



Church Street Lavenham

Lavenham Pre-School

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Sudbury

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## **Admissions Policy**

### **Our values**

It is our intention to make our setting accessible to children and families from the local community. We aim to ensure that our community has access to the setting through open, fair and clearly communicated procedures. We welcome each child and their family, having regard to their needs arising from their gender, special educational needs, social background, religion and ethnicity or from English being an additional language.

Our setting and its practices operate in a way that encourages positive regard for and understanding of difference and ability .

We support children and/or parents with special educational needs to take full part in all activities within our setting.

We monitor the needs and background of children joining our setting on the Registration Form, to ensure that no accidental or unintentional discrimination is taking place.

We share and widely promote our Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality Policy.

We consult with families about the opening times of our setting to ensure that we accommodate a broad range of families' 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.

## **Opening hours and availability of places**

The Preschool is open 9:15am - 3:15pm Monday to Friday during term time.

We also operate a wraparound care service:

Breakfast Club 8:00am - 9:15am

Little Owls Club 3:15pm - 6:00pm

A holiday club is also provided if the demand requires it.

Wraparound care and holiday clubs run subject to demand and are not guaranteed and we cannot open during these hours with insufficient numbers.

The Preschool offers the following pattern of provision for early education funded places which can be taken between 09.15am – 3.15pm Monday to Friday if places are available:

- Up to 15 hours per week 2-year old funding over 38 weeks (if eligible).
- Up to 15 hours per week 3-and 4- year old universal funding over 38 weeks.
- Plus, (if eligible), an additional 15 hours per week 3-and 4-year old extended funding over 38 weeks (note: parents do not have to take up the full 30 hours – if an eligible parent wants to take up, for example, 25 hours per week, these will still be funded).

The Preschool is also in receipt of Early Years Pupil Premium and Disability Access Fund for eligible children.

If you require any hours in addition to your free entitlement, these may be purchased in line with our fees policy (available on request), where places are available.

## **Number of places**

We offer 24 spaces per preschool session.

We will take one extra child in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Manager. We will not exceed 25 children per Preschool session.

If there is exceptionally high demand, we will let Suffolk County Council know and work with them to support parents to find alternative places.

Wherever possible, we will try to give your child a place at our Preschool, subject to the operation of the waiting list as set out below. Sometimes we may be able to offer you a place, but the exact sessions you have requested may not be available. If this is the case, we will discuss with you the sessions we are able to offer. If there are no places available, we will add your child's name to our waiting list (see below). We would also advise you to contact the Family Information Service on 0345 60 800 33 who will be able to support you to find a place.

## **How to apply for a place**

You should contact the Preschool by phone, email or in person if you are interested in applying for a place for your child. You should provide your name, the name and age of your child and the sessions about which you are enquiring. You will be offered the opportunity to visit the setting with your child. During this visit, parents/carers are shown round the premises, introduced to staff and shown the learning opportunities available to children at the setting.

If you wish to proceed with an application and a place is available the registration process can start immediately. If a place is not immediately available, but you still wish to proceed, you will be asked to confirm in writing or by email that you are requesting to be placed on our waiting list (see below). If you are subsequently offered a place, you will be given one week to accept it.

Before the registration process is complete, you will be asked to provide documentary evidence of eligibility for funding. You can obtain details of what is required from the Preschool.

The Preschool will retain paper or digital copies of documentation to enable the local authority to carry out any necessary due diligence.

## **Waiting list and Admissions Criteria**

As noted above, the waiting list is used to allocate places when there are more applications than places available. It is arranged in the order in which each request to be placed on the waiting list was received. Places are generally allocated on a “first come first served” basis (starting from the earliest), taking into account all relevant priorities (see below). However, we are not able to leave places empty. This may mean that a child is offered a place in September even if they have not had their name on the waiting list as long as a child who wishes to start in January.

Empty places will first be offered to children who are already at the setting and wish to increase their hours before being offered to those on the waiting list.

