



The policies and procedures adopted by Sunshine Pre-school are underpinned by the Department for Education, Statutory Framework for The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements (March 2014).

This policy supports a positive transition into pre-school.

The Admissions Process

Introduction

The services of Sunshine Pre-school are advertised via Facebook, our website, and on-line directories as well as via local outlets such as doctors' surgeries, health visitors, libraries, and shops. Our aim is to reach out to all families in the local community who may be interested in using our services. Interested parents can contact us, either in person at one of our settings, or by telephone, email, Facebook messenger or letter, and are then directed to our website where they can make an online application to join our waiting list. Parents who are unable to complete the online application themselves can be supported by the office staff. There is a non-refundable registration fee of £10.00 which must be sent by BACS when making an application, to cover the cost of the admissions process, and children are not added to the waiting list until this payment is received. This is to enable all families to have equal access to our privately funded hours and enrichment programme. Details of how to pay are sent via email and a follow up email is sent if the payment is not received. We advise parents when applying to add our email address to their contacts list to avoid any responses going into their junk folders.

At our Knowle settings, all parents of children who will be eligible to join in the following academic year, who have registered their child will be given a written invitation to attend an open session, which is usually held in February or March. The open session provides an opportunity for families to look around the setting, meet the staff, and find out more about the services we offer; including how we meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and how they can access the government's Nursery Education Grant. After the open session, parents are asked to apply for the sessions they require, and are notified of the closing date for applications.

At Whitchurch (due to the high volume of families on the waiting list) parents are asked to request the sessions they require and once they have secured a place they are invited to attend an open session and information afternoon. If, after attending the open session, a parent decides they no longer wish to proceed with their application, then their place is cancelled and their security deposit is refunded (see next paragraph).

Once the closing date has passed, sessions are allocated to children in line with our Admissions Policy, and confirmation is given to parents in writing. Parents are asked to confirm, either by email, telephone or in writing, if they wish to accept the sessions we have been able to allocate them and their place is secured once a £50.00 security fee is paid. At Knowle, this is nonrefundable and at Whitchurch parents have one week after the open session in which to decide if they no longer require their place, after a week their fee is also nonrefundable.

Once Sunshine Pre-school has received confirmation that the sessions have been accepted, the family is issued with a Welcome Pack by post, which includes: a date to come to pre-school and meet with the child's allocated key worker, how to access the Welcome book on-line giving detailed information about Sunshines and its policies and procedures, and paperwork to be completed before the child starts (please see our Transition Policy in the online Welcome Book for more details of how families are welcomed into pre-school).

Admissions Policy

Sunshine pre-school is registered to accept children from 2 years of age, but as we are a preschool and not a nursery, children are eligible to start in the term before they are 3 years of age i.e. at 2 years and 10 months. Children need to be developmentally ready to join Sunshines, and this includes being toilet trained (unless there is a specific developmental reason such as if a child has Special Educational Needs. If this is the case, parents are advised to contact the office for advice and further information). If parents wish their child to start before they are 3 years of age, staff will work with parents to assess if their child is ready, and both parties (parents and staff) must be in agreement that starting preschool at this time would be in the best interest of the child.

When considering applications for places at Sunshine Preschool, the following criteria is taken into consideration:

- **Age of Child** – The oldest children on the waiting list will be given priority as, to ensure the pre-school is financially viable, sessions need to be filled as soon as possible; for example a child who can start in September will be given priority over a child who cannot start until January
- **Siblings** - Wherever possible, siblings of children who have already attended Sunshine pre-school will be given priority for their pre-school year; but this does not guarantee them a place before their pre-school year and is subject to the completion of the necessary registration form and fee.
- **Waiting List** – Wherever possible, children who have been on the waiting list the longest will be given priority
- **Full Time Places** – Families requiring full time places due to training or work commitments may be given priority
- **Vulnerable Children & Families** - Children or families with a specific need may be given priority.
- **Attendance** - Children are required to attend a minimum of 3 sessions per week, unless authorised by Karon Nichol for a specific reason which benefits the child.

NB. Although Sunshine Preschool will do it's best to allocate sessions in line with parental preference, sessions are subject to availability and therefore we cannot guarantee which sessions we will be able to allocate.

Please note – Sunshine Preschool will endeavour to work with parents and families in a professional and positive manner at all times and, whilst no child will be discriminated against, it reserves the right to:

- Defer a child's entry to 3 years of age if staff feel the child is not developmentally able to access the provision at the setting.
- Change allocated sessions if staff feel it is not in the best interest of the child (ie if a child has difficulty spending a full day at pre-school).
- Change allocated sessions in the event of an administrative error or extenuating circumstances regarding another family attending the setting.
- Refuse admission to a child if appropriate relationships cannot be built or maintained with the child's family.
- Terminate a child's place, giving one month's notice, if staff are unable to build or maintain a relationship with parents that enable them to effectively care for the child.
- Terminate a child's place, immediately, if family members are rude or abusive to staff.
- Terminate a child's place if the fee paying policy is not adhered to

