



Parental Policies

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Reviews and Responsibilities

Member of staff responsible	Rebecca Bryant / Caroline Mckellar
Committee member responsible	Committee Chair
Date agreed with staff	
Date agreed at Committee	14 January 2025
Signed on behalf of Committee	Tom Saunders
Print name & date	Tom Saunders
Frequency of policy review	Bi-annual
Date next review due	January 2027

Overview

Lydiard Millicent Pre School aims to be 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.
We accept admissions throughout the year.

Admission to Lydiard Millicent Pre-School

Procedures

We ensure that the existence of Lydiard Millicent Pre-School is widely advertised in places accessible to all sections of the community.

We ensure that information about our setting is accessible, in written and spoken form and, where appropriate, in more than one language. We will use the Early Years team at Wiltshire Council to support us with this if necessary.

We describe our setting and its practices in terms that make it clear that we welcome both fathers and mothers, other relations and carers, including childminders, as well as people from all cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups, without regard to their gender, special educational needs, social background or disability.

We make our Equality of Opportunity Policy widely known by making it available on the website and in the Welcome Pack.

We monitor the gender and ethnic background of children joining the Pre-School to ensure that we are being fair.

We consult with families about the opening times of the setting to ensure we accommodate a broad range of family needs.

We are flexible about attendance patterns to accommodate the needs of individual children and families, providing these do not disrupt the pattern of continuity in the setting that provides stability for all the children.

Allocation of Places

We arrange our waiting list in the following order:

- the date of birth of the child
- the date the child was placed on the waiting list
- whether the child also attends a different setting

Any parent/carer wishing to register their child for a place at the Pre-School will need to submit a registration form. This must be completed and returned to the Pre-School, we ask for contribution of £10.00 to cover the cost of a book bag and administration. On receipt of this a confirmation letter will be sent notifying the parent/carer that their child is on the waiting list.

The Pre-School will review its waiting list one term in advance;

- September intake will be reviewed in April
- October intake will be reviewed in September
- January intake will be reviewed in November
- February intake will be reviewed in January
- April intake will be reviewed in February
- May intake will be reviewed in April

A letter offering the child a space or a letter informing the family of any other decision will be sent out within the first 2 weeks of the previous term. This offer will need to be accepted by the date given.

When a place is offered you will be sent a copy of our welcome pack, along with all new starter forms which are to be completed and returned to the Pre-School along with the acceptance form.

We will endeavour to invite children to attend an induction session the term before they are due to start at Pre-School. Parents/carers are required to attend this session with their child. During the induction your child will meet their key person and staff will complete the Unique Child documents with you.

Any requested change to the child's sessions (before or after the child starts in Pre-School) must be submitted in writing. The Pre-School will confirm in writing whether the change is possible or not within 2 weeks of receiving the request. Until written confirmation is received, there will be no change to the child's sessions. Six weeks' notice in writing is required to cancel sessions.

The final decision on the allocation of places rests with the Pre-School committee.

Settling in

At Lydiard Millicent Pre-School, we want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the absence of their parents, to recognise other adults as a source of authority, help and friendship and to be able to share their new learning experiences with their parents afterwards. From the beginning, we want parents to feel welcome, involved and confident in all that the Pre-School offers.

Aim

We aim to make the Pre-School a welcoming place, where children feel comfortable and settle quickly and easily, through consideration of the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

We will achieve this in the following ways:

- By creating opportunities for the exchange of information using, among other resources a Pre-School welcome pack, registration forms, a Unique Child profile and induction session.
- By ensuring plentiful opportunities for parents to inform Pre-School about their children's current achievements and interests.
- During the term before a child starts, we offer opportunities for the child and his/her parents to visit the Pre-School.
- By introducing new children into the group on a staggered basis.
- When a child starts to attend, we work with his/her parents to decide on the best way to help the child settle into the Pre-school.
- We make it clear to families that they will be welcomed and supported for as long as it takes to settle their child. We understand that parents or carers may wish to stay for part or all of the sessions during the first week, gradually taking time away from their child and increasing it as and when the child is able to cope.
- Younger children and children who have not previously spent time away from home may take longer to settle in. Children who have had a period of absence or disruption at home such as illness or the arrival of a new sibling may also need their parent/carer to be on hand to re-settle them.
- When parents leave, we ask them to say goodbye to their child and explain that they will be coming back, and when.
- We allocate a key person to each child, before s/he starts to attend. The key person or other named person welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents at the child's first session.