We will aim to give certain groups priority over strict adherence to the waiting list. This means that children in such groups may be allocated places even if they are not first in the waiting list. These groups are (in order of priority):

- Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan which names our Preschool
- Looked after and previously looked after children
- Other children with exceptional medical or social needs\*

*\*You must provide written evidence from relevant registered professionals i.e. a doctor or social worker. The evidence must demonstrate why our setting is more appropriate and what difficulties would be caused if your child were to travel to and attend alternative settings.*

Every effort will be made to admit children with a sibling already at the setting even if this means departing from the waiting list.

If it becomes necessary to apply a tiebreaker where children have an otherwise equal claim to a place (e.g. in the case of children who joined the waiting list on the same day), preference will be given to children who live closest to the setting (measured on a straight-line basis).

Decisions about admission are made by the Manager, taking account of the above criteria but also exercising discretion where necessary, bearing in mind the need to maximise occupancy, maintain the financial stability of the Preschool and ensure an appropriate ratio of staff to children.

Every effort is made to accommodate preferences. However, no guarantees can be given that parents/carers will be given their first-choice sessions.

If you have a complaint about the way in which the waiting list has been operated in relation to your child, you may lodge a complaint with the Manager using our Complaints Procedure.

The normal operation of the waiting list may have to be suspended if the Preschool is unable to operate at full capacity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In this situation the Preschool will take account of any relevant Government guidance in deciding how to allocate places.

## **Early Education Funding**

Subject to availability, we admit children in receipt of 2-year funding, the universal funding for 3-and 4-year olds and the extended entitlement (30 hours) for 3-and 4-year olds. Full details of these schemes (including the "Golden Ticket" scheme for 2-year olds) and eligibility are available on request or online at <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/childcare-information-and-support-for-parents-and-providers/>

Places for the 30 hours funding will be allocated to the extent that this is financially viable for the Preschool. A child will be entitled to the additional funded hours from the term after both of the following conditions are satisfied:

(1) the child has reached the age of three; (2) the child's parent has a current valid eligibility code from HMRC.

Example: If a child turns 3 and the parent/carer gets a code from HMRC between 1 January to 31 March, up to 30 hours childcare starts from 1 April.

You must go online to reconfirm details at the end of each funding period (you will receive an email from HMRC prompting you to do this).

If you are no longer eligible for the extended funding you will fall into a 'Grace Period'. This is a short period of time to give you the opportunity to find work or reconfirm eligibility.

We will inform you of the end of your grace period date. This is when the funding for the extended hours will end. You will continue to be entitled to your 15 hours universal funding.

We will make arrangements with you regarding ending or you making alternative payments for your extended 15 hours.

Contact HMRC regarding any queries or appeals on 0300 123 4097 as the Preschool and the local authority are unable to answer any queries relating to the online application system.

### **Parent declaration for early education funded places**

You must complete a Parent Declaration Form every term to enable us to claim all early education funding your child is entitled to. You must complete this information and return it to the Preschool administrator to secure your child's funded place for the following term.

Information you provide on this form will enable us to access any additional funding that your child may be eligible for, such as Early Years Pupil Premium and Disability Access Fund.

For further information go to <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/childcare-information-and-support-for-parents-and-providers/guidance-for-parents-and-carers/funded-early-learning-for-3-and-4-year-olds/early-years-pupil-premium-eypp/>

### **Notice periods**

Parents are required to give a 4-week notice period for any funded and paid hours when deciding to withdraw their child from the Preschool and will be invoiced for this period in the usual way.

### **Top-up fee**

The Preschool will not charge parents 'top-up' fees (the difference between our usual fee and the funding we receive from the local authority to deliver funded places) or require parents to pay a registration fee as a condition of taking up their child's funded place.

### **Invoices**

The Preschool will ensure that invoices and receipts are clear, transparent and itemised, allowing parents to see that they have received their funded entitlement completely free of charge and to understand fees paid for additional hours.

This policy was adopted by Lavenham Preschool (name of provider)

On 28th July 2021 (date)

Date to be reviewed July 2022 (date)

Signed on behalf of the provider



Name of signatory Roy Mawford

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) Chairman of Trustees