

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Information and Records

Providers must maintain records and obtain and share information to ensure the safe and efficient management of the setting, and to help ensure the needs of all children are met.

Happy Faces preschool

Admissions

Policy statement

It is our intention to make our setting 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.

- In Suffolk an academic year is from 1st September to 31st August. Children usually start Primary School Reception Class in the September of the academic year in which they turn 5.
- Happy Faces Preschool provides care for children aged 2 years 6 months to almost 5.
- When we refer to the 'preschool year' this is the year before school; the child will turn 4 during this year.
- When we refer to the 'younger children' we are referring to the children aged 2 years 6 months to almost 4; the child will turn 3 during this academic year.
- Early Education Funding is provided from the Government via the County Council. Every child is eligible for up to 15 hours funded per week for 38 weeks a year from the term after their 3rd birthday.
- Happy Faces Preschool accepts children who are eligible for a funded 2 year old free place, up to 15 hours a week.
- Happy Faces Preschool also accepts children aged 3 or 4 year old, who are eligible for 30 hours free childcare.

Parents can check if they are eligible for funded childcare at the following website:

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

- When full days or extra sessions become available, we will let parents know in order of position on the waiting list.
- Early Education Funded hours can be shared between two settings.

Waiting list

- Parents may register their interest in a place at Happy Faces Preschool at any time. A form will be completed with the child's and parent's details. Acknowledgement of receipt of this form should be received within two weeks. This acknowledgement is not a commitment to either take or offer a place, but simply places the child's name on the waiting list.
 - Emails or letters to families either offering or refusing places for their children will be sent out according to the child's place on our list. For children starting Happy Faces preschool at the beginning of the Autumn term, confirmation will be sent out as follows:
 - For places in Preschool by the end of May

- For places in the Younger Group, by the end of June.
- Please note it is Happy Faces priority to provide Early Education Funded places.
- We reserve the right to change the notification dates if necessary. There is no appeal process and the management's decision is final.
- Any offer requires a response from the family, either accepting or declining the place, by the deadline. Offers will be made by email where possible. If no response is received by the deadline, we make a phone call to the family, if no response is received within 48 hours the child's place may be forfeited.

Preschool Admissions (children who will turn 4 during the academic year)

- We arrange our waiting list in birth order. In addition, our policy may take into account the following:
 - Siblings already attending the setting
 - Children who may qualify for funded places
 - Referrals from outside agencies
 - The balance of the group as a whole
- Parents are asked to specify preferred days and hours, giving reasons if appropriate. The child must book a minimum of 12 hours. We have found that fewer hours than this can be detrimental to the child's ability to form relationships and settle into the group.
- 15 hours will initially be given as a maximum, once all children have been offered at 15 funded hours extra hours will be considered. Preference will be given to extra funded hours, for those qualifying for the 30 hours funding. Once these have been allocated we will consider offering additional hours at our cost per session.

Younger Children (Children aged between 2 yrs 6 mths and 3 yrs)

- Children can join our younger group from 2yrs 6 months if there are spaces.
- Places are limited due to staff ratios and room size.
- Places in the younger group will be determined on an annual basis according to the extent of demand for our preschool places.
- We follow the same admissions procedure as the preschool children.
- Children will normally start at Happy Faces Preschool at the start of the Autumn term and at the start of the Spring Term. We believe this makes settling in easier for all children. Exceptions can be made by the manager if there is a special need or if there are spaces left.
- Children start in the younger group with a minimum of 2 sessions a week across 2 days. Up to 15 funded hours are available if space allows.

Charging

- Extra sessions which are not included in the funded hours are charged at £8 a session for a child aged 2 yrs and £7 for a child aged 3 or 4 yrs.
- A session is 3 hours; either 9.15am – 12.15pm or 12.30pm – 3.30pm.
- Parents/Carers are invoiced every half term in advance. Invoices can be paid in full or in instalments at the discretion of the management.

- Payments can be made to the manager or by direct payment.
- Happy Faces Preschool reserves the right to charge for absences through illness or holiday.

Older Children

Happy Faces Preschool is registered to take children up to the age of 5. According to government policy, at the management's discretion, in consultation with parents and supporting professionals where appropriate, we may accept a child who could otherwise start Reception in September.

Lunch club

- Lunch club is only available for those children who are staying for a full day.
- Places are limited and will be offered according to the same criteria as our waiting list.
- Children should bring their own healthy packed lunch and we will provide guidance on what is meant by a 'healthy' lunch.
- Happy Faces does not provide food for lunch. Milk or water is available for the children

Procedures

- We ensure that the existence of our setting is widely advertised in places accessible to all sections of the community.
- We ensure that information about our setting is accessible and provided in written and spoken form.
- Where necessary, we will try to provide information in other languages.
- We keep a place vacant, if this is financially viable, to accommodate an emergency admission.
- We describe our setting and its practices in terms that make it clear that it welcomes both fathers and mothers, other relations and other carers, including childminders.
- We describe how our practices treat each child and their family, having regard to their needs arising from their gender, special educational needs, disabilities, social background, religion and ethnicity or from English being a newly acquired additional language.
- We describe how our practices enable children and/or parents with disabilities to take part in the life of the setting.
- We monitor the gender and ethnic background of children joining the group to ensure that our intake is representative of social diversity.
- We make our Valuing Diversity and Promoting Equality Policy widely known.
- We consult with families about the opening times of the setting to ensure we accommodate a broad range of families' needs.