Funding Your Child's Pre-school Place

All places are subject to an enrichment fee (£1.50 per session, paid termly) to support us to continue to provide high quality and exciting learning and development opportunities for our children, along with covering the costs of snacks, suncream and other miscellaneous costs.*

**1st September, 1st January, 1st April*

Please see separate Enrichment Fee Paying Policy if you wish to choose to opt out of the enrichment fee

2 Year Old Funding - (Children starting in the term before they are 3)

NURSERY EDUCATION GRANT (NEG)

Funding for two year olds is divided into three categories:

- Eligible two year old funding: for families who receive benefits including Universal Credit/ Income support etc. More information can be found at childcarechoices.gov.uk. Children receive 15 funded hours per week, term time only
- Qualifying two year old funding: for working families earning under £100,000pa and above an average of 16 hours at the minimum wage per week. Children receive 30 funded hours per week, term time only (from September 2025)
- Privately funded two year olds: session fees are listed below.

All children must attend a minimum of three sessions per week.

3 and 4 Year Old Funding

NURSERY EDUCATION GRANT (NEG)

- Universal Hours - All children are entitled to claim 15 hours of funding via the Nursery Education Grant (NEG) in the term after their third birthday. Cut off dates are 1st September/ 1st January and 1st April so your child needs to be 3 before these dates to receive funding for the following term.
- Extended Hours - Most working parents are also eligible to claim an additional 15 hours of funding per week so in total they can claim up to 30 hours.

Eligibility for Extended Hours

Each parent (in a dual parent family or the parent in a single parent family) must meet the following criteria:

- Earn at least the equivalent to 16 hours per week at the national living wage or national minimum wage to those aged over 25.
- Self-employed parents, parents on zero hour contracts, and those on sick or parental leave may also be eligible, subject to the income criteria above

Determining Eligibility

- Whether parents are eligible and their continuing eligibility will be determined solely by Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC).
- Parents are able to apply for the additional funding through a joint on-line application developed by HMRC. This includes an eligibility checking system which can be accessed at childcarechoices.gov.uk
- Once accepted, HMRC will provide an 11 digit code to present to your chosen provider(s) (eg Sunshine Pre-school). This code will expire after three months
- Parents are therefore expected to reconfirm their eligibility every three months.
- Failure to reconfirm eligibility will result in the additional 15 hours of funding being withdrawn (funding will therefore reduce to the 15 hours available to all children).
- The NEG can be split between different nursery providers if required.
- NEG payments are paid directly to the setting and we will automatically provide you with the necessary forms once your child is eligible.
- Parents must advise us if their child is attending another setting and they intend to claim NEG hours at that setting.

Pre-school Fees Knowle

From September 2025 fees for Knowle settings will be:

- £25.20 for a half-day session (3.5 hrs)
- £55.20 for full day (7.5 hours and this includes a £4.80 charge for lunchtime cover).

Pre-school fees are payable monthly, in advance.

At Knowle government funding covers:

15 Hours

2 full days (no lunch charge)

1 full day and two half days

4 half days (morning or afternoon)

30 hours

Up to 4 full days (no lunch charge)

Pre-school Fees Whitchurch

From September 2025 fees for Whitchurch settings will be:

- £28.50 for a half-day session (3.75 hrs)
- £61.80 for full day (8 hours and this includes a £4.80 charge for lunchtime cover).

Pre-school fees are payable monthly, in advance.

At Whitchurch government funding covers:

15 Hours

4 half days (morning or afternoon)

1 full day and one half day

30 hours

Up to 3.5 days (no lunch charge)

Government Tax Free Childcare Voucher Scheme

Sunshine Pre-school also accepts the above voucher scheme which can be used to pay for pre-school fees and enrichment fees. This saves you 20% on any payments you need to make.

Knowle Session times

We are open 5 days a week term time only. Each morning and afternoon session is 3.5 hours long.

Drop off and collection times are as follows:

Morning: Drop off anytime between 8:30 – 9:00 and collect between 11:45 - 12:00

Afternoon: Drop off at 12:45 and collect anytime between 3:30 – 4:00

All day: Drop off anytime between 8:30 – 9:00 and collect between 3:30 – 4:00

(Children staying all day need to bring a packed lunch).

Whitchurch Session times

We are open 5 days a week term time only. Each morning and afternoon session is 3.75 hours long.

Drop off and collection times are as follows:

Morning: Drop off anytime between 8:30 – 9:00 and collect between 11:45 - 12:15

Afternoon: Drop off at 12:45 and collect anytime between 3:30 – 4:25

All day: Drop off anytime between 8:30 – 9:00 and collect between 3:30 – 4:25

(Children staying all day need to bring a packed lunch).

If you would like further information on funding please contact our finance officer Don at:

07905791950 or donaldnichol@hotmail.co.uk

Related Policies & Procedures – This policy is supported by: *Working in Partnership with Parents policy, our Key Person system, Equal Opportunities Policy, Transition policy.* This policy was updated in January 2025. Unless there are significant changes to legislation or practice, it will be reviewed annually.