- We ask parents to complete all registration documents prior to the child attending an induction section.
- By reassuring parents whose children seem to be taking a long time to settle.
- Parents/carers are welcome to attend any session that their key person also attends to chat to their key person.

Parental Involvement & Communication

At Lydiard Millicent Pre-School, we believe that children benefit most from Pre-School early years education and care when parents and Pre-Schools work together in partnership.

Aim

We aim to support parents as their children's first and most important educators by involving them in their children's education and in the full life of the setting. We try to involve all parents in the Pre-School, whether this is through involvement in the committee, through contributing skills, knowledge and interests or through any other way they feel comfortable with. Parental involvement and an open dialogue with parents is key to the success of Lydiard Millicent Pre-School.

'Parents' is used to mean both mothers and fathers, as well as step-parents and parents who do not live with their children but have contact with them and play a part in their lives. 'Parents' also includes same sex parents, foster carers and other individuals who may have parental responsibility for a child.

Method

In order to fulfil these aims:

- We consult with parents to find out what works best for them.
- We ensure ongoing dialogue with parents to improve our knowledge of the needs of their children and to support their families.
- We inform all parents about how the setting is run and its policies through access to written information and through regular informal communication. We check to ensure parents understand the information that is given to them.
- We encourage and support parents to play an active part in the running and management of the Pre-School.
- Staff are aware of the need to maintain confidentiality.
- There is an opportunity for developmental chats whenever a parent/carer stays for a session in which their key person also attends. A rota is displayed in the Pre-School cloakroom each term.
- We provide opportunities for parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the setting.
- We inform parents about relevant conferences, workshops and training.
- We consult with parents about the times of meetings to try to avoid excluding anyone.
- We provide information about opportunities to be involved in the setting in ways that are accessible to parents with basic skills needs, or those for whom English is an additional language where possible.
- We hold meetings in venues that are accessible and appropriate for all.
- We welcome the contributions of parents, in whatever form these may take.
- We inform all parents of the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions and check to ensure these are understood. All parents have access to our written complaints procedure.
- We provide opportunities for parents to learn about the curriculum offered in the setting and about young children's learning, in the setting and at home.

Payment and charges including unpaid fees and late collection

Lydiard Millicent Pre-School is a registered charity and is not permitted to operate at a loss, nor to operate as a profit making organisation. We charge fees for each session of the Pre-School to cover

our costs and to benefit children at the Pre-School. This policy sets out the current charges made for each child attending the Pre-School and the timing of payments.

Registration

A one -off payment of £10 is required when a child is registered at the Pre-School. This non-refundable payment covers the cost of administration.

Charges for sessions

Lydiard Millicent Pre-School charges for each session are as follows:

	Under 3	3+
Morning (8.40 – 11.40 am)	£21.51	£15.63
Afternoon (11.40 – 2.40 pm)	£21.51	£15.63

Ad hoc sessions

Ad hoc sessions may also be available at a cost of £24.00 per three hour session. Please speak to the administrator to book these in advance.

All children are eligible for nursery funding from the term after their third birthday (based on the old three term year) which covers the care of each child. Each child is eligible for 5 sessions of 3 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year. We also accept the extending funding which gives up to 30 hours a week of funded childcare for 38 weeks a year. The sessions attended may be spread across more than 1 setting.

Costs for under 3s are slightly higher, to reflect the higher staff ratio required for this age group.

Parents are only invoiced for those sessions not covered by the nursery education grant. For example, parents of a 3 year old eligible for the nursery grant attending 5 morning sessions per week would not need to make any additional payment for care, provided that the nursery education grant is not being claimed for sessions at other settings.

Additional consumables fee

Our consumables fee (currently £2.00 per session) covers all the resources the children use such as paint, paper, toilet rolls, wet wipes, toys and resources. In addition, several programmes are run throughout the year to support the learning of the children which require additional funding including our gross and fine motor skills programme and maths and letters and sounds programmes.

There may however be several weeks in each academic year that are not covered by the nursery grant and will need to be funded by parents. An invoice for this additional amount will be issued at the beginning of each term and payment will be due by the date on the invoice.

