

09 Early years practice procedures

09.1 Waiting list and admissions

We aim to ensure that all sections of the community receive accessible information, and that our admissions procedures are fair, clear and open to all parents who apply for a place.

- The setting is widely advertised in places accessible to all sections of the community.
- Information about the setting is accessible, using plain English, in written and spoken form and, where appropriate, provided in different community languages and in other formats on request.
- Children with disabilities are supported to take full part in all activities within the setting and the setting makes reasonable adjustments to ensure that this will be the case from the time the child is placed on the waiting list.
- The waiting list is arranged in birth order and in addition may take into account the following:
 - the age of the child with priority being given to children Pre-School
 - length of time on the waiting list
 - siblings already attending the setting
 - the capacity of the setting to meet the individual needs of the child
 - We accept children from the age of 2 years and 6 months, dependent upon the availability of space and readiness* of the individual child.

*(*Definition of readiness, please see below)*

2-Year-olds

- We only accept 2-year-old funded children in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Managers. This is subject to a face-to-face visit by parents/carers and the child, to discuss in detail our routine and procedures of Stanwix Community Pre-School. The Managers will take in to account, if it is in the best interests and the readiness* of the individual child to attend the setting. This is subject to the full approval of the committee. These spaces may be limited to ensure the child to adult ratios are maintained.

- *Readiness

1. *The state of being fully prepared for something.*

2. *Willingness to do something*

Most settings will start accepting children at around age 2 ½ and in certain cases accept children from the age of 2 but that does not mean your child is magically ready for pre-school when he/she reaches that age.

Readiness for pre-school has more to do with where your child is developmentally. Is he/she socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively ready to participate in a daily routine with a group of other children? Has your child spent time away from you?

Starting a setting is a huge step for any child but particularly if your child is very young and has never spent any time away from you. If you have spent every day with them, the child can often find it distressing when left in an unfamiliar environment with unfamiliar adults and without you

In preparation we recommend that you attend various mother and toddler groups and other child group activities. It may be advisable to try leaving your child with a family member to help reduce the child's anxiety at being left without you. Once the child realises you are coming back, they will find it easier. We do not believe that leaving a child to cry continuously will help them settle any quicker and in very young children, it can be hard to settle them, as they may struggle to understand when you are coming back and quite often continue to become more and more distressed. We believe that a child's distress will prevent them from learning and gaining the best from the setting. It also can unsettle and upset the other children.

As our pre-school is an open plan lay out, it may be unsuitable for some very young 2-year-olds with regards to their own health and safety. Children who place objects in their mouths, are unsteady on their feet, climb upon tables, stand on chairs, appear to have no sense of danger, all of which would require one to one with an adult.

We could remove objects and implement safety devices in to the environment, however this will impact on the learning and development of the majority of the other children in the setting.

Although we do have a wide selection of resources for two-year olds, unfortunately we are unable to provide an area specifically for them. Therefore, we do not have cots and pushchairs for nap time, highchairs for snack time or any bottle preparation facilities as you would find in a baby room of a nursery.

- Funded places are offered in accordance with the Early Years Entitlements: Operational Guidance for local authorities and providers (DfE 2018) and any local conditions in place at the time,
- Where it is financially viable to do so, a place is kept vacant for an emergency admission.
- We do not admit a child for less than 2 sessions which must be taken over 2 days as this is not financially viable.
- The maximum number of children we enrol at any one time is 40, with the exception of an emergency admission.
- Stanwix Community Pre-School aims to support the childcare needs of its staff where possible. Therefore, the staff of the pre-school whose children are over two years and 6 months may enrol them as long as this does not interfere with the effectiveness of the member of staff during these sessions.
- The setting and its practices are welcoming and make it clear that fathers, mothers, other relations and carers and childminders are all welcome.
- The setting and its practices operate in a way that encourages positive regard for and understanding of difference and ability, whether gender, family structure, class, background, religion, ethnicity or competence in spoken English.
- The needs and individual circumstances of children joining the setting are monitored on 09.1c Childcare and early education registration form, to ensure that no accidental or unintentional discrimination is taking place and that reasonable adjustments are made as required.
- Section 05 Equality procedures is shared and widely promoted to all.
- Places are provided in accordance with 09.1d Childcare and early education terms and conditions issued to every parent when the child takes up their place. Failure to comply may result in the provision of a place being withdrawn.

Admissions

- Once a childcare and early education place has been offered the relevant paperwork is completed by the setting manager or deputy before the child starts and filed on the child's personal file. Forms completed include:
 - 07.1a Privacy notice - explains what personal data we collect, why we collect it, how we use it, the control parent/carers have over their personal data and the procedures we have in place to protect it.
 - 09.1d Childcare and early education terms and conditions - govern the basis by which we provide childcare and early education.
 - 09.1c Childcare and early education registration form - contains personal information about the child and family that must be completed in full prior to the child commencing.

Children with SEND

- The manager must seek to determine an accurate assessment of a child's needs at registration. If the child's needs cannot be met from within the setting's core budget, then an application for SEN inclusion funding must be made immediately.
- Children with identified SEND must be offered a place when one becomes available as with any other child. However, the start date for children with more complex SEND will be determined by the preparations made to ensure the child's safety, well-being and accessibility in the setting. If a child's needs determine that adjustments need to be made, the manager must outline a realistic timeframe for completion, detailing the nature of adjustments e.g. risk assessment, staff training, health care plan and all other adjustments required. The child's safety at all times is paramount.
- At the time of registration, the manager must check to see if a child's family is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, if so, the manager must ask for evidence to enable them to claim the Disability Access Fund directly from the local authority. If the family is eligible but not in receipt of the allowance, the setting manager will support the family in their application. More information can be found at www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children/how-to-claim.
- Preparation for admitting a child with SEND must be made in a reasonable amount of time and any delay in the child starting is scrutinised by the setting manager to avoid discrimination and negative impact on the child and family. During a preparation period the family and relevant agencies and the local authority must be regularly updated on the progress of the preparations.

Safeguarding/child protection

If information is provided by the parents that a child who is starting at the setting is currently, or has had involvement with social care, the designated person will contact the agency to seek further clarification.

Parents are advised on how to access the setting's policies and procedures.

Further guidance

Early Years Entitlements: Operational guidance for local authorities and providers (DfE 2018)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718181/Early_years_entitlements-operational_guidance.pdf