Heather Playgroup

1.2 Admissions and Fees Policy

It is our intention to make our Playgroup genuinely accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community. To accomplish this, we will:

- Arrange our waiting list in order of date placed on the waiting list. We will contact you by post or email when a place becomes available. If we have had no response by the due date, we will make reasonable attempts to contact you. If we still have no response after two weeks, we will offer the place to someone else.
- Hold places only after completed registration forms have been received. Places are offered from the start of the next applicable or available term.
- Describe the Playgroup and its practices in terms that make it clear that it welcomes both fathers and mothers, other relations and other carers, including child-minders, and people from all cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups, and where possible, with disabilities.
- Monitor the gender and ethnic background of children joining the Group to ensure that no accidental discrimination is taking place.
- Make our Diversity and Equality Policy widely known.
- Extra sessions cannot be guaranteed, and priority may be given to children with additional needs or those on a child protection plan.
- We are flexible about attendance patterns so as to accommodate the needs of individual children and families, subject to availability.
- We ask you to inform us if your child is attending any other playgroup or nursery, and if you are already claiming West Sussex Funded Entitlement or Working Families Funding for the child.
- When allocating sessions, priority is given to allocating extra sessions to existing children, before offering sessions to new children. Within this, priority may be given to children due to start school in the next academic year
- We will endeavour to offer all the child's funded entitlement hours where it is requested, however this may not always be possible due to lack of availability. Priority for the full entitlement may be given to children with additional needs, or those on a child protection plan.
- We currently take a maximum of 24 children per morning session and 18 per afternoon session.
- Please note that accepting a place at Heather Playgroup in no way ensures a place at North Heath School, and that Playgroup staff have no influence over allocation of school places. These are allocated centrally via the West Sussex County Council School Admissions Office.
- Requests for additional sessions will be accepted in writing via email and are subject to availability. Changes to funded hours can only be made from the beginning of a term, prior to Headcount Day. In exceptional circumstances changes may be agreed by the manager mid-term.
- For sessions that are invoiced, we request at least a half a terms notice for any changes in sessions.

We will endeavour to accommodate your request.

- All admission, funding and consent forms must be completed, signed and returned to us before your child starts. If not returned by the date stated in the covering letter, your child's start date may be deferred or the place may be offered to another child on the waiting list.
- Before we can claim any Funded Entitlement on behalf of a child, we will need to see an original copy of the child's ID, either birth certificate or passport.
- You will be sent an email from Famly to create a log in once your child has been enrolled. This log in will be removed 6 months after your child has left Heather Playgroup.

Under 3's Admissions

We accept a limited number of under 3's.

- Children will need to be at least 2 years old. We accept children from the term after their 2nd birthday.
- 2 year old places will be available Monday – Friday from 8.45 – 11.45 only. Subject to availability and staffing levels. Once your child is 2.5 it may be possible to add some afternoon sessions, at the manager's discretion.
- Under 3 admissions will be first come first served in waiting list order.
- Under 3's will be charged at a higher rate per hour due to the extra staffing required.
- Charging will be changed to the three year old rate upon child's 3rd birthday.
- We accept Two Year Old LA issued Funding from WSCC. To check if you are eligible, contact the Family Information Service on 01243 777807, go online at http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/living/children_and_families/childcare_and_early_education/free_entitlement_for_2_3_and.aspx. Alternatively, your local Children and Family Centre will be able to give advice on eligibility.
- We accept the government Working Families Funded entitlement, as long as we are provided with a valid 11 digit eligibility code. Where a child is no longer eligible, the place will only remain available during the Grace Period. Parents will have the option to continue paying for the sessions (monthly in advance, in accordance with our Policy) or reduce them to the 15 hours universal funded hours. To find out further information about funding options please visit https://www.beststartinlife.gov.uk

FEES

Invoices are issued monthly via the Famly app. Fees are due one month in advance. Any families experiencing difficulty in paying must see the Manager to discuss payment plans as soon as possible to avoid losing their place.

To secure a place the registration form must be completed on Famly by the due date.

We are able to accept childcare vouchers and payments from Tax Free childcare accounts.

Most children qualify to receive Universal Funded Entitlement from West Sussex County Council in the term

following their third birthday. Please see the West Sussex website at http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/living/children_and_families/childcare_and_early_education/free_entitlement_for_2_3_and.aspx for further details. Our funded hours are free at point of delivery with no hidden extra charges. We sometimes ask for donations or contributions to extra outings or activities.

If you are invoiced for all or part of your sessions, if you fall significantly behind with payments and are in debt, your sessions may be reduced to funded hours only until your balance is paid off. Requests for additional invoiced hours will not be accepted if there are overdue fees.
If you wish to withdraw your child from Playgroup, or reduce their sessions, we require at least half a term's notice in writing. For funded places, changes can only be made from the start of the following term. If sufficient notice is not given, any outstanding fees as well as the notice period will be due for immediate payment. If your child claims Funded Entitlement, this will not be available to be claimed by another setting until the start of the next term. Under some circumstances it may be possible to transfer Funded Entitlement funding to another setting.
No refunds are given for sickness and holidays.
Charges will apply if a child is repeatedly collected late to cover emergency staffing costs. Please see our collection policy for more details.

After Pre-School Sessions

These are available to children registered at Heather Playgroup only and only on the days the child already attends an afternoon session. This is a premium paid for service and funding cannot be used for this session. Sessions need to be booked in advance and for whole or half terms only. They are not available on an ad-hoc basis. Payment is due monthly, one month in advance. Notice period is half a term. After pre-school sessions are currently offered 2.45-3.15. No refunds are given for booked sessions where the child does not attend. This may be extended in the future subject to staffing.

In the event of emergency closure, no refunds will be given. We endeavour to remain open whenever possible. We will strive to offer alternative sessions to make up the hours in the event of an emergency closure. However, during busy times this may not be possible and hours to suit may not always be available.

I have read and understood the Admissions Policy and accept the above Fee Payment Terms
Child's Name

Print Name Date

Signed

Policy reviewed February 2026
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