be made one month in advance of sessions commencing.

The Nursery reserves the right to ask the parent/carer to withdraw their child in the event of non-payment. This will enable the Nursery to allocate the place to another child on the waiting list.