

## Admissions & Waiting List Policy

Admissions are made to ensure that each setting operates to as near full capacity as possible, as set out by Ofsted registrations.

Admissions are made at the discretion of the management but places are available to everyone in the community who require day care, before & after school care, holiday club or wraparound care for their children, whilst they are, primarily, at work. Admissions are available all year round without reference to ability or aptitude.

Once a visit has taken place and an interest expressed applications for a place must be made online via our online Registration Form & Parental Agreement, a link to which will be sent to you. One form per child will be required. A Registration Fee will become payable when the form is completed. This fee is still payable even if you are placed on the Waiting List. The Registration Fee is not payable for children taking up a government funded only place and taking no settling visits outside of the funded entitlement, settling visits may be taken during the funded only hours if required. Where no Registration Fee is taken then a Refundable Deposit will be charged at a similar rate. This will be refunded in line with Local Authority Guidelines or within 2 weeks of leaving the setting, providing no monies are outstanding, whichever is sooner. If a place cannot be found then it will be refunded within 2 weeks of our knowing this. If a place is offered but the parent chooses not to take this up then the deposit will not be refunded.

The completion of a Registration Form does not in itself guarantee an offer of a place, as this will be decided by the available places that we have on offer at that time. Place allocation is a complex matter and some sessions have limited availability which is dependent on the number of full time equivalent places being taken up. As a rule we offer a minimum of 1 NIL COST funded place for 15 hours children and 1 NIL COST funded place for 30 hours children. The times of these session vary between our either settings and at some settings this number will be more than one, our individual Schedule of Fees for each site will provide more information on both these aspects. All parents have the same right to access our NIL COST sessions and these will be allocated in line with the Waiting List rules below.

If there are more applications than places available then places will be allocated by the Manager, firstly to those who have completed the relevant forms and paid their fee or deposit (on a date received basis). Full-time and full-day places will take priority over part-time places and sibling places will take priority over new applicants. Employees children will be considered on the same basis, although in order to obtain the employee discount no more than three full time equivalents may attend one setting at any one time. Where a place cannot be found then children will be placed on a Waiting List. Where there are multiple applications for a NIL COST funded place then, subject to the above criteria, these will be allocated in line with our Waiting List criteria below.

All new registrations will be acknowledged via our automated system and the child will be registered onto our database. When a place has been confirmed then the child or children will be booked into the base room for their settling visits as per the agreed schedule. These will preferably take place in the weeks immediately before starting. In emergency admissions then these settling visits may need to be altered to accommodate the child's and parent's needs.

Once a child has started, daily feed back to the parents is made via the key person through the Parent App and this is continued throughout nursery. The child will also be entered onto the electronic learning system and observations begun straight away.

### **Waiting List Criteria**

Children will remain on the Waiting List until a place becomes available. If we cannot find a place in the timescale required then Registration Fees or Deposits will be returned. Where we have a waiting list for NIL COST sessions then these will be allocated on the following basis: Looked After Children, Vulnerable children, SEND children, staff children, siblings of children in previous categories.

### **Flexible Funded Childcare & Education Offer**

*“Government funding is intended to deliver 15 or 30 hours a week of free, high quality flexible childcare. It is not intended to cover the costs of meals, other consumables, additional hours or additional services.”*

*Operational Guidance 2024*

Once your child becomes eligible for funding then we mainly offer this as an enhanced stretched offer over 51 weeks. We also have some limited places to offer over 38 weeks, although we do not offer 30 hours over 38 weeks. Where parents chose to access an **Enhanced Flexible 15/30 Offer**, over and above the basic entitlement funded provision, then there is an additional charge that covers additional services. These services include, but are not limited to, extra hours, breakfasts, snacks, lunches, teas, trips outside the nursery, parties for children, equipment or gifts that the children take home such as for Mother's or Father's Day and other such specific activities that the nursery buys in specifically for children. You can also access your funded hours as **Just 15/30** to include these **Food & Resources**. You are not obliged to take up these food and resources and you can opt-out of those and choose the NIL COST sessions over the 38 or 51 weeks as shown. Services outside our funded delivery are charged for and when attending all year round then we ensure your funded entitlement is accounted for on your invoice as a number of hours. This equates to your 'free' entitlement from the government, and the balance relates to the fees for your remaining childcare as shown in the Fees List.

Should your eligibility for Working Families 15 hours or 30 hours change then the company reserves the right to offer you an alternative place, with an altered attendance pattern, based on the Universal Entitlement as places are allocated dependent on the total number of hours in the settings. We will always endeavour to ensure continuity of care for your child in order to support their remaining with the setting but have limited spaces for some sessions.

Grace Periods have been put in place to support families where their circumstances and therefore their eligibility might change. These are generally around these dates:

<b>Validity end date (may vary)</b>	<b>Grace Period End date:</b>
1 Jan – 10 February	31 March
11 Feb – 31 March	31 August
1 April – 26 May	31 August
27 May – 31 August	31 December
1 September – 21 October	31 December
22 October – 31 December	31 March

### **Complaints Procedure for the Government Funded Entitlement**

If you consider that your funded place has not be provided correctly, or the terms of your contract have not been fully explained, then you should make a complaint, initially in writing to the Manager of your setting, who will either handle this directly or pass along to their senior for a response. If you still do not get a satisfactory answer to your complaint within 4 weeks, then you may copy your complaint directly to the Chief Executive through [hello@bright-kids.co.uk](mailto:hello@bright-kids.co.uk) and you will receive a response within 2 weeks of it being received there.

If you still consider the complaint has not been dealt with satisfactorily then you may contact the Local Authority in which the setting operates (Worcestershire, Warwickshire or Birmingham) and follow their complaints procedure. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority to ensure we are delivering our funded hours within the national guidelines and whilst we might not offer our funding in the way you might like to access it, the Local Authority can help you in finding a setting that might better suit your needs, if this is the cause of your complaint.

Ofsted are not concerned with, or have time to deal with, issues relating to funding or fee charges that are made for childcare or education. Their responsibilities lie clearly with the regulation and inspection of the welfare and safeguarding requirements and the children’s learning and development.

Any other complaints about funding should be made directly to the Ombudsman or Department for Education via gov.uk or your local MP.

### **Review of Policy**

This policy is reviewed annually.

**Next Review Date**            July 2025