Timing of payments

Payments are due each term, based on the 6 term year. An invoice will be sent to each family at the beginning of each term and payment is due within 14 days. Payment by cash, BACS or childcare vouchers are acceptable. Cheques are not accepted as these incur banking charges. Please contact the administrator to arrange a cash payment, as staff are not permitted to handle cash.

Invoices for ad-hoc sessions are usually raised during the week they are taken and payment is due within 14 days.

Refunds

Refunds are not made for sessions missed by a child, for example, due to illness or holiday or for sessions missed because of the temporary closure of the Pre-School, for example, due to bad weather. This is because the Pre-School overheads such as rent and staffing costs still have to be covered. If the Pre-School is closed for more than 1 week (5 Pre-School days) the Pre-School committee will meet to review the situation. This does not imply that refunds will be made for closures that are longer than a week.

Unpaid fees

If fees are not paid on time, the Pre-School will notify the parent/carer by email and request payment at the earliest possible opportunity. A charge of £10 per week will be levied for all late payments.

Payments for increased sessions agreed after the start of term will be invoiced separately and are due for payment 14 days from the invoice date. A late payment fee of £10 per week will also apply to these supplementary invoices.

The Pre-School will be sympathetic to parents/carers who are having or who anticipate having difficulty in paying and it may be possible to arrange an individual payment plan. However, this must be negotiated between the Pre-School chair/treasurer and parents/carers, preferably in advance. Any family in this situation should contact the chair or treasurer at the earliest opportunity to arrange a confidential meeting. The administrator will arrange this meeting for you. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

If fees are paid persistently late or not at all with no explanation, the Pre-School will issue a formal warning to the parent/carer and inform them that continued late payment will result in their child's place at the Pre-School being forfeited. This letter will state the final date by which outstanding monies must be paid. If payment is not made by this date, the Pre-School will be forced to withdraw the child's place. Under exceptional circumstances, the chair may agree to allow the child to continue attending the Pre-School for the remainder of that week.

Once a child's place has been forfeited, the Pre-School will pursue payment of unpaid fees in the small claims court and the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list.

Changes to sessions/leaving the Pre-School

Unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate short term changes to Pre-School sessions such as changing from a Wednesday morning to a Thursday afternoon for one week only, as this makes planning appropriate staffing cover very difficult and increases administrative time and costs. One term's notice (based on the 6 term year) is required if a child leaves the Pre-School. Any remaining fees will be refunded after this time.

Late Collection

At the Committee's discretion parents and or guardians who do not collect their children within normal collection times may be charged and invoiced a late collection fee. Those collecting outside of normal collection times will be charged a £5.00 fee up to and including 14 minutes late. Any collection after and including 15 minutes late shall be charged £15.00. These charges shall apply for the first three instances, any subsequent late collections shall incur a charge of £15.00 for collections up to and including 15 minutes of lateness and a further £1.00 applied for each additional minute. Those that collect 15 minutes late on more than three occasions shall be subject to charges at the discretion of the committee, and any further action the committee sees fit.

All late collections will be logged, parents and carers are required to complete, sign and date a late collection form providing the reason for the late collection.

If you wish to dispute any late collection fees these must be made in writing to the Committee within 3 working days of the date of the late collection.

We appreciate that sometimes there are exceptional circumstances and would ask, in all cases, that parents contact the Pre-School and let us know they will be late, and what time to expect you. We are also then able to communicate to your child that you will be late as to minimise any upset.

Document Version Control

Issue Number	Issue Date	Summary of changes
1.0	November 2009	Checked against PSLA guidelines
1.1	December 2009	Changed ownership of policy to Committee
1.2	February 2010	Changed deposit to non-refundable & clarified cancellation/changes to sessions procedure
1.3	July 2011	Addition regarding holiday spaces
1.3	March 2012	No changes
1.4	November 2013	Amendment to Admissions Process
	November 2014	No changes
1.5	February 2018	Changes to Procedures and Ad-Hoc Sessions
1.6	November 2020	Major changes to incorporate parental policies.
1.7	March 2021	Document Formatting and Amendments
1.8	March 2023	Changes to session, ad hoc session and consumable fees

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